

Minutes of the Spring Garden Township Board of Commissioners Workshop
5:00 p.m. – September 10, 2025

Persons Present:

Daniel Rooney, President Commissioner
David Detwiler, Vice President Commissioner

Thomas Gwilt, Commissioner
Andrew Herrold, Commissioner
Anne Gray, Commissioner

I. Commence Workshop

A. 2026 Budget Considerations

Krista Gardner (CFO) stated these are high level items to be considered for feedback for the budget version to be presented in October.

1) Fire Expenses

- a) Estimated budget is \$2.5 million which is 4.2% higher than 2025.
- b) There is a capital item purchase of radios for \$148k
- c) Four trucks for a cost of approximately \$1.4 million are needed with the original purchase expected for 2026-2027, which has been pushed back to 2027.
- d) The cost of the new fire station is currently estimated at \$10 million.
- e) Currently the fire tax is .086 mil (since 2006) and brings in approximately \$85,000 in revenue per year.
 - i) Should an increase to the fire tax be considered in the budget
 - ii) Rob Stuart of 1161 Hollywood Terrace asked for clarification on the numbers for the fire station and it was clarified that on a \$10 million loan the yearly debt service would be approximately \$800,000 which is like the Township Building financing.
 - iii) For perspective taxes were raised 0.25 mils in 2018-2019, .5 in 2019-2020, and .5 in 2024-2025 (1.0 was related to the Township building costs and the .25 was a general increase).
- f) Only half of the fire tax can go towards salary and benefits. The Solicitor asked for the CFO to clarify what a 'mil' was. It was clarified that it is used to calculate property taxes per \$1000 of assessed value.
 - i) Melissa Stuart of 1161 Hollywood Terrace asked for clarification on the breakdown for YAFUR expenses. President Commissioner Rooney clarified that YAFUR is made up of Springettsbury Township (37%), Spring Garden Township (25%), and Manchester Township (38%). Vice Commissioner Detwiler noted that Chief Hoff had mentioned looking into options to recoup cleanup costs for hazmat incidents.

2) Codes Officer

- a) The CFO stated that the approximate yearly cost of an additional Codes Enforcement Officer would be \$100,000 with a one-time set up cost of \$5,000.
- b) The Township Manager stated that prior to 2019 there were two staff in the code enforcement department.
 - i) There has been an increase in Rental Units from 625 to 760 and there are an estimated 600 inspections that will need completed in 2026.
 - ii) The increase is in part due to finding properties that were not registered as rentals as well as the Memorial Hospital units.
 - iii) There has also been an increase in re-inspections needed due to the adoption of the 2018 property maintenance code.

- iv) There has also been an increase in complaints with 120 complaints received year to date.
 - (1) The Township Manager inquired if the Board supported the consideration of an additional Code Enforcement Officer
 - (2) Commissioner Gwilt said he supports the addition because he sees the issues with complaints and rentals in his neighborhood and how much work it is for one person.
- 3) Recreation expansion
 - a) Summer parks program with revenue generation components.
 - i) Part-time staff for parks program and Friday events.
 - ii) Purchase of a van (approximately \$46,000) to replace the approximately 20-year-old Ford Escape. There was discussion about a used van.
 - iii) Melissa Stuart of 1161 Hollywood Terrace inquired if there was any budget for park improvements. It was clarified that at this time there is none at this time, but there is the option for grant opportunities in 2026 in addition to having other Recreation Funds available.
- 4) Zoning
 - a) After the Comprehensive Plan is adopted, the next step is to review and update the Zoning Ordinance.
 - b) Commissioner Gray would like to see a Workshop relating to this.
 - c) The Zoning Officer stated that there are new uses throughout the state that the current Ordinance does not address and the Township should address. It is a huge project.
 - d) It was discussed how the revamp is an approximate 18-month project with an estimated cost of \$100,000. Most will be done with an engineering firm, with some legal. Getting feedback from other Townships that are in the process now.
 - e) It was discussed that there are some Zoning designations that might not apply to the Township, but it is good to have them for clarification on what each Zone allows for.
- 5) Stormwater
 - a) Creating a Stormwater Authority does not equate to a Stormwater Assessment.
 - b) \$50,000 for engineering and \$50,000 for legal is currently what is listed in the 2026 budget for this purpose.
 - c) Public Works and Sewer are spending more time on Stormwater related items. Should the allocation be updated to better account for the time spent?
 - d) The amount allocated to Stormwater under Public Works and Sewer could become the Stormwater budget.

B. Other Business - None

C. Public Comment - None

II. Conclude Workshop

Commissioner Rooney- Adjourned 5:53pm

Respectfully submitted,

Luther C Wike Jr.
Township Secretary

EA