

MINUTES
NORTH LEBANON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING
October 7, 2020

The duly advertised workshop meeting was held on Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 6:00pm at the Municipal Building located at 725 Kimmerlings Road, Lebanon, PA with the following people present:

Richard E. Miller	Chairman
Edward A. Brensinger	Vice – Chairman
Ardy A. Snook	Treasurer
Lori Books	Assistant Manager
Cheri Grumbine	Township Manager

Ebenezer Fire Co:	Mike Leonard, Steve Ronald
Glenn-Lebanon:	Brian Vragovich
Rural Security:	Allen Firestine – via ZOOM
Weavertown:	Donald Steiner Sr., Donald Steiner Jr.

1.) Standard Allocation (June/Dec distribution)

This year, the June and December allocations were able to be released earlier than normal by the Township. The Board acknowledged their awareness that fundraising events are very limited this year because of the Covid19 restrictions. All Fire Chiefs expressed their appreciation to the Board.

2.) Capital Reserve Funds & Approved Apparatus Purchases

Chief Leonard reported that the final inspection of Ebenezer's new truck starts 10/08/2020. Hopefully, by the end of the month, the truck should be in PA.

3.) IamResponding Software and Shared Data Plan for iPads

The Fire Chiefs reported that the software is still working out well. Manager Grumbine confirmed that the expense is being taken from the Fire Protection Tax, not the EMA budget.

Discussion was held regarding the VzW shared data plan and a couple of months where they were close to going over the 10 GB. Currently the 10 GB shared data plan is being used, which costs \$46.20 per month plus the four tablets (one for each fire company) at \$10 each (equals \$40.00) bringing the monthly total to \$86.20, with an annual total of \$1,034.40. To increase to 12 GB for the month, annually it would cost \$1,126.80 and to increase to 14 GB for the month, annually it would cost \$1,219.20. Unlimited data would cost \$1,919.52 for the year. It was decided to switch to a 14 GB shared plan, starting immediately. This will give each fire company an extra 1 GB per month. Manager Grumbine agreed to contact the VzW representative tomorrow to upgrade this plan.

4.) Alarms

There were no questions or concerns regarding the false alarms and it was acknowledged that they did not have many so far this year.

5.) RSFC DOA Call

Chief Vragovich and Chief Firestine discussed the call received by Rural Security Fire Company to assist HazMat for a DOA that was in the house along N. 7th Street for several weeks. HazMat has a truck with two assigned workers to handle calls but called for assistance from the Fire Company, not their own department. The Fire Chiefs discussed that they do not believe this should be the type of call that constitutes an emergency call for the Fire Companies and should be handled through HazMat. The HazMat personnel stood outside and left RSFC to pretty much handle the situation. FASP used to handle these types of calls but when HazMat obtained the truck and staffed with employees, they no longer perform this service. The Fire Chiefs requested the Board send a letter to the County Commissioners, DES, the HazMat Chief, and the County Coroner stating that these types of calls not be considered an emergency and that our Fire Departments will not respond. If the person is alive and they need a lift assist they will certainly respond, but not for a DOA, which is not an emergency call for them.

6.) Cares Application/Awards

Glenn Lebanon Fire Company (\$15,000) & Weavertown Fire Company (\$25,000) both applied during the first round and were awarded grants. The next round for the CARES application will open on October 15th, with a deadline of October 30th. All Fire Companies discussed this at a meeting last evening and are planning on applying this round.

7.) FEMA Grant

A second opportunity for the volunteer fire companies to apply for the FEMA Grant was discussed. It was discussed that next year's State Grant application is not available yet.

8.) IPMC & Authorization to Require Fire Safety

Chief Steiner reviewed the incident that occurred at Walmart in the early morning hours of Saturday, August 22, 2020. The Fire Company was dispatched for an automatic fire alarm due to water flow at 1:14 a.m. and was on the scene until about 2:30 a.m. The construction company was grinding the floors in the restroom in the rear of the store. The grinder was powered by propane and the exhaust created enough heat to trip a sprinkler head, causing water to flow. Due to a malfunctioning valve, they could not isolate the sprinkler riser with the activation and had to shut the sprinkler system down for the entire facility. Walmart management was unsuccessful at finding a company to fix the system promptly. Being that the sprinkler is required for that type of facility to operate, he requested the police department to the scene to involve code enforcement. Code Enforcement requested the fire department remain on scene until the sprinkler contractor arrived. As commanding officer, Chief Steiner refused to have volunteers sit for hours waiting for the arrival of an unknown time and company to respond. Walmart agreed to post an employee to do a "fire watch" until the sprinkler system was back in service. He later stopped by this facility on his way to work at 7:00 a.m. A sprinkler contractor had just arrived on the scene and told him they were there to get the sprinkler system back in service. Chief Steiner highly recommends that someone follow up with Walmart to make sure the corrections were made.

Chief Steiner had several questions regarding what fire codes the Township has adopted and if, as the Fire Chief, does he have the authority to tell a facility what needs to be corrected and order evacuation, or must that come from the Code Enforcement Officer? He is asking for a more defined line of where the fire department leaves an incident and Code Enforcement takes over. He is not comfortable leaving the scene of an incident knowing that what he is walking away from is not correct and no one is enforcing that the issues are being corrected promptly.

The Fire Chiefs discussed the "Protocol" that they received about two years ago. There is no letterhead to know where it came from, no signature, nor date. Is it the current Code Enforcement Protocol to follow? They presume it came from the Police Department, which is why Chief Steiner stated he contacted the on-duty police officer for the Walmart incident, so he would reach out to the Code Enforcement Officer. Can the Fire Chiefs contact the Code Enforcement Officer directly when they are at an incident or must they contact the on-duty police officer to make that call?

9.) Worker's Comp

By law, fire police personnel are covered under the Fire Departments for worker's comp insurance even though they report to the Police Chief. Discussion was held about coordinating Fire Police appointments and confirmation each year, when updating the roster, to confirm that they are indeed a member of a fire company. They must be members of a fire department to be fire police.

Chief Firestine questioned if there was ever a solution made for Drug and Alcohol testing after hours. Lori Books stated that she was told they can still go to the hospital and request the test. Chief Firestine stated he had two firemen that were denied testing when going to the hospital earlier this year, as they did not have the staffing to complete the urinalysis. Lori agreed to investigate this item again and send out the information when received. She will also send out the required form to be taken along to the testing site.

10.) 2021 Budget

The 2021 budget for the 4 Township fire companies is the same as 2020. There are no proposed changes to the allocation or other line items. Chief Firestine requested a copy of the budget worksheet since he was participating via ZOOM and not present. Manager Grumbine agreed to forward it to him. Chief Vragovich indicated that the safety program money for 2020 will not be utilized this year for the school district events.

11.) Ebenezer Ladder Truck: Fire Company Members/Staffing

Expenses about the Ladder Truck and the possibility of replacing the Ladder Truck, in the near future, were discussed at length. Chief Leonard stated the 20-yr old truck needed a \$12,000.00 rear suspension rebuild. The cost of repair has skyrocketed because of the discontinuation of the chassis that is no longer being manufactured. This ladder truck only serves, at best, 2/3 of the Township. They do not participate in the Weavertown service area, as that is covered by another fire company. Warehouses are big buildings, but their main issue is water and not necessarily real important to get access to a roof. However, a hotel would be more important to access higher floors to rescue people and access stairways, utility control, etc. A ladder truck needs 6 people for staffing. It could be done with 4 people but really should have 6 to handle all the functions. The hotels are the most use we would have for the ladder truck, as a safety issue. We do have mutual aid companies around us that are doing it but how long until they start charging?

Do we look at utilizing our mutual aid agreements and/or contract with the City or South Lebanon because our fire companies do not have the staffing? We are losing our volunteers and not gaining any new ones to staff the fire trucks. We all need to discuss ways to bring in new volunteers. Discussion was held regarding some of the consolidations taken place in Annville-Cleona, Northern Lebanon School District, etc. South Lebanon also has a "safer grant" for recruitment and retention where they pay a stipend calculated by the number of calls responded to a month by firefighters. However, they are not sure how that is working and if volunteers are just showing up for the stipend and not necessarily an asset for handling the incident because they are not properly trained. Chief Steiner stated they are seeing firefighters leave to become members of the South Lebanon Fire Department because of the stipend and other incentives. They believe this is only a 3-year grant and will need to reapply, if

available. On Weavertown Fire Company boxes, Chief Steiner stated if one of the first alarms fail to respond, he has the City coming to assure something is coming. He is also relying heavily on Hebron and South Lebanon's ladder truck, but as far as his own members, it is not good. It might be good to reach out to the City or others at this point.

Question was raised as to whether the Township could adopt an ordinance for an "impact fee" for fire service, like the Park & Rec fees? Or would the Township be willing to look into billing for incidents? Various thoughts were shared with no specific direction given at this time.

Donald Steiner, Sr. stated years ago he tried getting a DCED Fire Study for the Township but when the Board was ready to approve, other Fire Chiefs recommended that they not move forward with the DCED study. They were concerned they would be told they would have to move their station. He still feels this would be a helpful idea, good or bad, we would have had direction and a recommendation for the future.

With no further business to discuss, meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Cheri F. Grumbine
Township Manager/Secretary