

## Buck Creek Township May 14 2024 Board Minutes

All board members present, Andy DeLivron-Chair, Jennifer Fellerman-Secretary, Kenny Simmons-Board Member

In attendance, Nick Baker, Spencer Brown, Micki Simunek , Brandon Wilch

Called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm - Andy DeLivron. Meeting closed by Andy Delivron-8:15 pm

Pledge of Allegiance-all

**Motion made:** Approval of April meetings by Kenny, 2nd by Jennifer, the vote taken by Andy-Minutes approved

### Budget Review

Reviewed annual budget amount in the budget for Poor Relief, per Micki is \$25,000 for the year. Bond payment will be paid before the next meeting for \$135,000.

### Donations to the Fire Department

Jersey Mikes opened their doors and a percentage of their sales for the opening weekend went to the Buck Creek Fire Department. Discussion of where the check should be deposited and how it should be spent was discussed. Micki shared there is no account that can accept donations due to the fact there is no 501-C3. The question is whether the check should be deposited into an auxiliary or firefighter account. Currently, the auxiliary account has been a bit questionable by the state board accounts while they have been completing their investigation. Great chance that the account will be closed in the end.

### Bond Proceedings

Micki met with the Financial Consultant for the county, he was asked to oversee the \$700,000 check from the Hancock County RDC and ensure financial books are in good working order, and good decisions with the money are made which will lead to \$700,000 for three years. This led to the decision to talk with Greg Guerrettaz, a certified Municipal advisor.

Micki shared there hasn't been a good financial plan in the past, "the plan is only as good as the implementation of it" Discussed setting aside funds for capital improvement projects such as equipment replacement, generator replacement, resealing of the parking lots, painting, replacing of mattresses, or refrigerators to name a few. First, there needs to be a plan to replace the things that we currently have, and secondly, to try to fold that into the future financial plan going forward.

One way to accomplish the replacement of such items listed above is to replace the current bond with a new one. The tax rate for that bond and the tax obligation to the taxpayers is .3 %

or 3 cents per \$1,000 assessed value. If we look at bonding again we do not want to raise the tax rate at all. How do we preserve the tax rate at the same amount that we currently have in debt, what are the interest rates, what are the fees, and what is the timing, can this be accomplished without affecting the taxpayers? Can we extend the same debt at the same rate and keep the same payment going forward?

Micki shared she would like to enlist the services of Greg to assist with the bond process.

Per Brandon, the goal is not to establish a new bond that would add additional tax. It is effectively carrying the bond we have now and allowing us to get funds that we can carry forward, as a taxpayer, you're not going to see a change what you're going to see is it's consistent and it allows us access to funds, funds for the primary things needed such as replacing the ladder truck and in the future an engine, and ambulance. For the ladder truck, the cost is approximately \$1.85, and a three-year wait on production. 1.5-3 years production time as well for the ambulance and engine, the reason for starting the process now. Continuation of the bond is not the only step being assessed for future funding. Conversations with local developers are already underway. Selling the current ladder truck will also assist in funding the projects in need of completion. The goal is to have much of it done with the funds that we can, it won't have a direct impact on the taxpayers because they won't see an increase, they just won't see the 3 cents fall off because it will carry forward as we go forward with the bond.

To proceed we need to understand person assisting with the bond will get paid out of the bond proceeds, looking for the bond to be a 15-year bond with a possible interest rate of 4.5%, and would like for everything to be completed by November, will need to spend the money within 3 calendar years, will need to advertise two different times about the bond.

**Motion about the Bond.** Kenny presented a motion to move forward with the research and gathering of information concerning the bond. This motion is for research steps only. Jennifer-2nd the motion. Andy reviewed and confirmed the motion. The board approved 3-0 to proceed with gathering information about a future bond.

#### Condolences

Brandon shared about the unfortunate passing of the former Fire Chief Dave Sutherlin. Brandon shared about the great accomplishments Mr. Sutherlin had achieved during his time as the fire chief. Gratitude was shared by the firefighters for his service to the township.

#### Budget for 2025

Brandon has started preliminary budget planning and will have individual meetings with the board members to allow for questions and an understanding of what is projected for the future. Official discussion of the budget is set for October.

### Ladder

Nick Baker presented detailed information about the future ladder truck. The committee of firefighters has assessed and reviewed the best ladder option for the current state of Buck Creek Township but also kept in mind what will be needed in the future. The board reviewed the packet of details presented. A 21-day turnaround was needed for the continuation of ladder truck discussions. With a signed contract, the payment is not due until the truck is delivered. Motion was not made with the continuation of the ladder, however, the board did agree for the firefighter committee to continue with the specs and advancement of the ladder.

### Rescue Truck

Discussion was had about a future medium-sized rescue truck. This idea is down the road and is based on the development of the township.