

CITY OF DUBOIS/SANDY TOWNSHIP JOINT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 7, 2022 @ 6 p.m.

City Council Chambers, City Building, 16 West Scribner Avenue, DuBois, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, March 7, 2022 @ 6 p.m. the DuBois/Sandy Joint Board convened. Board Members present were: Barry Abbott (by phone), Jim Aughenbaugh, Bill Beers, Diane Bernardo, Shane Dietz, Shannon Gabriel, Kevin Salandra, Mark Sullivan, Edward Walsh. Also present were: City Manager, John "Herm" Suplizio; Township Manager, Shawn Arbaugh; Public Works Superintendent, Scott Farrell; Redevelopment Authority Director/Assistant Public Works Superintendent, Joe Mitchell; Sandy Township Chief of Police, Kris Kruzelak; DuBois Police Chief, Blaine Clark; DuBois Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer, Zac Lawhead; Sandy Township Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer, Pat Green; DuBois/Sandy Joint Board Solicitor, Chris Gabriel; 9 Person Consolidation Committee Chairman, Dick Whitaker; LeeAnn Rogers, Pennsylvania Economy League (Phone); Adam Shienvold, Eckerd Seamans (Phone); Terri Cunkle, DCED; and City Secretary, Bobbie Shaffer.

Absent: Sam Mollica

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Kevin Salandra.

Public Comments on Agenda Items Only

None

Approval of the Minutes of the January 12, 2022 Meeting

The motion was made by Walsh and seconded by Gabriel that the DuBois/Sandy Joint Board approve the minutes from the January 12, 2022 meeting as presented by the City Secretary. Roll call was as follows: Abbott, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Beers, yea; Bernardo, yea; Dietz, yea; Gabriel, yea; Sullivan, yea; Walsh, yea; Salandra, yea. Motion passed 9-0.

New Business

Update from Chairman of Consolidation Committee – Dick Whitaker

Mr. Whitaker stated the first item is the recommendation regarding payment of expenses, he doesn't anticipate getting a lot of expenses but it's something that needs addressed. We do like to eat and the managers have been paying for that out of their pockets; I don't believe they should be doing that, so I think we should put some money in the budget to cover that. Also some of the sub-committees have copying, printing, and paperwork expenses and we're going to have some other expenses as well that need to be covered.

Manager Suplizio requested clarification: Invoices for the sub-committees and the 9 Person Committee will go to the 9 Person Committee for approval and then on to the 10 Person Committee for approval.

Mr. Whitaker then quoted President John Kennedy "Every accomplishment starts with the decision to try." He believes the citizens of DuBois and Sandy Township should be proud of their decision to consolidate. It doesn't happen very often and it's exciting to see how everyone has cooperated. He has spoken to LaToya Bellamy from Eckert Seaman and she is very pleased with what she has observed on our Committees and Sub-Committees. We have good interaction and support from Managers Arbaugh and Suplizio. They provide the resources and are very supportive in the offsets. He asked Ms. Bellamy today about our May 15th Finance deadline coming up, how are we doing on that? She stated that they have all the financial information from the City and Township and they are working on that report. So he was proud to announce that we are ahead of schedule. They are very pleased with our progress.

CITY OF DUBOIS/SANDY TOWNSHIP JOINT BOARD MEETING MINUTES (Cont'd.)

Update from Chairman of Consolidation Committee – Dick Whitaker (Cont'd.)

Mr. Whitaker talked about the process. He stated that all of the Chairmen of the Sub-Committees are present tonight with the exception of Chris Nauti, Public Works and Dan Kohlhepp, Codes & Zoning; however, they do have representatives here to answer any of your questions. It was his understanding when talking to the Consultant, that the 9 Person Committee does the research and gets all the facts together, they just do a lot of the grunt work getting the information the 10 Person Committee who needs to make the decisions. Once the 9 Person Committee gets the information they will send everything to the 10 Person Committee. There will be no lack of transparency. He stated if you have any questions, feel free to call me, I'll be glad to answer any questions. If he can't, he'll send you in the direction of our sub-committees and they should be able to answer. He wants the process to be understood by all in attendance. Total transparency, the 10 People Committee will be getting the stuff that he is getting so they can review. He thinks they are not even close to being able to give the 10 Person Committee anything. He reiterated that no decision will be made except by the 10 Person Committee. The 9 Person Committee is aware that they have no power to make decisions they just make recommendations. They send the information and recommendation to the 10 Person Committee and they decide. Ultimately in three years you will have the grand plan and then you will all have to decide what we can afford and what we cannot afford and how it fits into the budget.

Someone once said that progress is not possible without change and some people will simply not change their minds. He hopes that people will change their minds and be open to the give and take. He believes we will all have to sacrifice something; most likely things that we do not want to sacrifice. He stated he grew up in this area, he likes this area, but he thinks it could be better. That is his goal and his desire.

He stated that something happened just the other day; a good friend, very successful business man, came up to him, he had voted for consolidation was excited about consolidation and he had heard a rumor that certain things were going to happen, that the buddy system was alive and well which he stated came from a very good source. Mr. Whitaker told him he would give him an even better source, the best one you can have; he said how do you know, Mr. Whitaker said because it hadn't gone to the 10-person Committee. They haven't voted on anything. When they vote on it, they say that's the way it is going to be and that's the way it's going to be. He encouraged everyone in attendance and the media if you want questions answered he would suggest you talk to someone on the 10 Person Committee or Shawn or Herm to get the actual facts. But as of now, and in the near future there are not going to be any decisions to make because there is no information from the committees. It's going to be coming, but it's going to be a while and then the 10 Person Committee will make the decisions over the next three years. He believes there is a reason for the process taking three years, he thinks it's going to take three years for people to wrap their heads around it. Get comfortable, get some of the temperature out of the room, let people grow into it. If we tried to make it in three months it would be tragic, difficult and a lot of anger. He believes the people who came up with the three-year time limit were smart to give us that long to work through the problems.

Thank you to the 9 Person Committee, the sub-committee chairmen and members for all their hard work and their many meetings. We are kind of ahead, we were behind, but now we are ahead of our deadline. He then asked for any questions, there were none.

Chairman Salandra asked Attorney Gabriel about the expense; whether or not we needed to approve the process. Gabriel reiterated that the expenses will be approved through the 9 Person Committee and then sent to the 10 Person Committee for approval. Gabriel stated if you want to approve that process you would want to make a motion.

CITY OF DUBOIS/SANDY TOWNSHIP JOINT BOARD MEETING MINUTES (Cont'd.)

Update from Chairman of Consolidation Committee – Dick Whitaker (Cont'd.)

The motion was made by Beers and seconded by Gabriel that the 10 Person Joint Board approve the process for paying expenses. Roll call was as follows: Abbott, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Beers, yea; Bernardo, yea; Dietz, yea; Gabriel, yea; Sullivan, yea; Walsh, yea; Salandra, yea. Motion passed 9-0.

Section 108 Loan – Platt Road

Chairman Salandra turned the meeting over to Manager Arbaugh which stated the purpose of this item on the agenda is to seek the 10 Person Committees approval of the Section 108 Loan. He stated that they have been working on the process for over a year now, it's a \$875,000 loan that is guaranteed to be repaid by CDBG funds. The Federal Government, HUD asked for a letter showing the City's support of their application; ultimately, the City would be on the hook for the loan if it is not paid before we consolidate. They do plan to utilize the majority of their CDBG funds each year for payment. They do expect to pay it off sooner than the document states, less than 10 years. They are also pursuing other funding, if it comes through they may be able to reduce the amount of that loan. They are looking at other avenues. This is a sewer extension project for Platt Road it will connect to the trailer parks and the industrial park.

Manager Suplizio said on the City end, the more sewage we can bring into the Sewage Plant the better, it will help to defray the costs. That will be a good thing. He also stated that City Council talked about it in their Work Session on Thursday.

The motion was made by Walsh and seconded by Aughenbaugh that the Joint Board accept the Section 108 Loan for Platt Road in the amount of \$875,000 as presented by Manager Arbaugh and Mayor Walsh will sign the letter showing the City of DuBois' support. Roll call was as follows: Abbott, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Beers, yea; Bernardo, yea; Dietz, yea; Gabriel, yea; Sullivan, yea; Walsh, yea; Salandra, yea. Motion passed 9-0.

S.C.B.A (Air Packs) for the City of DuBois

Manager Suplizio stated that this is simply an information item. The beginning of 2023 the City of DuBois' Air Packs will be out of date. The City of DuBois will be ordering packs in June for July to insure we have them before the current packs our out of date. Right now the City of DuBois and Sandy Township are putting in a grant which would defray 90% of the cost if we get the grant. Last year the City of DuBois put in for a grant and didn't get it under the federal grant program. Either way we will be doing something. Supervisor Beers would like to see Sandy Township move along with the City in the purchasing new Air Packs, theirs will be up in a year or year and half. Gabriel asked how many the township needs; Beers stated 66. Gabriel said the City needs 70, she asked how much the grant is for. City Redevelopment Director Mitchell stated \$135,000. Beers stated they would like to start the process now. It was decided that the Fire Chiefs would discuss it and bring more information back.

R.F.P. for Emergency Ambulance Services

Chairman Salandra stated that it has been brought to their attention that the ambulance services we have are inefficient and there are some coverage issues. What we would like to do is have Shawn and Herm come up with an RFP that addresses some of the problems, and get better services and protection for the Community from the companies that we are dealing with.

Manager Suplizio stated in their Fire sub-committee they had discussed this and thought it was a good idea; he's not sure if the police have talked about it or not. He thinks a better efficient ambulance service would be good. Manager Arbaugh stated that the Township recently put out an RFP for towing and it is working very well. He thanked the Bigler Boys for helping them out.

CITY OF DUBOIS/SANDY TOWNSHIP JOINT BOARD MEETING MINUTES (Cont'd.)

R.F.P. for Emergency Ambulance Services

The motion was made by Gabriel and seconded by Beers that the Joint Board appoint Arbaugh and Suplizio to come up with an R.F.P. for Emergency Ambulance Services for joint DuBois and Sandy.

Sullivan had a question on the motion, he wanted to know what the deadline on the R.F.P. would be; Arbaugh said normally 30 days, Sullivan requested 60 to 90 days.

Gabriel amended her motion to add a 60-day deadline to the R.F.P. and Beers seconded. Roll call was as follows: Abbott, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Beers, yea; Bernardo, yea; Dietz, yea; Gabriel, yea; Sullivan, yea; Walsh, yea; Salandra, yea. Motion passed 9-0.

Joint Board Member Comments

Councilwoman, Diane Bernardo

Thank you to everyone who has a great input into this process; Committee, Sub-committees, etc. Dick Whitaker I didn't know you until actually were appointed Chairperson; I said who is this person. Then I formally met you at last Council Meeting, since then we have had a lengthy conversation or two. I want to say this from the sincerity of my heart, you are the right person, at the right place, at the right time. Thank you very much for travelling this road with us.

Supervisor, Mark Sullivan

Thanked Mr. Whitaker and the Committees and Sub-Committees; really doing a good job.

Councilman, Jim Aughenbaugh

Had the same thoughts and appreciates everyone's efforts and for volunteering their time. Really great how everything is coming together.

Mayor, Edward Walsh

Ditto

Councilman, Shane Dietz

Thanks Mr. Whittaker and the Sub-Committees for all their hard work. Really shows how everyone is interested in their Community.

Supervisor, Bill Beers

Same

Chairman, Kevin Salandra

Didn't have anything to add.

Open Meeting to the Floor

9 Person Consolidation Chairman – Dick Whittaker

He just wanted to reiterate, that the most dangerous thing to the consolidation is unfounded rumors. He cannot emphasize enough, he served on the Treasure Lake Board and was a very rocky road. He's heard a rumor will make it around the world before the truth makes it across the street. He stressed how important it is for everyone in attendance to stop the rumors. Until the 10 People Committee vote on something he doesn't mean a thing. Stop enough rumors we stand a better chance of making this work.

CITY OF DUBOIS/SANDY TOWNSHIP JOINT BOARD MEETING MINUTES (Cont'd.)

Adjourn

There being no further business to transact; the motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Sullivan that the DuBois/Sandy Joint Board adjourn. Roll call was as follows: Abbott, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Beers, yea; Bernardo, yea; Dietz, yea; Gabriel, yea; Sullivan, yea; Walsh, yea; Salandra, yea. Motion passed 9-0.

ATTEST:

 APPROVED: 