

Branch Communicator

December 2010

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Township Offices

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SEWAGE Problems
• SCMA 622-8240

Police Report

During the month of November the police officers handled 53 incidents or complaints. There were 45 traffic citations issued. Officers attended 4 hearings. They traveled 2,969 miles in patrolling the two townships using 4 vehicles.

Supervisor Notes

Compost Site

The compost site is closed until Spring. The site gate will be left open for access by residents as needed,

Leaf burning ban

The burning of leaves, even in containers is banned. The smoke is deemed noxious and therefore prohibited. Leaves that are bagged can be picked up by telephoning the township office. A pick-up will be scheduled on the basis of the call.

2011 Budget

The budget for next year was passed at the meeting. Both revenue and expenses are less than last year. The police expenses will be paid from a different checking account that both Branch and Reilly Townships will contribute \$1,200.00 per month. Payroll will be paid from the general account by each township for their offi-

cers. Township workers will receive a \$0.25 cent per hour raise. The position of assistant treasure will be discontinued effective 1-1-11. The budget will show no increase in taxes even though there is no increase in revenue or expenses anticipated.

Tax Anticipation Loan

The annual Tax Anticipation loan from the Miners Bank was approved. This is a draw down as needed loan to assure funds are available to meet expenses.

Rental Unit Ordinance

A proposed property rental ordinance was examined. The ordinance will require property owners to report all tenants and maintain a minimum insurance. Tenants will be required to get an occupancy permit and pay a fee for all occupants. This will be a one time requirement for tenants. Owners will be required to obtain

a license, provide certain information and pay a fee annually for each property. This ordinance will be adopted at the January meeting and be effective as of February 2011. A copy of the ordinance can be viewed at the township building Monday through Thursdays.

Garbage Problems

The hauler is still missing too many pick-ups. A letter of complaint is being sent to them with the next step being the calling of the performance bond.

Solicitors Report

The solicitor is still working on the dissolution of the BCRSA, a wind energy ordinance and a Marcellus Shale ordinance. He also recommended the Croley Liquor license be denied for now.

Road Masters Report

Township workers have been cleaning drains and preparing for winter.

This and that

The Phoenix Park Fire Company sponsors a weekly bingo every Monday night. All are welcomed to come out and play.

Wings and Things

The Good Intent Hose Company of Llewellyn is

serving wings, peel and eat Shrimp, and fries every Tuesday night from 6 until all are gone. Eat in or take out.

Reorganization

The annual reorganization of the township will be held on January 3rd at 7PM in

the township building. We still need volunteers for the Zoning Hearing Board (1) and the Planning Commission (1). The pay is \$0.00. The Zoning board meets as needed. The Planning Commission meets monthly as necessary. If interested, contact the Supervisors or show up on January 3rd.

The Branch Communicator is a privately published newsletter to provide residents of the Township with information on governance by their elected and appointed Township officials. Opinions expressed are those of the Publisher and do not reflect the opinions of Sponsors nor officials. Questions and comments should be directed to Norm Bertasavage 544-6583

SCMA Meeting

The meeting focused on the new sprinkler regulations going in effect on 1-1-11. This will require every newly built home to have a sprinkler system installed. SCMA estimates the cost of the dual water system necessary to split the flow of water between the normal water supply and the sprinkler system will be \$500.00 to \$1,000.00 for the water pit at the curb. The cost from the curb to the home will be born by the homeowner as well as the installation of the sprinkler system.

What the cost would be for Branch with two different water companies providing service is unknown. What ever that cost is the fact remains that to build a new home in Branch will rise

by \$15,000.00 to \$25,000.00. In addition to the building cost the property tax bill for new homes would have to include the sprinkler cost.

Given the current stock of homes available for sale or rent, new residents of Branch will be facing higher property or rental costs. And this will be true of every municipality.

With the local arsonists still roaming free, affordable housing will be a thing of the past.

Fortunately SCMA doesn't propose an increase in sewage fees for 2011.

Merry Christmas to all and wishes for a happy, healthy, and prospers New Year to all.



Planning Commission Meeting

There was no December Planning Commission meeting.

There was a meeting of the Zoning Hearing board which proved to be very contentious on the Croley variance request. The meeting held on December 2nd had to be recessed after 3 hours and reconvened on December 7th. This meeting also lasted

nearly 4 hours as local residents voices their opposition to the establishment of a bar and restaurant in the old Terrace Music center. Although the neighborhood is presently and was historically a mixed use area and is located on a major interstate highway *not in my back yard* complaints about potential noise and traffic were being voiced. After ending

Financial Data

Dec 1 - 21, 10

Income	
Court Income	452.59
General Receipts	6,493.18
Permits	1,899.00
Tax Income	<u>26,540.98</u>
Total Income	<u>35,385.75</u>
Expense	
advertising	106.91
Building Inspector	216.14
Contractors	522.30
Electric	3,682.70
Garbage	7,997.65
Insurance	
Health Insurance	4,685.89
Insurance - Other	2,872.19
Total Insurance	7,558.08
Misc	310.73
Office Expense	115.67
Payroll Expenses	12,024.78
Payroll Taxes	3,274.18
Police	-180.54
postage	84.00
Sewage	174.00
Solicitor	2,305.00
Supervisors	147.12
Tax Collections	1,291.18
Telephones	375.11
Truck & Equipment	13,514.54
truck Loan	360.12
Utilities	<u>777.65</u>
Total Expense	<u>54,657.32</u>
Net Income	<u><u>-19,271.57</u></u>

the audience participation the hearing was again recessed with the board proposing to examine the parking plan on December 11th and reconvening the hearing in January. Unless there are valid reasons for denying the variance request a motion to approve the request will most likely be granted.