

Branch Communicator

January 2010

Supervisors Meeting Notes

Telephone Numbers

Supervisors:

Joseph Wank 544-3183
John Purcell 544-5890
Robert Yeager 527-5144

Township Offices

Branch Police 544-2901
Township Garage 544-3557
Secretary/Treasurer Joyce Beach
Township Manager 544-4283
John Andruchek 544-4283
Sewage
Tina Williams 544-1764
Kim Krasinski 544-1764

Police Report

The Police officers traveled 3289 miles in patrolling the townships using 4 police vehicles. 66 Incidents, Assists or Complaints were handled by 4 officers. There were 10 traffic citations issued and 4 criminal arrests for misdemeanors. The officers attended 5 hearings at District Judges offices.

The report covered the period 12/1/09 12/31/09

Wings and things

The Good Intent Hose company of Llewellyn is serving Wings every Tuesday from 6PM until all are gone. They will also serve clams and peel and eat shrimp. Come out and support the Hose company while enjoying a tasty dinner.

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.

Volunteer Fire Companies

The Supervisors appointed the Good Intent Hose Company # 1 and the Phoenix Park Community Fire Company as official Fire Companies for the Township. This is an annual requirement to protect firemen in the performance of their duties.

The Phoenix Fire Company activities for 2010 were also approved. The Good Intent Hose Company will provide it's list of 2010 Activities at the next meeting for approval. This approval is required to protect volunteers injured while working at the activities under the townships workmen's compensation insurance.

The Good Intent Hose Company worked to obtain a CDGB grant to extent the water line from Shober and Willing streets to the Fire Company's station. This extension is necessary to provide adequate flow of water that has been hampered by breaks in the current line.

This grant triggered a discussion on the ownership of the line after it's installation. The township and taxpayers provide funds to install the line which is then turned over to the Blythe Water Company who then become the owners of the line. This is the same situation with the sewage system. The taxpayers pay for the systems but have no say in the ownership or operation of the systems. In the case of the water lines, the township is serviced by Blythe and Minersville Water Companies. Formal requests were made to both entities for membership on the boards of directors. In both cases the requests were never acknowledged.

The ownership of these taxpayer funded public utilities is apparently a common practice in Pennsylvania that should be address with our legislators.

Crown Towers Request

Crown Towers, operators of the cell phone towers located in the cemeteries across from Pritz Auto, requested permission to place red aircraft warning lights atop of the towers. The area is within the flight path of helicopters landing at helipads and the placement of these lights will aid in preventing collisions

as they take off and land.

Timbering permit extension

Fort Jackson Logging has requested an extension of their logging permit until the end of February. Their current permit expired at the end of the year. The request was tabled by the Supervisors for further discussion of several legal questions. The current permit was issued under the old timbering ordinance and a new ordinance was enacted last year. Fort Jackson may be required to apply for a new permit under the new ordinance.

Tax Anticipation Loan

The Tax Anticipation loan for 2010 has been approved by the supervisors and accepted by the Miners Bank. No money has yet been drawn against the loan as current receipts and transfers from the Penn Vest account have been sufficient to meet current expense.

Mileage Adjustment

In line with IRS adjustments, the mileage allowance for official travel by township personnel has been reduced from the current \$0.55 cents per mile to \$0.50 cents per mile.

Road Master's Report

Work is being done at the playground to maintain the equipment. The seesaws have been removed and taken to the garage where they are being sanded and will be painted before being reinstalled.

More road salt has been ordered to maintain the township streets.

Christmas trees have been picked up though the 3rd week in January. The piles at the compost site will be burned and no more trees will be picked up by the township.

Delinquent Garbage Fees

The Tax Receiver is preparing a list of unpaid garbage accounts for the township. The list will be used to enforce collection of monies due.

Sewage Authority

A standing room only crowd of about 100 attended the meeting for January. With few exceptions the crowd voted in favor of a merger of BCRSA into SCMA. Three of the Branch members including two newly seated members and one of the Cass members expressed opposition to the merger. Anger was directed at this stand by several members of the audience who felt the merger would provide lower cost service over the coming years.

Several questions were directed to the SCMA representatives concerning guarantees of the proposed \$58.00 per edu per month cost. That would depend on DEP regulations, economic conditions and unforeseen events just as it would for BCRSA. The ability of SCMA to use its resources and the depth of its organization to operate and maintain the system would help keep the cost down.

The problems being experienced by the BCRSA were a result of decisions made on poor advise given by the original Branch Twp engineers, HRG, who used bogus figures as to operating cost, design faults and the BCRSA's failure to listen to warning from individuals.

The current board has taken great pains to reduce operating costs. American Water, the plant operator, introduced practices to reduce failures and increase efficiencies. The BCRSA staff worked hard to increase collections and reduce delinquencies. But the long standing problems were to great to overcome. It is time to face facts and cut our losses.

The BCRSA solicitor informed the board that the vote taken at last months meeting to proceed with the merger can only be overturned by a vote to overturn greater than 5 to 3. Without such a vote the merger would go ahead. The crowd was strongly opposed to such a vote and in the end there was no motion to overturn. Now the details must be worked out.

Financial Data

Jan 1 - 19, 10

Income

Court Income	135.59
General Receipts	197.58
Permits	72.49
Tax Income	<u>15,538.40</u>

Total Income 15,944.06

Expense

advertising	742.98
Building Inspector	169.06
Contractors	100.00
Electric	3,084.91
Misc	236.70
Office Expense	59.21
Payroll Expenses	6,786.60
Payroll Taxes	3,616.09
Police	17.50
Road Work	1,494.97
Sewage	174.00
Solicitor	3,577.16
Supervisors	147.14
Tax Collections	1,048.27
Telephones	511.77
Truck & Equipment	1,525.56
Utilities	<u>2,075.26</u>

Total Expense 25,367.18

Net Income -9,423.12

Planning Commission

There was no business to conduct so there was no January meeting.

Primary Election

The primary election will be held on May 18th this year. We will be electing a governor, Lt governor, US Senator, and Representative for the 17th Congressional District, State House and committee people. To get on the ballot, candidates must circulate and file petitions with varying numbers of signatures. This process will begin on February 16th and petitions must be filed by March 9th.

I will be circulating a petition for Russ Diamond, candidate for Lt Governor. Russ was the founder of PACleanSweep the organization that tried to replace all the members of the General Assembly.

He is running on the Republican ticket. Anyone who is a registered Republican and willing to sign Russ's petition can contact me.

Those of you who would like to vote in the Primary election or to change their party must be registered in your party by April 19th. Voter Registration applications can be gotten at the Post Office or from the Election Bureau in Pottsville.

Remember, Primary Elections are to chose the candidates for Republican, Democrat, or certain minority parties only. You must be registered and can only vote for the candidates in the Party you are registered in. Democrats can't vote for a Republican and visa versa in the Primary Election.

News letter Sponsors

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

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

Patrons:

Jerry Rizzardi

Phoenix Park Happenings

The Phoenix Park fire company will be sponsoring weekly bingo games. The games will be held on **Mondays starting at 6:30PM at the Fire Company.** All are invited to play.

Up Coming Events : The next supervisors meeting will be *February 21st* . Planning Commission February 2nd . Public meetings start at 7PM . Sewage Authority meeting will be Thursday February 18th@ 4:30 PM.

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