

**LONDON GROVE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MEETING MINUTES
September 14, 2022 – 5:30 P.M.
Special Meeting
2023 Budget**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Stephen Zurl
David Connors
Lee Irwin
Christina Fanning
Kevin Runey

STAFF PRESENT:

Ken Battin, Township Manager
Robert Weer, Assist. Twp. Manager
Dawn Maciejczyk, Township Secretary
Shane Kinsey, Director of Public Works
Latta White, Building Code Official
Tim Shannon, Fire Marshal
0 Audience Members

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Zurl called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Zurl called for Public Comment on agenda items. There was none.

II. 2023 Budget Discussion

Mr. Zurl stated that the Board has been presented a very conservative 2023 budget. Mr. Battin stated that everyone did a great job on keeping their budgeted areas to the minimum. There is however a \$600,000 deficit. If we need to cut areas it will cause pain. Mr. Zurl explained that the last two years the Township reabsorbed the Open Space tax to cut the deficit and we agreed to return that to them this year. Fire and EMS hit us hard this year. Mr. Battin explained that in order to keep the expectation of services that the residents have come to expect it is going to be challenging the next couple of years. We need to keep funding the roads and the bridges otherwise we will fall behind. Mr. Zurl stated yes, our biggest responsibility is the Township infrastructure.

Mr. Zurl asked to hear from the Department heads starting with the Public Works Department. Mr. Kinsey stated that this year Public Works took a little bit of a hit with the budget. We are still on track but we need to continue to fund the road fund and the bridge fund. If we start pushing projects to the next year, then the next year, we are going to fall into a cycle of not repairing the roads but needing to repave the entire road which will cost more in the long run. We are right on the line for repairing the roads right now with maintenance and reconstructing the roads. Mr. Connors stated we need to get back on track at some point.

Mr. White, Building Code Official stated that the Code Department is revenue neutral. We have the fee schedule which we follow. We are looking at less revenue this year, all the developments have finished. So things are slowing down.

Mr. Shannon, Fire Marshal stated that the Fire Marshal expenses are up this year due to outfitting the vehicle with lights and equipment.

Mr. Zurl stated we are committed to returning the Open Space Tax this year so where do we make up this revenue. Mr. Connors stated there are a couple of things we could do. We could implement an Emergency Services Tax. We could raise the Earned Income Tax a quarter of a percent, or we could raise the Real Estate Tax. Personally I feel our best bet was the Open Space Tax.

Mr. Battin stated so at this time we are giving back the Open Space for 2023 and coming up with a plan. This year we are raising the Earned Income Tax a quarter of a percent.

Mr. Connors stated back to the Fire and EMS Services, this year they stated they need another million, but there is no 0 budgeting happening. They are just pulling a number out of the air. If they can justify their numbers to us then we will work with you. If they are just grabbing numbers that doesn't work for us. There might come a time where we need to start micro-managing them. Mr. Irwin stated I'm not seeing any belt tighten down there like our residents and the Township is doing. Mr. Connors stated I suggest that we pay them there ask this year and then next year say no more. Mrs. Fanning stated, why pay the ask this year. We need to pay what we paid last year and then have them justify to us why they need the increase. Mr. Connors stated we should try to set a meeting with the fire company and have a talk to see why the increase. Where is there justification? Mr. Irwin stated I would like to know what is driving the increase. The number of fires has decreased. Mr. Weer stated when our Fire Marshal shows on scene he is being disrespected. He is supposed to be the lead. It's disrespecting the position not just the person.

Mr. Battin stated so we want to meet with Open Space, meet with the Fire Department and make a decision on the Earned Income Tax. Mr. Connors and Mr. Irwin stated they will volunteer to meet with the Fire Department. The Board agreed that in 2023 the Open Space tax is going back to Open Space with the Township looking at it and the Earned Income Tax will increase this year a quarter percent. Mr. Runey stated I do not support the tax increase.

Mr. Connors made a motion to increase the Earned Income Tax a quarter percent pending Mr. Runey's review of the budget to see if there is anything else we can do in a one week time frame, seconded by Mrs. Fanning and approved by a vote of 4-1. (Mr. Runey voted Nay)

XII. PUBLIC COMMENT NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Zurl called for Public Comment. There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Fanning to adjourn the meeting at 6:53 p.m., seconded by Mr. Runey and approved by a vote of 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Maciejczyk
Township Secretary