

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP**

The Board of Commissioners of Springfield Township met in public hearing on Wednesday evening, December 10, 2008 in the Springfield Township Building for the purpose of receiving public comment regarding the preliminary 2009 budget. All members of the Board were present. Mr. Harbison presided.

Mr. Harbison stated that the hearing was being held in compliance with Section 1701 of the Pennsylvania First Class Township Code as last amended. The sole purpose of the budget hearing is for the Board of Commissioners to receive public comment on the 2009 preliminary budget.

It was noted that the legal requirements associated with the public hearing had been met by publishing the public notice in the Springfield Sun issues of November 20 and 27, 2008 and making the budget available for public review in the Township Building and the Library Building.

Mr. Harbison stated that the 2009 preliminary budget of Springfield Township is \$17,257,091. The proposed real estate rate is 3.370 mills, the earned income tax rate is 1.0%, with an annual refuse fee of \$187.20 and \$3.23 per 1000 gallons of wastewater treated for sanitary sewer service.

Marian Coopersmith, 8808 Hawthorn Lane, discussed her general concerns with expenditures at the Black Horse Inn and expressed concern for future fundraising efforts given the current state of the economy. She was also interested in the cost of the architect for the planning study for the municipal campus located on Hawthorn Lane. She noted the ongoing debt incurred by the community related to construction projects of the School District. She pointed to the ongoing increase in the cost of living for the senior citizens. In conclusion, she asked the Board to view the worldwide financial conditions and relate same to the character of the Springfield community when financing the 2009 budget.

General comments received from members of the Board related to the 2009 budget included the following. Ms. Peirce suggested the proposed budget is conservative and does not include any increases in real estate taxes and does not include any plans to add on to the municipal complex.

Mr. Harbison noted that the Board planned to buffer the increase to the sanitary sewer rent that was passed along by the City of Philadelphia. The Board plans to watch closely performance of revenues in early 2009 and they need to react to the ongoing financial conditions.

Mr. Gillies noted that with regard to the sanitary sewer rental, the Township is testing the wastewaters to help understand the ongoing costs associated in this area. He

believes there is still room to reduce or eliminate the projected \$12.00 increase overall to taxpayers, identifying conservative estimates in the business privilege tax and cable TV franchise receipts. Several members of the Board expressed their concerns with assumptions made on receipts given the difficult financial conditions of the world. There was some interest in reducing the projected net increase of \$12 a year with additional sanitary sewer reserve funds or the capital reserve fund.

Ms. Peirce suggested that perhaps the Board of Commissioners should review salary increases for the Township employees. Mr. Berger responded that unlike the private sector with bonuses and wide upward swings in salary increases during good economic times, the municipal employees look for constant modest salary increases.

Motion (Gillies-Dailey) vote 4-3, Harbison, Heller, Peirce opposed, to look for means to offset the net \$12.00 increase in real estate tax and users fees through the use of reserve funds. Mr. Harbison suggested that the 2009 budget is a conservative budget and that 2009 is not necessarily the year to be overly aggressive with anticipated revenues.

There being no further business, the hearing was adjourned at 10:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald E. Berger, Jr.
Secretary