

CITY OF DUBOIS/SANDY TOWNSHIP JOINT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 20, 2024 @ 6 p.m.

NOTE: Due to construction at the Municipal Building, all meetings will be held at the Third Ward Firehall until further notice.

Third Ward Firehall, 301 First Street, DuBois, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, November 20, 2024, at 6 p.m.; DuBois City Council and Sandy Township Supervisors convened at their Joint Board Meeting. Board Members present were: Barry Abbott, Jim Aughenbaugh, Bill Beers, Shane Dietz, Sam Mollica, Richard Whitaker, Pat Reasinger and Mark Sullivan. Also present were: DuBois/Sandy Township City Manager, Shawn Arbaugh; DuBois Public Works Superintendent, Scott Farrell; DuBois Codes Officer, Zac Lawhead; DuBois Interim Police Chief, Shawn McCleary; Sandy Township Police Chief Kris Kruzelak; and City Secretary, Korbi Slocum. Lisa Hagberg and Ben Kafferlin with Kafferlin Strategies were also in attendance.

Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Co-Chairman Mark Sullivan.

Executive Session

The board was in executive session prior to the meeting to discuss legal and personnel issues.

Roll Call

Elliot Gelfand and Jennifer Jackson were absent.

Public Comments on Agenda Items Only

No comments.

Correspondence

Sullivan reported the board received a letter from a concerned citizen.

Old Business

Managers' Progress Report

- Architect Update
- Special Counsel Update
- Tax Structure, Budget, and Utility User Fee Proposal
- Fire Study Update

The new building project has started, or the new deconstruction project has started as they are doing demolition in the City Building. It has only been two days, but the project is right on schedule. The Sandy Township building is out for bid with the bid opening scheduled for December 12, 2024. The roof and some exterior work will be completed to make it structurally sound for long-term storage.

Our special counsel is still working to identify a bargaining unit on the non-uniform side. We did receive some pension information on the non-uniform side and are evaluating that information.

We did enter into a contract with Pennsylvania Economy League. A kick-off meeting is scheduled for December 11, 2024. We will be working on the budget, tax structure and sewer/water rates over the next several months. We did not get the contract with the state executed as quickly as we had hoped so the target date of February 2025 will probably be pushed back to March or April 2025. We will look at amending

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the Consolidation agreement to make up for the lapse in time. Arbaugh recommends we wait until January in case anything else needs to be adjusted and to make sure the new interim management company is comfortable with the deadlines.

The fire study consultants needed some additional information; we got most of that to them today. Chief Runyon publicly thanked the 9-member fire subcommittee for all the work they are doing. Chief Federici thanked the Township supervisors and City Council members who attended the last meeting to better understand the communication problem the department is having with the county. They are still working on it.

Approval of the Minutes from October 16, 2024

The motion was made by Beers and seconded by Mollica to accept the minutes from October 16, 2024, as presented. Roll call was as follows: Abbott, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Beers, yea; Dietz, yea; Mollica, yea; Whitaker, yea; Reasinger, yea; Sullivan, yea. Motion passed 8-0.

New Business

- Consulting Engineer Approval – Stahl Sheaffer Proposal
- Elected Officials – 2026 Benefits
- Approval of Invoices
 - KTH Architects - \$145,172.01

With our current Engineer Mike Haynes leaving, it leaves a void in certain projects such as stormwater, road, bidding and advertisements and reviewing subdivision plans. We are looking for approval to bring on Stahl Sheaffer on an hourly basis for special projects. Sewer and water will be handled by HRG on the City side and Gwinn Dobson on the Township side. Stahl Sheaffer has been doing a great job for us on some projects; we wanted to make a formal relationship with them. Beers asked if there is a penalty clause if we hire an Engineer during 2025. Arbaugh replied, “There is no contractual relationship. We just agree to their hourly fee schedule. They understand we may use them one hour a week or five hours a week – whatever the needs are. The motion was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Beers to approve Stahl Sheaffer for engineering services as presented. Roll call was as follows: Abbott, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Beers, yea; Dietz, yea; Mollica, yea; Whitaker, yea; Reasinger, yea; Sullivan, yea. Motion passed 8-0.

One of the things the Joint Board needs to determine is how much Elected Officials will be paid in 2026 so people can decide if they want to run for office. This needs to be done by the end of January 2025. Arbaugh researched cities of similar size and structure and came up with the following recommendation:

Mayor	\$10,000.00/year
Council members	\$ 5,000.00/year
Treasurer	\$ 5,000.00/year
Controller	\$ 5,000.00/year

Mollica feels the Mayor is no different than a council person in the new City. He pointed out that the referendum petition for the ballot read, in part, ‘...a seven-member Council, elected at large (one of whom shall be Mayor)’. “The Mayor does not have implicit power because that power belongs to the appointed Manager who has the ability to hire and fire with the blessing of the Council. There should be no Mayor on the ballot. Also, if you have someone running for Mayor, now you might eliminate two or three people that might make good councilmen. I could be wrong on the interpretation of this.” After some discussion, the motion was made by Beers and seconded by Reasinger to get counsel’s interpretation as to whether it is seven members at large with one being selected Mayor or if the Mayor is separate on the ballot. Roll call

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was as follows: Abbott, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Beers, yea; Dietz, yea; Mollica, yea; Whitaker, yea; Reasinger, yea; Sullivan, yea. Motion passed 8-0.

Sullivan reminded the board there are still other positions to consider setting salaries and benefits. Arbaugh's recommendation is that benefits not be offered. The motion was made by Beers to pay \$5,000.00 across the board with no benefits. The motion died for lack of a second. The motion then was made by Aughenbaugh and seconded by Beers to table setting salaries for elected officials until the board receives clarification from counsel. Roll call was as follows: Abbott, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Beers, yea; Dietz, yea; Mollica, yea; Whitaker, yea; Reasinger, nay; Sullivan, yea. Motion passed 7-1.

The motion was made by Beers and seconded by Mollica to approve paying the invoice for KTH Architects in the amount of \$145,172.01. Roll call was as follows: Abbott, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Beers, yea; Dietz, yea; Mollica, yea; Whitaker, yea; Reasinger, yea; Sullivan, yea. Motion passed 8-0.

Sullivan apologized for not doing it sooner in the meeting and gave the new interim managers the opportunity to introduce themselves. Lisa Hagberg will be acting as the operations portion of interim management. "I'm excited to join in all of the projects and many things you have going on. I'm looking forward to working with all of you – all the board, the community and staff." Ben Kafferlin, who is a partner in the company, will be working with the Consolidation and public relations side. "We (he and Lisa) will be interchangeable. There will be times when we wear each other's hat. We haven't had that much time with Shawn, but we've been extremely impressed with the work he's done with the very many projects that are complex and interrelated and how he's been able to come up with some huge plans for the future. I want to applaud you for a job well done."

Joint Board Member Comments

Richard Whitaker

"I want to welcome our people on board. I'm looking forward to working with you. One of the things that impressed me about them is they have six other highly qualified employees that each have an expertise that they'll be bringing to the table, so I feel real confident that they can get the job done. It's good having you."

Shane Dietz

"Lisa and Ben, welcome to our great City. And everyone have a Happy Thanksgiving."

Shawn Arbaugh

"I was asked to address some comments at the last City Council meeting on the Borough of Falls Creek initiative that the County Commissioners undertook. There were some comments made about public meetings and what the impact is for the City and the Township. The Commissioners did have a series of public meetings that were advertised in the paper to discuss the initiative. There are two parcels that are paying taxes to Sandy Township that will now pay taxes to Falls Creek Borough. Those properties brought in about \$25.00 per year. We see it as a minimal impact and think it makes sense to do what the County Commissioners did.

Pat Reasinger

"I just want to welcome Lisa and Ben. I look forward to working with you."

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Sam Mollica

"I want to welcome Lisa and Ben and thank Shawn for all he did. I think this might be his last joint meeting. I want to thank Shawn for all he's done throughout the years that I've been on the board of Sandy Township and on the Joint Board."

Jim Aughenbaugh

"Kind of the same thing. I look forward to working with you two and your firm. You do offer a lot of services that, going into consolidation, we're going to need. There's a lot to this, like you related to, everything Shawn was trying to balance. Thank you, Shawn, for all your hard work and staying right in the game right to the end and helping out even later if there's any questions. I appreciate it. On the concerned citizen letter, we all did receive a copy of it, and thank them for it."

Bill Beers

"Welcome aboard (Lisa and Ben). You'll be sorely missed, Shawn. Good job through the last several years you've been here."

Mark Sullivan

"I'll echo all of those. Welcome aboard. And, Shawn, we are definitely going to miss you. You hit the ground running when you came on board, and you've been a great asset."

Open Meeting to the Floor

Deb Mechling – Monroe Street

"First of all, I'd like to thank Sam for mentioning how to possibly structure the new Council that would be the most beneficial and to open it up to more solid candidates. I think that's a wonderful idea, especially since you're sticking to the way the resolution was put on the ballot. Since it was noteworthy to have the concerned citizen letter on the agenda tonight, I was wondering, do we know who the author of the letter is?" Arbaugh replied, "We do know who the author is. It is a letter with concerns from the last meeting about Community Days that was addressed to the Joint Board. When we get correspondence, we like to disseminate it and make sure the resident that submitted it knows it was received and we did take a look at it." Mechling asked if the board is working on a resolution to the concerns and if the public will get to hear what was in the letter. Arbaugh responded, "Yes, we are. Some of those concerns will be addressed at the City Council meeting on Monday (November 25)."

Close Meeting to the Floor

Adjourn

There being no further business to transact, the motion was made by Beers and seconded by Aughenbaugh that the DuBois/Sandy Township Joint Board adjourn. Roll call was as follows: Abbott, yea; Aughenbaugh, yea; Beers, yea; Dietz, yea; Mollica, yea; Whitaker, yea; Reasinger, yea; Sullivan, yea. Motion passed 8-0.

ATTEST: Korbi Slocum

APPROVED: Lisa M. Hagberg