The duly advertised regular meeting of the Rice Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, February 2, 2016, at the Rice Township Municipal Building, 3000 Church Road, Mountaintop. Copies of the Agenda and Treasurer Reports were available to the public. Chair Marcia Thomas called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. It is announced that the meeting will be recorded for preparing the minutes. Interior cameras are also recording the video.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - Here
 Pipech - Here
 Thomas - Here

Also present were: Please see attached sign in sheet.

Received the Treasurer's Report: Total income for January was $47,931.31, total expenses of $67,942.35. There was no activity in the Liquid Fuels or Recreation funds. Bills presented for payment today total $33,332.80. Balances as of January 31, 2016:

General Checking: $40,468.69 General Money Market: $125,397.53
Liquid Fuels Checking: $0.00 Liquid Fuels Money Market: $2,500.32
Recreation Checking: $3,123.17 Recreation Money Market: $10,014.50

Total Cash on Hand: $181,504.21

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, and all bills to be paid.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

EMA Coordinator, Bryan Brown, spoke about the SWIFT 911 program through Luzerne County. Rice Township has signed up to utilize the service. It is a way for the Township to contact residents via cell phones in case of emergency (road closures, etc). Marcia Thomas stated that once we get all of the information, it will be posted on the Township website. Bryan Brown stated that residents may also find the information on the Luzerne County website. Many residents stated that they received automated phone calls regarding the program. Bryan explained that residents already in the system would get notifications via their home phones (land lines), but everyone has the option to provide their cell phone information to receive the notifications.

**BUSINESS MATTERS:**

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to accept the Minutes of the Reorganization and Regular meeting regular meeting on January 4, 2016.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

Received the Roadmaster's Report for January 2016: Roadmaster Pipech reported that the Public Works department did a great job during the snow storms. He discussed their schedules, which can be altered in snow events. Rice Township received 2 more loads of salt, so the shed is now full. The Public Works department has
been cleaning the fire department grounds. Secretary Stier stated that the dumpster is not full--when it is full, Gittens will be contacted for a pick-up. She also stated that a time limit was not stipulated when she called to have the dumpster delivered. Mr. Pipech stated that, once the grounds are cleaned, he and Rick Arnold will do a walkthrough of the lower hall.
**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Arnold, to accept the Roadmaster's Report as presented.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

The Township received notification that the Department of General Services COSTARS Program has received, recorded and approved our "Salt Contract Participation Agreement" form for the August 2016-July 2017 season. The same amount was requested as the August 2015-July 2016 season (500 tons).

Received the Police Report for January 2016: 269 Incidents; 138 Complaints; 8 Automobile Accidents; 36 Assist Calls; 28 Traffic Citations; 2 Non-Traffic Citations for Disorderly Conduct; 14 Traffic Warnings; 1 Criminal Arrest for an Act 64 Violation; No Warrants. The Police Department receives a lot of complaints from the developments in regards to speeding and stop sign violations. Chief Franks explained that, with the extra personnel, he has been assigning Officers to work in those developments to try to curb the traffic issues. On February 18th at 6pm, at the Wright Township Fire Hall, Representative Mullery will be holding a seminar on Pennsylvania State Laws under the Open Carry Act. Marcia Thomas stated that she has noticed patrol cars sitting at major intersections. Chief Franks explained that most accidents happen at those intersections: coming off of I-81 Southbound (Unimart), in front of the PennDOT Salt Shed, and a few others.
**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to accept the Police Report as presented.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

Received the Zoning Officer Report for January 2016: No permits issued this month. A complaint was forwarded to my office from DEP regarding a resident dumping used motor oil into the ground behind 13 Wilderness Drive. I believe this complaint is consistent with anonymous complaints made in the past; my investigation determined that the complaint was unfounded and the complaint has been sent back to DEP for further review. I have addressed the complaint with the property owner.

Supervisor Pipech asked why the Township is addressing anonymous complaints. Solicitor Dean stated that we will not be after tonight. Supervisor Arnold concurred with Mr. Pipech, stating that we should not be wasting time for the Township residents investigating anonymous complaints. Marcia Thomas stated that an anonymous DEP complaint was filed against this same property owner several years ago. DEP does accept anonymous complaints, and that one was unfounded as well--it was relating to an on-lot septic system, which was completely functioning. Unfortunately, the State allows their agencies to be used to make anonymous complaints about people. She stated that she's glad we're taking a stand in Rice Township.

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to accept the Zoning Report as presented.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

Felicia Bierzynski stated that she believed this issue to have been remedied in the past, specifically after the anonymous complaint made against her. Marcia Thomas stated that she is not aware of a Resolution having been passed, so she believes the issue was never followed up on. Secretary Stier stated that she has been cleaning up mismanaged files for some time, and there was no such Resolution filed in the binder.

Marcia Thomas stated that she spoke with DEP personally after several anonymous complaints were deemed unfounded. She spoke with Maribeth Aileo, and she agreed that they would not pursue them anymore. It stopped for a while, but now it has started again.

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to approve Resolution #2016-5, which states that Rice Township will not act on anonymous complaints.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

The Planning Commission met on January 27th at 7pm--Draft minutes are available to the public. Ray Fedor was named Chairman and Ann Kijek was named Vice-Chair of the Planning Commission for 2016. Solicitor Dean briefly reviewed the meeting's agenda: the Political Sign ordinance, Matt McGowan's moving from forced mains into gravity flow in sections of Woodberry Phase III, Jack Varaly's Comprehensive Plan/Community Survey, and the Susquehanna-Jenkins project. The plans from the Susquehanna-Jenkins project were too big for Jack's office to handle, so Engineer Pasonick dropped off copies to the Township today. Solicitor Dean will be sending a letter to PPL tomorrow; although they are exempt from the Township SALDO, they are not exempt from the Stormwater Management Ordinance. In places where they are putting in impervious soil, they will need to take out a permit and comply with the Ordinance.

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to pay a fee of $80 to Luzerne County for review of pending Ordinance #2016-1, amending the Zoning Ordinance to include Political Signs.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

Wright Township Volunteer Fire Company Report & Fire Police Incident Recap--Summarized by Supervisor Arnold: "The Wright Township Fire Department responded to 29 incidents in the month of January. That's for all the Townships that they cover. Also, a short report for their 2015 activity: They responded to 375 total incidents, which, with 365 days in the year, it's a busy Volunteer Fire Department. One hundred of those incidents were in Rice Township. That tells you that they are very responsive and are doing a great job for everybody's safety in the Mountain Top communities that they cover. There is a full report available for anyone who would like to see it, we will make it available."

The Minutes of the Reorganization meeting of the Board of Auditors held on Tuesday, January 5, 2016 are available and approves the wages of Supervisors working for the Township.

Please be advised that, although owned by the Township, the Fire Department land and buildings are not open to the public at this time.

Secretary Stier stated that a complaint was received from a former firefighter; the complaint was that personnel files were being disposed of in the dumpster on the former Fire Department land. She and the Board got involved and all paperwork found on-site was to be given to the Secretary for further examination and proper disposal. Anything with a social security number, patient information, etc is being burned.

Marcia Thomas stated that when the Fire Department was decertified, the building and records were not properly secured. Bob Pipech stated that the dumpster was relocated to the inside of the building once the complaint was received. He also verified that there was no sensitive material in the dumpster. Bob added that no one should be over there snooping around until it has been opened to the public. He would like to make sure the grounds are secured for everyone's safety. Marcia Thomas stated that there has been vandalism and doors had been jimmied open, yet we were called on the carpet for it. We are taking care of everything properly.

Barb Deaton asked if the property should be posted with Private Property Signs. Bob Pipech confirmed that the signage is in place.

Solicitor Dean clarified that somebody went onto private Township property and went through the dumpster. Bob Pipech added that the dumpster had only been on-site for a few hours. Marcia Thomas added that the person who called to complain was not the person who had entered the property and went through the dumpster.

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to purchase a self-contained security camera system to monitor the newly acquired Fire Department land and buildings. CK Alarm Systems quoted $2,059.00 for equipment and installation.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Arnold, to advertise Ordinance 2016-2, renewing the Service Electric Franchise Contract.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

**MOTION** by Pipech, second by Arnold, to advertise Ordinance 2016-3, providing for pave cuts and openings within the public roads and rights of way.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to ratify a payment to Amerihealth Casualty Services in the amount of $5,169.27 for Workers Compensation Coverage period August 1, 2015 thru August 1, 2016.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

**MOTION** by Arnold, second by Pipech, to approve usage of the Rice Township park grounds according to the provided spreadsheet. Other groups may apply for use--all groups applying for use must coordinate dates and times to properly accommodate each other, as well as provide the Township with a certificate of liability.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

Janeann Lokken asked how she may obtain a spreadsheet to assist with preparation of the Kite Festival. Secretary Stier stated that she has the spreadsheet; Marcia Thomas stated that the Secretary is in charge of coordination of activities on the field.

Supervisor Arnold stated that he spoke with Holly Guydish, who has organized the Rice Township Easter Egg Hunt for the past 2 years. She has graciously accepted to help us again. Rick also stated that he spoke with Representative Mullery regarding a donation that he has made annually to assist with the prizes. Representative Mullery has committed to making the same value donation, although it will be up to the Supervisors to decide how they wish to receive it (bicycles, chocolate bunnies, etc). Mr. Arnold stated that Fairview and Wright Townships will be holding their joint event on March 19th. He proposed a date of March 12th, so as not to compete with neighboring municipalities.

**MOTION** by Arnold, second by Pipech, to approve a budget of $1,000.00 to hold an Easter Egg Hunt in the Rice Township Park on March 12, 2016.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

Secretary Stier asked to set a rain date as well. The Board decided on a rain date of March 13th.

Bob Pipech stated that he spoke with Representative Mullery as well. Mr. Pipech believes that the Township should buy smaller prizes to make sure every kid gets a prize. He does not believe it's fair for 2 kids to get bicycles when the rest of the children don't get as much.

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Arnold, to make a donation to the SPCA of Luzerne County in the amount of $100 for their annual campaign. Rice Township contributed $100 in 2015 as well.
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes
MOTION CARRIED.

Chief Franks stated that this gives the Police Department the opportunity to utilize their facility (or associated facility).
 **SOLICITOR'S REPORT:**

A letter was sent to Aqua PA yesterday, requesting their equipment be removed from Laurel Lakes. This was at the request of the Roadmaster.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Bob Pipech asked Chief Franks to report missing stop signs to the Public Works Department.

Bob Smith asked about the status of the Ice House Pub utilizing the former Fire Department land. Solicitor Dean confirmed that a lease agreement is in place, as well as insurance, so they may continue to use the property. Attorney Swiegart had to go to the Ice House several times in negotiating the lease. **MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia E. Stier
Secretary