

**TOWNSHIP OF DERRY  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**PUBLIC WORKSHOP**

Tuesday, April 22, 2014  
600 Clearwater Road, Hershey, Pennsylvania 17033

**CALL TO ORDER**

The April 22, 2014 Township of Derry Board of Supervisors Public Workshop was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by John Foley, Jr., Chairman.

**ROLL CALL**

***Supervisors Present:***

Sandy A. Ballard  
Justin C. Engle, Secretary  
John W. Foley, Jr., Chairman  
Marc A. Moyer, Vice-Chairman  
Matthew A. Weir

***Also Present:***

Jill E. Henry, Assistant Township Manager  
James N. Negley, Township Manager/Township Treasurer  
Jon A. Yost, Township Solicitor

***Public Present:*** Scott Stein, Ray Brace, Greg Koussis, Frank Ferguson, Charles H., Dennis Thompson, Rev. James Stough, Stephen G., James Chestnut, Dean Hooper, Kyle Wine, Douglas Beatty, Braeden Stein, Josh Wyse, Fred Solnstein, Pat Leonard, Michael McCoy, Adam Cray, Todd Pagliarulo, Michelle Walls, Steve W., Phil Friedrich, Rich Gamble, Anne Newman, Al Fricke, Elvira Ebling

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**A. Discussion, Presentation and comments on the proposed plans for the Hershey Fire Station Project.**

***Introduction:***

Chairman Foley introduced Greg Koussis, who is with Capital Construction Volunteer Fire Company, and Ray Brace who is working on behalf of the Fire Company as the co-Chair of the Capital Campaign.

**Chairman Foley**

Chairman Foley shared that he is an active member of the Fire Company. In 2008, he served in the capacity as an assistant chief and was tasked with some of the activities related to the fire station. One of them was site selection and assisting with moving the process along.

The Fire Company started this process in 2008 when they sought to acquire the former Township building via the ICDA. That process started with a very simple proposal to acquire ground and subsequently grew after the department was informed of Rep. Payne acquiring a \$1 million grant. Over the last number of years, the Fire Company, the Township Board of Supervisors and the ICDA have had extensive meetings as it relates to this project. Some of the meetings were held in executive session as it related to land acquisition. That land acquisition was not just limited to what is now known as the Cagnoli properties, but that is where it ended up. The current process with the Cagnoli's is still under way with their counsel, ICDA counsel and Solicitor Yost.

It is important to understand there were a number of tasks and direction given to the Fire Company so they could continue ground acquisition and do that in such a way they could protect their interest and the interest of the seller.

### **Ray Brace, Co-chair of the Capital Campaign:**

Mr. Brace distributed a copy of his notes to the Board. He stated that the Hershey Volunteer Fire Company is seeking the Township of Derry's support for four things:

1. The expansion and modernization of the existing fire station
  - Plans were presented at the February 25 Derry Township Supervisors meeting by Rodney Sonderman.
2. The purchase of 31 and 35 West Caracas Avenue (known as the Cagnoli's property)
  - Negotiations have progressed significantly thanks to the efforts of Solicitor Yost and other legal representatives. These purchases need to be completed for both properties.
3. Support for the capital campaign that the Fire Company will conduct
  - There were initial meetings with major contributors well over a year ago.
  - Other capital campaigns have recently been announced that will compete for our contribution dollars (example: Hershey Gardens for a conservatory).
  - Need to begin getting dollars in 2014 – do not want to miss the balance of this year.
  - Initiate the general public capital campaign as soon as possible.
4. Loan guarantee through the ICDA of up to \$3 million dollars.

The Hershey Volunteer Fire Company (HVFC) has funds available for the purchase of a portion of the two Caracas properties of \$325,000. The HVFC has a capital fund of

\$200,000 that can be used immediately on the project. There are two state grants from Rep. Payne's office and if we do not move ahead, those grants will go away.

Dauphin County has made some commitments on an annual basis and we will need the Board's full support to gain those commitments from the County. Until the Township meets with the County and solidifies those commitments, we cannot give out a firm number at this time.

A year ago, we met with the large businesses and received a verbal support from them that would have slightly exceeded a million dollars. They wanted to know if the land acquisition is complete, if the Township is supporting the project, and if the HVFC has a formal campaign. These are all pre-requisites to the HVFC getting hard numbers from the large businesses.

We have not yet made contact with the small businesses, but one of them contacted HVFC to make a \$100,000 commitment. We will be approaching the other small businesses. There are also 11,000 families within the Township that we want to approach for a commitment to the capital campaign.

They can safely count on \$4,875,000 to-date which leaves a \$1,925,000 to raise among the community including small businesses. If we should not get any of that, the HVFC is in the position to borrow that money and support the payments.

Based on the cash flow projects by Capital Construction Management and only taking into account those funds we are certain of, we would need the Township to support us with the ICDA for \$2.55 million. This loan would be secured by all of the HVFC assets that include, land, buildings and the equipment which far exceeds the \$3 million.

Supervisor Ballard said she was happy to see a much lower number for the loan. She thought we would be asked to guarantee \$5 million.

**Public Comment: No one came forward.**

### **Scott Stein, Assistant Chief, Hershey Volunteer Fire Company**

Mr. Stein thanked the Board and the public for the opportunity to present. The members of the Fire Company are anxious to move this project forward after many years of researching. This project is admirable for downtown and it pulls a lot of the community aspect into it and is an asset for the community.

There has been a lot of time spent analyzing what is the best location after looking at various locations. They need to stay in the Village as it offers a lot for the community.

- The members know how to get to the fire station in situations where traffic conditions are gridlock and they find and know the alternative routes to provide the response they need to provide.
- The opportunity to purchase the properties next door and the portion of the triangle to provide them the space they need.

- It gives an opportunity to improve an aging station and make the necessary renovations/addition helps the ability to access equipment easier.

Chairman Foley asked Mr. Stein to comment on feedback from the community regarding remodeling and adding an additional station.

Mr. Stein: There was a significant amount of time looking at the prospect of remodeling or building a new station. They wanted to keep some historical aspect to the building as well as providing the opportunity for new space. Because of the computer software they have they were able to collect data from their response times and evaluate whether they are complying with what NFPA requires. From the current station they meet the NFPA 1720 requirements which require 80% of the time the fire fighters are on the scene responding from dispatch to engaging in firefighting activities within 12 minutes. They achieve that through every portion of the Township well over 80% of the time. They looked at what their responses have been specifically at Waltonville Road/Middletown Road corridor and the proximity to our mutual aid companies. Mutual aid is an agreement where if HVFD calls another fire company, that fire company agrees to provide support if they are able to. Then there is automatic aid agreements which means they will come with HVFC when the dispatch happens with no special request needed. We will get an automatic dispatch from Hummelstown, Middletown, and Lower Swatara Township.

Vice-Chairman Moyer: Are the Hummelstown and Middletown Fire Departments automatic aid responses for the Middletown Road corridor?

Mr. Stein: It depends on the type of call, but generally, Middletown provides an engine or truck rescue for structure fire calls and a tanker comes from Lower Swatara.

Supervisor Engle: The Board and the Township have received letters and questions about another station. What would the challenges be to having another station?

Mr. Stein: The HVFD follows the NFPA standards and that is what ISO looks at. It is not a law, but it is a standard for best practice. ISO looks at 1.5 miles 2.5 miles and 5 miles for responses. The stations that currently exist in this portion of the County include Hershey, Hummelstown, Union Deposit, Middletown and Palmyra. All of the areas in this portion of the county are covered within 5 miles. When you look at 2.5 miles, the southwest area has a little bit of a need, but Hummelstown is only 1.5 miles away. Additionally, looking at where our station needs to be located, you don't want to duplicate services because it really doesn't benefit the community as a whole. The need that exists in the Township would be in the area of the Sand Hills where you would put a station, and then you have to look at your response to it. The challenge is if you put a station in a complete bedroom community, you are going to have a lack of response to that station. You would have to have duplicate equipment and manpower.

Supervisor Engle: The trend in emergency services is consolidation not additional stations. There would be a duplication of resources and equipment which would be added costs.

Mr. Stein: Our ISO rating is a good rating and if you build a second station and pull an engine out of the downtown station, you negatively affect the response and the ISO rating. There are certain fire flows that we have to meet in order to maintain our ISO rating which impacts the insurance rates for homeowners and businesses throughout the Township. If you have to pull apparatus then you are limiting it to certain other areas especially downtown where the manpower tends to be during the day.

Supervisor Engle: Is it fair to say the process by which the HVFC chose to stay at the existing sight was a fire department process?

Mr. Stein: That is correct.

Supervisor Engle: Was there a third party involved?

Mr. Stein: There was not.

Supervisor Engle: The Supervisors did not approve that the Fire Company stay where they are it. It was strictly the Fire Company's decision.

Mr. Stein: The position of the Supervisors has always been that the Fire Company knows best what their needs are and how it needs to operate. They spent a lot of time analyzing the data of one station versus two stations and feel this is the best solution at this point of time.

Supervisor Ballard: The discussion if a regional county-wide police force regionalizing firefighting should happen argues towards having too many small fire companies. If Hummelstown and Hershey became all part of one, they would be a substation within the region.

Mr. Stein: A good example of the regionalization consolidation aspect is Harrisburg. They have 13 fire companies and are down to one department and two houses. Lebanon City did the same thing. Relying upon the other regional partners to assist you is just something that has been going on for many years.

Vice-Chairman Moyer: The Board of Supervisors and other organizations have been attempting to develop a vibrant, walkable, useable, enjoyable downtown. The current footprint of the station would be center stage of downtown. If we are successful to create a vibrant downtown, do you envision a vibrant downtown with a high volume of traffic negatively impacting on the current location of the station in the years to come?

Mr. Stein: The whole vision of a walkable downtown would have people parking their cars and walking resulting in less traffic congestion. There is a prospect of the downtown becoming less traffic clogged and more opened by the changes that are coming. With that being said, it does not matter where you put a fire house at some point you are going to have emergency equipment traveling through some portion of the town at any given time whether it be the fire department responding out of the station or responding through the area to get to another portion of the Township.

Supervisor Engle: How many calls involve sirens and lights?

Mr. Stein: A Class 1 call which is emergency lights and sirens through Chocolate Avenue area is estimated at 20 to 25% of the calls. 70% of the time the calls are canceled because they have people on scene to check it out and clear it. Because of where the fire station is located they can get to the north part of the Township – Hersheypark Drive – multiple ways quickly, to the eastern portion quickly, and then to the southern portion of the Township and Conewago in a timely fashion. If the flow through town east and west ever happens that has been talked about, it will help with the calls.

**Chairman Foley opened this up to the public for questions.**

**Rich Gamble, 39 Hockersville Road** – Mr. Gamble mentioned that fire fighters leave their homes and go directly to a fire. Is that counted as response time?

Mr. Stein: It is not.

Mr. Gamble: Are they counting on Palmyra or Hummelstown when on scene as part of HVFD response time?

Mr. Stein: No. All the data is based upon response of HVFD apparatus.

Mr. Gamble: As we have grown, the study highly recommended another station. With the redevelopment of downtown he sees an increase with traffic because we want the people to stop in town. With the different shifts at Reese's there is a great deal of traffic at different times. More and more people are learning the shortcuts and there are still traffic jams and he questions that this would not be a problem. His concern is why we spent the money to do an extensive study and not act upon it. What impact are we putting on Hummelstown? Do they have the funds and equipment to help or are we depleting their needs? The purpose of fire station is the safety of the community, not a tourist attraction.

Chairman Foley: The station was designed as part of the downtown redevelopment, but that was not the primary purpose. Their current location is on the corner of Chocolate Avenue and Cocoa. It is a solid brick building and it is historic that we want to maintain which is part of the redevelopment of the fire department.

The County has a mutual aid agreement which encompasses all the municipalities and all the different fire companies whether there is one department in the municipality or multiple. As Mr. Stein indicated there are automatic aid and mutual aid. Our relationship with Hummelstown has been exceptional. Mutual aid is just that. Monday night there was a fire in Hummelstown and there were 26 members of the HVFD there along with their apparatus. When there is a fire instance in Derry Township, Hummelstown is there.

Chairman Foley: One of the components that may have been missed in this is why we can't tweak the current station to meet the needs. The Fire Company undertook this endeavor with long range vision at the forefront to prepare the fire department for the future. We

know that while today there is 100% volunteer, there is a time in the future that this could be a paid department or a combination department. The plan/vision they have in place is for the next 50+ years. In addition, there are currently a number of structural issues with the current station so a remodel isn't quite so simplistic. This will require structural improvements to extend the life of the current station. That is a big component to this project.

**Frank Ferguson, Edgewood Drive** – He understands the Board of Supervisors has great responsibilities and if they don't follow them then there are liabilities that have to be covered. Mr. Foley admitted he had two hats on and sometimes it is hard to extinguish which hat is speaking. It is a very serious subject. The firemen are entitled to a new home. The citizens who live in the southern/western part of Derry Township want better fire protection and they are entitled to that. When you were questioning about the second fire house, you are questioning a fireman who is doing his best for the Fire Company to get a new home. You should have been referring to the two previous independent studies that both suggested a second fire station around Middletown and Wood Roads. That would have been a fairer debate. It is difficult to get fire trucks out when Chocolate Avenue and Cocoa Avenue are congested with traffic. You can't change lanes because of all the Hershey Kiss advertising lights approaching the center of town. He asked the Board to consider building a second station and also grant them their new fire station downtown. The responsibility is to protect the citizens and you have the opportunity to satisfy the fireman.

**Rich Gamble, Hockersville Road** – We have been developing in the Township for over the past 30 years. In 50 years, we are going to grow much more. If we want to look into the future, maybe now is the time to add another station to meet the future.

**Adam Cray, Debra Drive** – Mr. Cray asked Mr. Stein if the 10 minute response time is an average on all of the calls you run? Mr. Cray said you can't get out Middletown Road in 10 minutes from the current station unless you are sitting on the apparatus.

Mr. Stein: 1720 requires 80% of the time to be 12 minutes or better and we are exceeding that over 80% of the time. That is apparatus from dispatch to arrival on scene. They look at it in the three blocks for all calls including structure fires and non-emergency calls.

Mr. Cray: If we are going to utilize Hummelstown to take care of the Middletown area, shouldn't they be on all calls?

Mr. Stein: They are not dispatched on an automatic fire alarm. When an automatic fire alarm is dispatched it is a single engine response from HVFD. If the officer on duty finds out there is multiple zones or report of smoke or flames, the box would be upgraded and the rest of the response would occur. We have a single engine response throughout every box in the Township based on analysis of all of the calls, responses, and not putting apparatus and people on the street unnecessarily. If the situation requires additional response, it is automatically requested and will come. We are not in the position of putting the community at risk in anyway. If the situation would ever require that we need to have additional apparatus responding, we would certainly be able to add that. The current data

indicates a signal engine is sufficient at this point and time and the officer in charge of the call has discretion to request additional manpower and or equipment.

Chairman Foley: There are zone officers and a patrol car in that area; therefore, getting emergency responders on scene to at least assess and notify County accordingly.

Mr. Cray: If we are using them then we should use them for all calls. He is not against the downtown station, but he strongly feels that we need a second station like the studies provided. There is a liability issue with the fact that if you don't pursue the second firehouse and something unfortunate would happen.

Chairman Foley: The public has to recognize that if we look at a station at Wood and Middletown Road, we are talking about 1 mile from an existing station. It may not be the Derry Township station, but that would be a duplication of resources. It is just counter to what is occurring right now in the service.

Mr. Cray: Should Hummelstown get a portion of the tax base if they are going to supply the apparatus to respond to the calls?

Supervisor Engle: The reports are pretty clear about providing another station. Based on the location and the consolidation of services and all the reasons that we talked about earlier; it became evident that there would be duplication. Maybe as the population grows on the west end, a second station does get looked at.

Mr. Cray: Why is duplicate service a problem?

Chairman Foley: Because it is a duplicate expense. The report looks great on paper if it is only looking at Derry Township. If you plug in the mutual aid agreements and the proximity of the other stations, we are covered.

Mr. Cray: You can't rely on them covering your territory and that is why they didn't take into account of mutual aid in those studies.

Chairman Foley: It is no different if you have a structure fire on the east end of the Township and a structure fire on the west end and what happens.

Mr. Cray: That is why some of the duplicate service doesn't hurt.

Chairman Foley: If the system was failing, he would agree that we need a second station, but it isn't failing.

**Frank Ferguson** – In response to Mr. Foley and Mr. Engle's mention of duplication of services, when these two independent studies were made a few years ago, that same distance existed between the fire station and the Roads. They concluded we needed a second fire station around Middletown and Wood Roads. There was no duplication of services to negate that suggestion.

Supervisor Ballard asked if we could make this discussion part of the regular meeting since there are people waiting to come in for the meeting.

**Todd Pagliarulo, 321 Concord Court** – Mr. Pagliarulo is a life member of the fire department. He has not been an active member for the last 20+ years, but is a former fire chief. He served under three different chiefs as an active chief officer. He had the opportunity of listening to the presentations that Mr. Sonderman had made. As a resident of Derry Township, he feels very confident having the one station will provide the necessary fire safety for Derry Township under the leadership of our chief officers. The confidence is there and they have a proven track record of making things happen and doing it right. The Board had an opportunity to sit through the state of the County last night and we heard about regionalization and it may not be bad to have in the future a major station in the eastern part of Dauphin County.

**Fred Solntein, Jill Drive** – Mr. Solnetien lived in this neighborhood of Middletown/Wood Roads many years ago. He had a neighbor who had a fire. Hummelstown responded and their truck sat on the street. Their men would not get off that truck until Derry Township came because it was Derry Township's area. It seemed like a long time before HVFD got there. Can that same thing happen today?

Mr. Stein: Absolutely not. HVFD was dispatched for a structure fire back off of Joann with entrapment. Hummelstown was the first piece of apparatus on the scene and their members rescued the woman from the structure.

Mr. Solntein: They tried to get them off the trucks, but they said they could not do anything until Derry Township arrived.

Mr. Stein: That will not happen today.

Mr. Stein: It does not matter where you have the fire house, the fire apparatus, ambulance, police department have to get through the community. Any traffic set up that is done, there are going to be challenges. HVFD is prepared to address those challenges. They will use the less travel areas to get their members to the station to get them out timely. With regard to the studies, one report indicated a station that was out Bullfrog and Hill Church and over in the Milton Hershey area and the other study indicated a station near Med Center. If Hummelstown is busy and Hershey is busy on a call, our box cards aren't limited to Hershey or Hummelstown. Chambers Hill, Lebanon County, Union Deposit, etc. will come to assist. We have to box 15 engines on every response. We help each other and we all benefit.

**Rich Gamble, Hockersville Road** – Since there has been discussion about the studies, he suggests we contract with an independent again and see what their recommendations are that could add to improve meeting the needs of the community.

Chairman Foley mentioned he personally was in contact with Dr. Carter regarding his study.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Vice-Chairman Moyer moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Supervisor Ballard seconded. ***The motion carried, 5-yes 0-no.***

SUBMITTED BY:

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Justin C. Engle  
Township Secretary

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Brenda Van Deursen  
Recording Secretary