

MINUTES  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
MAY 2, 2016

The Penn Township Public Safety Committee convened on Monday, May 2, 2016 at 7:00 P.M. Present were Chairman Felix and Commissioners Brown, Klunk, Heilman, and Van de Castle. Also present were Township Manager Rodgers, Police Chief Laughlin, Fire Chief Cromer, and Township Secretary Hallett. The following items were discussed:

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Commissioner Felix announced that an executive session to discuss personnel would be held following the Finance Committee meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the April 4, 2016 Public Safety Committee meeting were approved as submitted.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS: Steve Hartlaub, 1915 Youngs Road, was present to discuss the speed limit on Youngs Road. Mr. Hartlaub stated six vehicles have run through his yard in the past three months. On May 1, 2016 at 8:00 P.M. a gentleman ran off the road, hit a railroad tie, and knocked out six of his cypress trees. It appears people are taking a short cut from Broadway to the Industrial Park to avoid the stop light at Broadway and Eisenhower. Mr. Hartlaub is afraid someone is going to get killed on the sharp curve and is asking the Committee if anything can be done about speed enforcement. Commissioner Felix asked if the problem is primarily in the morning and Mr. Hartlaub said it's all day but seems to be worst between 2:30 P.M. and 6:00 P.M. Chief Laughlin reported that this area is already on the enforcement schedule and the speed limit is twenty-five miles per hour. It's a hard bend to the right and ramps directly into Mr. Hartlaub's property.

Mr. Hartlaub said there are no Curve markings on the road. Chief Laughlin said there was a curve sign at the top of the hill and it has been removed if it's no longer there. Commissioner Brown asked if Engineer Bortner could take a look at the situation. He asked if rumble strips would be an option. Mr. Hartlaub mentioned that people are hydroplaning when the roadway is wet. Commissioner Felix said the Committee will take a look at it to see what can be done.

Dr. Barb Rupp, Superintendent of South Western School District, thanked the Committee for taking the time to hear her speak on the safety of the SWSD students. She stated that in January of 2015 the school district was notified that they would need to give additional financial support towards having a Penn Township Police Officer in the schools. After speaking with Manheim Township and West Manheim Township they were not able to raise the necessary funds. A letter was sent to the Township offering a graduated payment option for increasing the contribution each year. After being notified that the officer would not be in the school after the current school year, SWSD offered to cover whatever costs were necessary. Dr. Rupp asked the Committee to consider keeping an officer in the school. She appreciates the collaboration and relationship with Officer Carbaugh and would like it to continue. Dr. Rupp shared the ways that the

officer has been a great resource and has offered comfort and assurance to teachers and parents. She reiterated that it's not her intent to tell the Committee what to do but is respectfully asking that an officer be sent to the school two days a week with the school district covering all salary obligations.

Dale Myers, President of the South Western School Board, thanked the Committee for allowing him to speak on behalf of the Board. Mr. Myers asked not only to maintain Officer Carbaugh at the current level of participation but to increase the police presence at the schools. He will also be asking Manheim Township and West Manheim Township for the same support. Mr. Myers shared statistics on the number of students that are served by the SWSD. He understands the financial constraints of the Township and is merely requesting that the goals and priorities for the utilization of police manpower be reviewed and a reallocation of hours be considered. He would like to work with the Township to find opportunities to further involve the police in school activities. Mr. Myers thanked the Township for all that has been done for the schools.

Jay Clouspy, South Western School Board member, stated that he's in a unique situation as a firefighter. He has been hearing more and more about community policing and being proactive particularly since the events of September 11, 2001. He is asking the Township to continue the relationship because it works well for the whole community especially the children.

Dr. Daniel Hartman, Principal at Emory H. Markle Intermediate School, shared examples of how Officer Carbaugh has benefited the students at his school. Specifically he has been very helpful in diffusing situations particularly with social media problems.

Dr. Judy Barryman, Principal at South Western High School, shared examples of how Officer Carbaugh has benefited the students at her school. She has appreciated the communication aspect of having an officer in the school. Officer Carbaugh has always been available to talk administration through situations and concerns. She said the police mentoring program has been phenomenal for the students.

Doug Klunk, parent of a South Western High School student, said they first met Officer Carbaugh at Park Hills Elementary during a finger printing event. He talked about the relationship that he's seen Officer Carbaugh develop with those students over the years and the difference it makes.

Pat Loss, South Western School District mentor, said she has known Officer Carbaugh for many years. She has been mentoring students at SWSD for eighteen years. Ms. Loss shared information about the way school has changed over the years and how it affects the students. She shared how Officer Carbaugh has helped with some of the negative situations students are faced with. She also shared information and statistics from the Youth Aid Panel.

Commissioner Felix stated that current staffing does not allow for an officer to spend time at the school. The Township is still willing to send officers to the school to speak with students and work with the school from time to time. Commissioner Heilman shared that the decision to remove an officer from the school was not made arbitrarily. He said there will be continuous patrolling particularly during the opening and closing of the school day. Commissioner Heilman pointed out that both Manheim Township and West Manheim Township are responsible for an officer in one elementary school each whereas Penn Township is responsible for the high school, intermediate school, and

two elementary schools accounting for 65-70% of the SWSD school population. In addition to this the Penn Township Police Department is responsible for the safety of over fifteen thousand six hundred residents as well as those travelling through and working in the Township on a daily basis. Dr. Rupp responded that having an officer in the schools is an important preventative measure to deter future problems with the students when they are adults.

Mr. Clouspy asked questions about the hiring process for new officers and it was discussed. Mr. Clouspy asked that the Committee take in to consideration that the school district is willing to cover all costs associated with having an officer in the school. Commissioner Felix responded that this was not merely a financial decision.

Chief Laughlin stated that he does not want to lose the relationship with SWSD. He would like to meet with Dr. Rupp at another time to work through these changes. Dr. Rupp asked if this can be reconsidered again at a later date. Commissioner Felix said it will be at least one year before this can be reconsidered and he cannot commit future Boards to anything but he does believe the Board will always be open to discussion. He asked that the line of communication be kept open.

The Public Safety Committee Chairman recessed the meeting for ten minutes and resumed at 7:51 P.M.

GOLD'S GYM 5K: Chief Laughlin read a letter dated April 24, 2016 from Gold's Gym concerning their annual 5K run, benefitting the American Red Cross, to be held August 27, 2016. They will be following the same route as past 5K's. This event is to benefit the American Red Cross. Chief Laughlin will send his standard letter.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY RELAY FOR LIFE: Chief Laughlin read a letter dated April 21, 2016 from the American Cancer Society concerning the Relay for Life to be held June 25, 2016. They would like to solicit donations at intersections. Chief Laughlin has spoken with them in the past about safety concerns with people collecting in the roadways. He suggested they speak to property owners about standing off the road. Chief Laughlin stated that he heard on the news recently that Penn State Thon has decided not to allow collecting in the streets anymore. The committee discussed the safety issues and asked Chief Laughlin to share their concerns with Jenna Klunk of the American Cancer Society.

MUSTANG HEIGHTS TRAFFIC STUDY: Chief Laughlin reported that he has reviewed Assistant to the Engineer Garrett's traffic studies in Mustang Heights and agrees with the recommendations. Chief Laughlin noted that there is still a pine tree at the corner of Sonny Street and Nancy Street. Manager Rodgers will send a letter to the property owner that the tree must be removed by May 30, 2016.

FIRE CONSOLIDATION STEERING COMMITTEE UPDATE: Commissioner Klunk reported that there was a public meeting on April 28, 2016 to discuss the possible consolidation/merger of the fire departments. The initial draft agreement was reviewed at the meeting. Changes will need to be made to the draft agreement and it will be finalized once all parties decide whether or not to participate. Commissioner Brown

asked if the end of June is enough time to finalize the draft. Commissioner Klunk responded that all parties will decide on whether or not to participate by the end of June but the final agreement will not be prepared and finalized before the Fall.

Commissioner Brown asked if seven years is excessive for determining if the consolidation/merger will work. Manager Rodgers pointed out that it will not be operational from day one, so there may only be four or five years of consolidation after the agreement is signed. Commissioner Klunk said it may be more like six years. The Committee discussed the options and recommended moving forward with drafting a final agreement to be considered for adoption at a later date by ordinance.

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE: Commissioner Heilman asked to clarify the plans for the Memorial Day Parade. Commissioner Van de Castle will ride in the parade with Commissioner Heilman if his son is available to ride as well. The committee discussed the details.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela M. Hallett  
Township Secretary