

Branch Communicator

February 2006

Supervisors Meeting Notes

Telephone Numbers

Supervisors:

Robert Keifer 544-2249
Joseph Wank 544-3183
John Purcell 544-5890

Township Offices

Branch Police 544-2901
Township Garage 544-3557
Secretary
Joanne Schultz 544-4283
Sewage
Donna Kroh 544-1764
Township Manager
John Andruchek 544-4283

Police Report

The 6 Police officers worked a total of 385 hours. They traveled 2380 miles using 4 police vehicles. 44 Incidents, Assists or Complaints were handled by 6 officers.

The report covered the period 1/1/06 to 1/31/06



Happy St Patrick's Day

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.

Memorial Day Committee

Several volunteers met on February 9th to help organize the AMVETS Memorial day Celebration and parade. The event will be on Monday May 29th. Contacts with Scout organizations, township fire companies, and other groups will be made to insure that all are invited to participate. A speaker will be found by Harry Paul. Volunteers are needed for firing squads and other volunteers are needed to assure that we honor our veterans. Anyone interested in being a member of a firing squad or to help organize events can contact Norm Bertasavage at 544-6583.

Parents are reminded that children learn patriotism from public participation, not displaying a magnet on a vehicle.

The next Committee Meeting will be March 23rd at the Union Church in Phoenix Park.

DEP Hearing on Sludge Dumping

The DEP has responded to our petition for a public hearing. The hearing will be held in the Branch Township Municipal Building on Tuesday, March 14th from 6PM to 8PM. This hearing concerns a request for a permit revision to process untreated sewage sludge that affect Branch, Reilly and Tremont townships. The DEP will accept both oral and written comments. They will respond in writing to the Township at a later date.

Supervisor Meeting Dates

The schedule for 2006 Supervisor's meeting is as follows: March 20th, April 17th, May 29th, June 26th, July 24th, August 28th, September 25th, October 23rd, November 20th and December 18th. All meetings are held on Monday evenings and begin at 7PM in the Township Memorial Building.

Steins Mill Sewage

The DEP in the form of Mr. B.R Patel is again pushing at the Supervisors concerning the sewage problem in the Steins Mill area. Although this area was one of the three problems originally identified by the DEP it was not a priority for the DEP when approving the unified Sewage authority. Now it a front burner issue. It also demonstrates DEP's dou-

ble standard. They allow sludge operators and truck stop operations to endanger our water supply while beating up municipalities and taxpayers for minor problems. See also Sewage Authority News.

South Gate Development

The question of boundary lines between the South Gate Development and Friedens Lutheran church again surfaced. Tom Doyle, a member of the church again made accusations of inertia against the Supervisors.

I contacted the Development's engineer and questioned her accuracy. She stated that there was a deed overlap not a property overlap as claimed by Doyle. The most recent survey prior to hers was made in the '50's when a sale of property between Schinkles and Radziewicz was transacted. At that time a stone marker on the road was found giving the dimensions. As technology has improved since 1827, these measurements were considered more valid than that of the deed description.

Branch Township has been involved in boundary disputes with Norwegian township caused by old surveys. Many of the deed descriptions are based on the course of streams, location of trees and other "meets and bounds" used at the time. The only means of settling these disputes is to have a new survey. In most cases, the cost out weight the benefit.

Delinquent Tax Collection

A list of unpaid property taxes has been submitted to Harry Ebling for collection.

911 Addresses

The 911 Center has been provided with a new list of street address to conform to the 911 requirements. These are located on Willing Street and will not change the current information, just update the 911 records.

Strossertown Bridge

The money for replacement of this bridge has been found by PENNDot. They will be scheduling a meeting in the near future on what must be done before the bridge can be replaced and the money disbursed.

Sewage Authority News

The newly reorganized board held it's first session. A report on the December meeting with PENNVest indicated that there will be no new financing arrangements or grants available to the Authority.

The board has not heard anything from Reilly Township concerning their Act 537 plan. The Authority remains adamant that the only acceptable solution is to take Reilly as a bulk customer with Reilly taking the Stein's Mill area as part of their sewage service area.

The Authority continues to operate as a deficit with the January short fall exceeding \$17,000.00. It was noted that the reserve funds will be consumed with-in the next 30 months at the present rate.

Engineers Report

The as-built drawings from Doli are under continuing review by Benesch. The cost of this review is being billed separately so that the costs can be paid from the final payment amount being withheld by the Authority.

The preparation of the DEP chapter 94 report for 2005 will be ready for submission to the DEP on or before March 31st.

Correspondence with Reed Bed Systems suggest the need for the remaining 2 reed beds be planted. The third reed bed must be emptied now so that there is sufficient time for the bed to dry out prior to being planted. The 4th bed will have to have all bio-solids removed prior to planting. All decisions have been tabled until the decision to purchase the necessary additional plants has been made.

Reed Bed Systems submitted an invoice for \$3,000.00 for the work done on the first two reed beds.

Plant Operations

The treatment plant operated with a daily average flow of 204,935 gallons per day. The effluent quality remains well within specifications.

There were 4 grinder pump calls during the month. One due to a clogged pump, one due to a float problem. The other two failures were due to moisture problems in the control panels. These required replacement of contacts at a cost of \$91.16 each. It was noted by the board that there seems to be an excessive number of failures due to moisture getting into the contacts. The manufacturer should be contacted for recommendation for preventing this problem from occurring.

A grinder pump was re-installed at a property that had been sold. The operators also investigated a complaint that a pump basin was too high. The complaint was unfounded and the connection wasn't the problem.

Solicitors Report

A letter was submitted to Cummins Power Systems requesting reimbursement of \$4,461.80 for expenses incurred in correcting a generator and transfer switch problem. This is part of an on-going dispute where blame is shifted between the manufacturer, PP&L and the contractor.

Other Notes

There are 1374 residents currently being billed for services. There are still some paying customers who are not yet hooked into the system

Volunteer

Don Snyder has offered his services in case of a need for replacement on the Planning Commission or the Zoning Hearing Board.

Anyone wishing to help out the township can contact the Supervisors so that a pool of volunteers can be maintained.

Road Master's Report

The road master reported the clearing of numerous trees which blew down during the recent high winds. There will be a burn at the Compost site to clear some of the residue from this clean up.

Planning Commission

There was no business to conduct so the February meeting of the Commission was canceled.

Up Coming and on going events

The Phoenix Park Fire Company is selling 50/50 tickets between now and the 4th of July.

They are also sponsoring a Ham Block shoot on Sunday April 9th.

News letter Sponsors

Enbee Tax Service, Federal and State E-filing Service available
544-6583

Don's Classis Restoration & Auto Body Inc
544-8209

Rushanan & DeStefano Real Estate Sales & Appraisals
544-9520

HB Excavations
544-3407

Up Coming Events : The next supervisors meeting will be *March 20th*. Planning Commission March 7th. Public meetings start at 7PM . Sewage Authority meeting will be March 16th 4:30 PM.

Note: Branch Communicators are available on line at www.normbert.com/