

Branch Communicator

November 2007

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
Treasurer Joyce Beach
Township Manager
John Andruchek 544-4283
Sewage
Donna Kroh 544-1764
Tina Williams

Police Report

The Police officers traveled 2724 miles in patrolling the townships using 4 police vehicles. 53 Incidents, Assists or Complaints were handled by 3 officers. There were 7 traffic citations issued 3 non-traffic citations and 5 criminal arrests. The officers attended 7 court hearings and 2 arraignments.

The report covered the period 10/1/07 to 10/31/07

Merry Christmas to all and best wishes for a happy, healthy, and prospers 2008.

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.

No Tax Increase

The Township's 2008 proposed budget was presented to the Supervisors. It contains no new tax increase. The budget will be voted on at the December 17th meeting. This is a departure from the usual practice of holding a special meeting for the budget on the last day of December.

A copy of the proposed budget can be viewed at the township building.

Compost Site Operation

The Compost site will continue its normal operating hours until further notice. The storm damage that tore down so many limbs and trees makes it necessary to keep the site open for now. A notice of closing will be posted at the compost site and the township building when the annual closing is necessary.

Remember that should a resident have an emergency need to dispose of trees, branches or storm damage can contact the township office to have the site opened.

Danger, Danger

The last storm saw not only trees and tree limbs on the roads but also downed power lines. Supervisor Wank wants everyone to know that they should call the township, the fire departments or the utility company and not try to remove the hazard themselves. The life you save may be your own!

The Beaver Dam

The beaver dam along the creek south of Llewellyn was destroyed by township workers in order to relieve a potential flooding threat. Unfortunately the beavers had the damage repaired the next day. New Orleans should have been so lucky!

Volunteer Fire Company Resolution

The Supervisors passed a resolution designating Llewellyn's Good Intent Hose Company and the Phoenix Park Fire Company as volunteer fire companies for Branch Township. This is a liability thing to protect fire fighters conducting fire related activities. Each company must submit a list of fund raising and

other non-fire related functions and activities which will not be covered by this resolution.

LIHEAP Information

LIHEAP is a state program to help low income individuals pay for home heating bills. The program also provides help for emergency heating loss situations such as broken heating equipment, lack of fuel and other types of heating emergencies. There are information pamphlets available in the township building or on line. For more information contact the Schuylkill County Assistance office at 570-621-3000. Applications for assistance are being accepted beginning November 5, 2007. These applications are also available online at www.compass.state.pa.us

Projected 2008 meeting dates

These dates are subject to change as needed. The January 2008 Reorganization meeting may be held on the 2nd at 10AM or on the 7th at 7PM and will cancel the regular January meeting scheduled for the 21st.

Feb 28th	March 31st	April 28th
May 26th	June 30th	July 28th
Aug 25th	Sept 22	Oct 20th
Nov 17th	Dec 29th.	

These are all tentative dates.

Tax Anticipation Loan

At the suggestion of the Solicitor the annual tax anticipation loan may be applied for as a line of credit of \$30,000.00. The benefit of this arrangement is that funds can be withdrawn in amounts needed. Interest charged will be only on the amount used and not on the whole \$30,000.00.

Strossertown Bridge Update

The Bridge will be opened for traffic by the end of November. The paving has been completed and remaining work is to install the guard rails

Sewage Authority

Financial Data

Income: Tax Revenues, 14,723.46 General Receipts, \$11,342.05; Permits, 50.00; Other Income, \$ 3,199.25; Court Income, \$684.39; Liquid Fuel Income, \$3,199.25. Total receipts \$33,299.15.

Expenses: Payroll expense \$9,018.06, Garbage \$6,393.61, Insurance \$4,326.23, Electric \$2,890.89, Engineering \$950.50, Truck & Equipment \$ 1,199.77, Utilities \$3,363.38, telephones \$561.39, tax collection \$ 826.69, Contractors \$679.74, payroll taxes \$2,870.16, Police \$337.93, Building Inspector \$138.46, Supervisors \$742.62, Solicitor, \$180.00, Sewage \$450.21, Office expenses \$58.00, Misc Expenses \$363.01

Total expenses: \$46,533.59

Other: Loan payments: Tax Anticipation loan: \$2,455.80, Road Repair Loan \$955.17, Building Loan \$360.12.

Current Balances as of Nov 19th; General Fund Checking account \$1096.98, General Saving account \$942.19, Penn Invest \$81,139.38, Liquid Fuel Checking \$312.56, Liquid Fuel savings \$126.83, Liquid Fuel Penn Invest, \$26,420.91

Annual Christmas Party

The Good Intent Hose Company will host it's annual Christmas party for children ten years old and younger. All township children in this age group are welcome. Santa will visit with the children at 2PM on Sunday December 16th .

Protecting Township Assets

Branch Resident Paul DiRenzo complemented the Supervisors on their action to protect the sewage assets. He stated that same protection should be applied to all assets paid for by the township and operated by others such as the water companies operating in the township.

He pointed to grants obtained for water lines. These grants were obtained by the township, moneys issued to the township and matching funds paid for by the township. After installation the pipe lines were turned over to a water authority for operation. In the event of mergers or consolidations the assets are transferred with no financial benefit to the township. Other examples were given including the fire hydrants. These are paid for and installed by the township but the water

companies charge rent on these hydrants.

A Lend-Lease type program should be investigated for future use of township assets. The Supervisors and Solicitor will look into this matter.

Zoning Hearing Meeting

The Zoning Hearing Board met on November 12th to consider the Colna variance request. After considering the recommendation of the Planning Commission and the testimony of several witnesses the Board granted the right to encroach 4 feet on to the east setback line to accommodate a residential extension.

Rate Increase

At the December meeting the rate increase for 2008 will be voted on. The proposed increase will be \$9.00 from the current \$46.00 per month per EDU to \$54.00. This figure is the rate suggested by HRG back before completion of the system. The Authority had hoped the number of EDU's would grow and so set the initial rate at \$42.00. The lack of growth has seen the Authority running at a monthly deficit in excess of \$20,000.00, which can no longer be tolerated.

EDU basis redefined

The question of what constitutes an EDU was visited in regards to the Smolsky property in Cass Township. The question was about a property with a residence with water service and a separate garage on the property with a separate water service. The Rates Ordinance calls for 2 charges for the tap-in fee and two billings as an EDU. The property owner complained of this definition as the garage isn't used full time. The Solicitor holds that both structures are separate EDU and the charges will be levied as per the ordinance.

Branch Township Supervisors Letter

The letter from the Branch Supervisors was read. The letter stated the opposition of the Supervisors to any BCRSA merger or consolidation with the Schuylkill Municipal Authority. Cass Township Supervisor and Authority member Jim Thomas voiced his opposition to the intent of the letter stating the Authority should continue to investigate any matter is deemed beneficial to the BCRSA.

Plant Operations

Operations continue to be within specifications.

News letter Sponsors

Enbee Tax Service, Federal and State E-filing Service available
[544-6583](tel:544-6583)

Don's Classis Restoration & Auto Body Inc
[544-8209](tel:544-8209)

Up Coming Events : The next supervisors meeting will be *December 17th* . Planning Commission December 4th. Public meetings start at 7PM . Sewage Authority meeting will be Thursday December 20th, 4:30 PM.

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