



Douglas Township, Montgomery County

1320 EAST PHILADELPHIA AVENUE • P.O. BOX 297 • GILBERTSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA 19525-0297
PHONE 610-367-6062 • FAX 610-367-7124
www.douglasstownship.org

AGENDA – December 16th, 2024

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Executive Session
4. Minutes of December 2nd, 2024 Board of Supervisors Meeting
 - a. Additions, corrections, motion for approval
 - b. Agenda for December 16th, 2024 – additions, corrections, motion for approval.
5. Engineering Report – Khal Hassan
 - a. Pickleball/Tennis Court Renovation – approval for payment #4 (\$11,563.05)
6. Treasurers Report – Cynthia O'Donnell
 - a. 2024 Budget Amendment
 - b. Authorization to pay the bills (BOS Approval Required)
 - c. Adoption of 2025 Budget (\$5,606,715.76)
 - d. Resolution # 12162024-01 – 2025 Tax Millage (2.6mil real estate, .5mil EMS, .4mil fire tax)
7. Solicitor Report – Wendy Mckenna, Esq.
 - a. Resolution # 12162024-02 – Annual tax of .5mills for EMS Appropriation Tax
8. Police Department Report – Chief Robert Evans
 - a. Monthly Report
 - b. Authorization to purchase new A.E.D. – Reimbursable grant from Lehigh Valley Hospital
9. Emergency Services Reports
 - a. Gilbertsville Fire and Rescue Monthly Report
 - b. Gilbertsville Area Community Ambulance Monthly Report
 - c. Bally Community Ambulance Monthly Report
 - d. Emergency Services Board Meeting Update – 12/9/2024

10. Manager's Report – Manager Andrew Duncan
 - a. Schedule of Meetings
 1. Monday 1/6/2025 BOS Agenda Meeting @6:30pm, BOS Reorganization Meeting @ 7pm
 2. Wednesday 1/7/2025 Board of Auditors will meet @ 6:00PM
 3. Thursday 1/9/2025 Planning Agency Reorganization @ 7pm, Workshop @ 6pm
 - b. 2025 Holiday Schedule and Public Meeting Schedule (BOS Approval & Authorization to Advertise)

11. Old Business / New Business
 - a. Any member of the public that is interested in serving on the various Township Boards, Agencies, or Committees, please submit a letter of interest and resume to Township Manager Andrew Duncan.
 - b. Ambulance RFP
 - c. Fair Funding Model - EMS
 - d. Appointment to Board of Auditors – fulfilling remaining term of Rebecca Zern (12/31/2027)

12. Public Comment

13. Adjournment

Next Meeting Reorganization January 6th, 2025 @ 7pm

The meeting of the Douglass Township Board of Supervisors was called to order at 7:04P.M. Attending were Chairman Josh Stouch, Vice-Chair Sara Carpenter, Supervisor Don Bergstresser, Solicitor Wendy McKenna, Manager Andrew Duncan, Khal Hassan of Pennoni & Associates, Chief Evans, Cynthia O'Donnell, Mike Heydt, McKenna Powanda, and approximately 15 residents/developers. A reporter was present.

Mr. Stouch led in the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that there was an Executive Session held this evening from approximately 6:00pm to 6:30pm involving personnel and police department matters. No votes or decisions were given.

Mr. Stouch asked if there were any additions, corrections, or comments to the minutes of the December 2nd, 2024 Board of Supervisors Meeting, none were given.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Ms. Carpenter to approve the minutes of the December 2nd, 2024 Board of Supervisors Meeting. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

Mr. Stouch asked if there were any questions, comments, or corrections to the December 16th, 2024 Board of Supervisors Agenda, Mr. Stouch motioned to add 11d. under Old Business/New Business for the appointment of an Auditor, seconded by Mr. Bergstresser. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Ms. Carpenter to approve the December 16th, 2024 Board of Supervisors Agenda with the changes. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

Engineering Report – Khal Hassan

Pickleball/Tennis Court Renovation – approval for payment #4 (\$11,563.05) – Mr. Hassan stated that this release would possibly be ready for release in January. The Board tabled the release for January 6th, 2025.

Treasurer's Report – Cynthia O'Donnell

2024 Budget Amendment #5 – Ms. O'Donnell asked for approval to transfer \$353,000 from the ARPA Fund to the Capital Reserve Fund.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Ms. Carpenter to approve Budget Amendment #5 to transfer \$353,000 from ARPA Fund to the Capital Reserve Fund. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

The unpaid bills as of December 16th, 2024 amount to \$177,415.17. Ms. O'Donnell gave a brief overview of some of the unusual bills. No questions were given on the bills.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Mr. Bergstresser to authorize payment of the Unpaid Bills as of December 16th, 2024 in the amount of \$177,415.17. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

Ms. O'Donnell asked for authorization to pay any additional bills for healthcare for the remaining of the year.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Ms. Carpenter to authorize payment of additional healthcare bills for the remainder of the year. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

Adoption of 2025 Budget (\$5,606,715.76) – Approval needed for adoption of the 2025 Budget in the amount of \$5,606,715.76.

A motion was made by Mr. Bergstresser, seconded by Ms. Carpenter for Adoption of the 2025 Budget in the amount of \$5,606,715.76. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

Resolution #12162024-01 – Tax Millage (2.6mil real estate, .5mil EMS, and .4mil fire tax) there are no increases in taxes, they are remaining the same as last year.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Ms. Carpenter to adopt Resolution #12162024-01 for the 2025 Tax Millage (2.6 mil Real Estate, .5mil EMS, .4mil Fire Tax). Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Mr. Bergstresser to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

Solicitor Report – Wendy McKenna, Esq.

Resolution #12162024-02 Annual tax of .5mills for EMS Appropriation Tax – Ms. McKenna presented Resolution #12162024-02 which is the annual ax of .5 mills for the EMS Appropriation Tax. Ms. McKenna explained that this Resolution provides new procedures for distribution of the Douglass Township EMS Taxes that are collected. This resolution now allows the Board of Supervisors to recognize any emergency medical service provider who meets the minimum standards to provide medical care to the residents, visitors, and businesses of Douglass Township. Mr. Duncan was asked to give the board of Supervisors an overview of the Ambulance RFP and the EMS Fair Funding Model that were listed under the old business section of the agenda because it is somewhat related to this resolution.

Ambulance RFP – Mr. Duncan stated that there were two responses received by the Township on November 14th, 2024. Tower Direct and Boyertown Ambulance submitted responses. Boyertown Ambulance submitted a letter stating that their business model currently could not support the requested items in the RFP but thanked the Township for the opportunity to be considered. Tower Direct submitted a full RFP package. They were able to meet all expectations of the RFP. The cost to Douglass Township would be \$400,000.00 for the first year with a 5% increase each year thereafter to the third year of the contract. In addition, Tower Direct would require a facility for the Ambulance to be housed. This ambulance is still required to respond to mutual aid calls if dispatched per the Department of Health Licensure. So, the Township is still paying the bulk of the freight for ambulance services in other Townships. While this guarantees ambulance coverage in the Township, it now changes the landscape of EMS services in the region. This could potentially put Gilbertsville Ambulance out of business, and also take first due territory from Bally Ambulance in the northern section of the Township. Both would have negative consequences for neighboring EMS agencies. In addition, we have a bunch of unknowns at the end of a three-year contact. Will costs remain the same, or will they double. There is no way of knowing.

Fair Funding Model – EMS – The Emergency Services Board and the Board of Supervisors have been talking about creating a fair funding model for model for EMS in Douglass Township for most of 2024. Initially, when the EMS tax was created by Resolution, Gilbertsville Ambulance was the only recognized EMS provider in the Township. At that time, it was the intention of the Township to stabilize and sustain an existing failing EMS entity in the Township to avoid a catastrophic failure and burden to other EMS agencies in the region. Bally Ambulance also has a large portion of first due coverage area in Douglass Township and currently does not receive any EMS Tax funding from the municipality. The fair funding model would recognize any ambulance company that responds into Douglass Township and provides a service to our residents. This model would reimburse an ambulance company for the number of calls that they responded to in Douglass Township for a calendar year. These calculations would have to be completed utilizing the year's responses into the municipality. This would fairly and equally disburse EMS tax monies to the ambulances that are providing service. This program will encourage our first due ambulance entities to make sure that their truck is fully staffed and on status at all times. This will make sure that an ambulance that arrives on location and provides care to a resident will be reimbursed and guarantees a return on investment for readiness on each and every call that they respond to. And finally, this program makes sure that the taxpayers in Douglass Township are only paying for EMS services that are provided within our municipal boundaries and not for other municipalities that do not pay their fair share. Mr. Stouch thanked Mr. Duncan for the explanation of each option. Mr. Stouch stated that it sounds like at this time,

the fair funding model is the way to go. He asked the other board members if they had any questions or comments, none were given.

A motion was made by Ms. Carpenter, seconded by Mr. Bergstresser to adopt Resolution #12162024-02. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye. Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

Mr. Gorr, a member of GACAS interrupted Mr. Stouch and asked if any public comment was going to be allowed. Mr. Gorr felt this resolution was unfair because they wouldn't get paid for lift assists or backup calls, which are currently not charged, while they would miss out on the payable calls for service. Mr. Stouch reminded Mr. Gorr that he is not a Township resident and interrupting a Board of Supervisors meeting will not be tolerated. Mr. Stouch advised comments are typically made during public comment but Mr. Stouch allowed Mr. Gorr to continue. Mr. Gorr asked Mr. Stouch if all entities receiving funds will have to abide by the same financial reporting rules as GACAS. Mr. Stouch confirmed this and said that Bally Ambulance uses the same model & provides all the information needed without question. GACAS's financial reports have not been forthcoming, this information is required by law. Mr. Gorr asked how would we be compensated for the free services that we give the Township. Mr. Stouch told GACAS to bill for every call they are dispatched to, regardless of the kind of call. Mr. Stouch stated that the entity pushed out the GACAS board members that were in place and cared about the commitment to the community, now current members either show up late or don't show up at all for the scheduled meetings. Mr. Stouch told GACAS to look at their business model to see how they could recoup any potential lost income. Mr. Gorr said we don't have a business model, we don't even know what will happen in 2025. Mr. Stouch said the manager & treasurer tried to reach out to GACAS multiple times and no one responds. Mr. Doucette, a GACAS Board member, said factored in the equation is we are being called into outside municipalities because their EMS services are covering somewhere else, now you are issuing payment to other EMS services from outside the Township but we don't get paid from other municipalities. Lack of service to Douglass Township is because we are covering other areas. Mr. Stouch said you were asked to go to other municipalities and request funding from them. Mr. Doucette said that we had those conversations and funding is better than it was. Mr. Stouch commented that we are responsible to make funding decisions for EMS coverage for our residents. Mr. Landis, GACAS Board President, asked if you would be reimbursing the calls for service at the end of each year? Mr. Stouch said that we are looking at two disbursements per year due to needing reports from Montgomery County. Mr. Gorr asked what would each call be reimbursed? Mr. Stouch said we don't have the numbers yet but will be able to calculate this better at the end of the year. Mr. Gorr thanked the Board. Mr. Stouch commented that if you are dispatched as standby service he would think that would be a paid service, he advised to put arrivals on the reports. Mr. Stouch asked the members to please show up for the ESB Meetings. Mr. Groff said we have a duty, as Bally Ambulance, to respond to dispatches unfortunately not every municipality reimburses for dispatches. Mr. Landis thanked the Board for their funding.

Police Department Report – Chief Robert Evans

November 2024 Police Statistics: 673 calls for service, 5 reportable accidents, 12 non-reportable accidents, 12 criminal investigations, 4 criminal arrests, 84 traffic citations, and 3 non-traffic citations. Douglass Township Police Department (DTPD) received a grant opportunity to purchase a new Lifepak 1000 AED for our fleet. This grant is being provided to us by Lehigh Valley Health Network in the amount of \$3,103.11, we would need to purchase it and this would be non-budgeted, and then get reimbursed by LVHN. Chief Evans asked for authorization to purchase a new AED for \$3,103.11, which would be a reimbursable grant from LVHN.

A motion was made by Ms. Carpenter, seconded by Mr. Bergstresser to authorize the purchase of one AED which would be a reimbursable grant from LVHN in the amount of \$3,103.11. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

DTPD received a grant in the amount of \$30,200.00 through the PADCED to cover the purchase cost of new less-lethal Taser 7's and 2 new hand-held Motorola police radios. Chief Evans wished everyone a happy and safe holiday.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Ms. Carpenter to accept the Police Department Report as presented. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

Emergency Services Report

Copies of the EMS Reports are available in the lobby.

Manager's Report – Andrew Duncan

a. Schedule of Meetings:

1. Monday January 6th, 2025 BOS Agenda Meeting @ 6:30pm, BOS Reorganization Meeting @ 7pm.
2. Wednesday January 7th, 2025 Board of Auditors will meet @ 6:00pm
3. Thursday, January 9th, 2025 P/A Reorganization Meeting @ 7pm, **Workshop @ 6pm**

b. 2025 Holiday Schedule and Public Meeting Schedule (BOS Approval & Authorization to Advertise).

A motion was made by Ms. Carpenter, seconded by Mr. Stouch to approve the 2025 Holiday Schedule and Public Meeting Schedule & authorization for advertisement. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Mr. Bergstresser to accept the Manager's Report as presented. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

Old Business/New Business

- a. Any member of the public that is interested is serving on the various Township Boards, Agencies, or Committees, please submit a letter of interest and resume to Township Manager Andrew Duncan.
- b. Ambulance RFP – (discussed under Solicitor's Report)
- c. Fair Funding Model – EMS – (discussed under Solicitor's Report)
- d. Appointment of Auditor – Mr. Stouch announced that Mr. Updegrave submitted a letter of interest in serving on a Board or Committee and he asked Mr. Updegrave if he would be interested in the appointment to the Board of Auditors, Mr. Updegrave agreed.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Ms. Carpenter to appoint Roger Updegrave to the Board of Auditors to fulfill the remaining term of Rebecca Zern ending 12/31/2027. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

Public Comment

Fire Marshal Rick Smith announced that the burn ban has been lifted and stated that there were only 2 incidents during the burn ban. Mr. Stouch thanked the Township Staff for the many years of service and also thanked the volunteers, professional staff, BOS, and Chief Evans.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Mr. Bergstresser to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm. Bergstresser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Carpenter-Aye. Motion passed.

The next Board of Supervisor's Meeting (Reorganization) will be Monday, January 6th, 2025 @ 7 pm

Respectfully submitted by,
Marcy Meitzler