

Lower Macungie Township Public Safety Commission

Minutes April 20, 2010

Attending: John Tunney, Richard Murphy, Julie Timmcke, George Calderelli, Scott Forbes, Joseph Ludrof, Richard Kipp,
Absent: Ron Clever

PSC President John Tunney opened the meeting at 7:10PM

1. Finalize recommendation of the Hunting Issue on Lower Macungie Township property

John Tunney stated that a goal for tonight's meeting was to finalize a recommendation to LMT regarding hunting on township owned property. The many issues associated with this topic have been discussed at length in previous meetings so John polled each PSC member for their position on the subject. The majority of the board members agree that the use of firearms on township property is a safety issue and recognize that the enforcement of an ordinance banning the use of firearms could be problematic for the township. However, the township owned open space (as pictured on a map provided by Keystone Engineering) that is not surrounded by buildings and structures, most of those buildings and structures being homes, is very small and getting smaller and the safety of those residents outweighs the enforcement issue. All members agree that Archery hunting should be allowed and a majority agree that trapping should be allowed. All members agree that more education is necessary to let the public know what the game commission rules are and how they are enforced and what a resident should do if they see a violation.

A motion was made by Richard Kipp to recommend that the township adopt an ordinance banning the use of firearms on township owned property. Richard read a sample ordinance that the township could adopt. Seconded by Julie Timmcke. Further discussion amended the sample ordinance to replace bow-hunting with Archery and specify township owner property. President Tunney was asked to check with township solicitor to see if specific language would be needed to allowed township sponsored controlled hunts to manage the wildlife population so the township is not in violation of their own ordinance. Motion approved. President Tunney will write up the recommendation to be presented to the board of commissioners along with the sample ordinance and the maps.

2. Progress reports by LMT Public Safety Commission members regarding the Police Protection Contingency Study.

Joe Ludrof reported on his follow up to determining how safe Lower Macungie Township is. He reported:

- The crime report doesn't break out township
- District Attorney Martin's opinion is that the township is a safe place
- State Police reports specific to the township indicated the township is a safe place
- Senator Browne's office will keep tabs on the Senate Bill regarding the issue of paying for state police protection and Joe will keep in touch with them

Richard Kipp reported that he spoke to Jim Straiter, Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and he said that the HB on paying for state police protection is opposed by the many rural communities in Pennsylvania and is not moving for now. Richard also reported that the situation could change because state police budgets are very tight right now and many troopers are expected to retire in June, 2010. Richard also reported back on his investigation of grant opportunities for the purpose of conducting a needs assessment in the township. Richard made connections with US Dept. of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and the DOJ Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). All agencies and organizations reported that funding would not be available for such a study in Lower Macungie Township. Richard is still waiting for information from the PA Dept. of Economic Development but it appears the township would need to fund such a study on it's own. John Tunney will work with some existing studies from other communities to help us formulate the options and cost estimates for various types of police protection. Richard will look for additional similar studies to help in that effort.

Joe Ludrof will ask DA Martin to present at a summer meeting.

3. Other

Joe Ludrof agreed to review development plans for:

Stone Hill Station

Dries Sketch Plan

Spencer Davis Sketch Plan

Stone Hill Station Major Subdivision

Danweber Rezoning Request

Roman Catholic Diocese Rezoning Request

4. Old Business

Safety Day was discussed and EMO liaison. Ben Galliardo reported that he met with South Whitehall Township Emergency Management Coordinator to discuss LMT's interest in partnering with South Whitehall, Upper Macungie and North Whitehall in a summer Safety Expo held at the PA Trade Hall. Ben reported that both Upper Macungie and North Whitehall voted against inviting LMT to participate.

John Tunney reported that the LMT EMO will be doing small educational programs for sheltering in place. A recent tabletop exercise demonstrated that the EMO does not have the manpower to reach all areas of the township in the event of a weather emergency and these education programs are designed to teach people what to do right where they are in case of such emergencies. These programs will be held at the Library, the township Pool, with homeowner's associations and in conjunction with the youth association.

5. New Business

Richard Kipp asked the group to review the form for request for traffic control/signage for discussion at the next meeting.

Joe Ludrof asked if any progress had been made to upgrading the township building entrance. PennDOT has said we can't put signage up to warn people of the entrance. The township has decided to install new lighting but that hasn't been done yet. Commissioner Doug Brown indicated that a potential development plan submitted for the Dries property at the corner of Indian Creek and Brookside could have some potential for improving the entrance to the township with either road widening or traffic signals. However, only a sketch plan has been submitted so that development project is still a long way in the future.

Ben Galliardo suggested we put a question on the website to poll residents on their feelings regarding police protection. The group agreed that a survey is a good idea but wants to do something more scientific and more detailed than the website poll.

John Tunney accepted the resignation of ad hoc member Robert Sharpe.

John Tunney adjourned the meeting at 9:00 PM