The duly advertised regular meeting of the Rice Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, March 3, 2015, at the Rice Township Municipal Building, 3000 Church Road, Mountaintop. Copies of the Agenda and Treasurer Reports were available to the public. The meeting was called to order by Chair Marcia Thomas 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: Stella - Here

Taney - Here Thomas - Here

Also present were: Please see attached sign in sheet.

MOTION by Thomas, second by Taney, to hire Phillip Collotty as a Full-Time Patrolman for the Rice Township Police Department. Wages are set by the Police contract; full benefits, sick-time and vacation time apply.

ROLL CALL: Stella - Yes Taney - Yes Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Patrolman Collotty was sworn in by Chair Marcia Thomas. Marcia thanked Chief Franks for his diligence in selecting an excellent candidate.

Received the Treasurer's Report: General fund income totaled \$130,089.83, expenses totaled \$74,433.53, for a net income of \$55,656.30. State fund expenses totaled \$3,172.55. Recreation fund income totaled \$6,375.00. Bills to be paid for the month total \$33,180.91.

Balances as of February 28, 2015:

General Checking: \$181,825.95 General Money Market: \$150,322.32 Liquid Fuels Checking: \$81.23 Liquid Fuels Money Market: \$56.76 Recreation Checking: \$9,426.75 Recreation Money Market: \$10,011.44

Total Cash on Hand: \$351,724.45

MOTION by Thomas, second by Taney, to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, and all bills to be paid.

ROLL CALL: Stella - Yes Taney - Yes Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Solicitor Dean told Officer Collotty, who was present with his family, that they didn't need to stay if they didn't want to, especially since it's a stormy night. Marcia Thomas invited Officer Collotty to introduce his family. Denise Manosky, from the Mountain Top Eagle, took a picture of the Board, Chief Franks, and Officer Collotty for the next edition of the newspaper.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Janeann Lokken inquired about the \$6,375.00 deposited into the Recreation fund. Marcia Thomas explained that it was a per lot donation from the Woodberry development.

BUSINESS MATTERS:

MOTION by Thomas, second by Taney, to accept the Minutes of the regular meeting on February 3, 2015. ROLL CALL: Stella - Yes Taney - Yes Thomas - Yes MOTION CARRIED.

Received the Roadmaster's Report for February 2015: The Public Works department was out for 23 separate snow incidents in the month of February. One of the bigger trucks is currently down for maintenance, needing new tires before it will pass inspection. We have used our yearly allocation of salt through the COSTARS contract. Mark Taney contacted three different private haulers and obtained quotes for salt; the hauler with the lowest price has been delivering salt to the Township salt shed. That hauler is currently looking for other sources for salt; the original source in Delaware sold 5,000 tons of salt to PennDOT. Mark stated that everyone is experiencing the same struggle to find salt right now. He also stated that next year the Township should think about building a bigger shed and getting more salt on hand at a time. Towards the end of the season, the contracted supplier is stretched very thin and salt deliveries can become delayed. When a municipality runs out of salt, they can contact the contracted supplier and ask if they are in a position to negotiate a lower price than a non-COSTARS hauler. The supplier would have to be willing to step up production; this year, they were not in a position to do that due to prior commitments in New England. Salt has been a tough thing this winter. As soon as the weather gets nice, there are about 5 potholes that will be patched. Last winter, the Road department was out between snow storms cold patching as needed. This winter they were out once. There have been a lot of repairs to the trucks this winter. Rule has taken care of most of the issues. The summer equipment is being prepared for the season with oil changes and other service.

MOTION by Taney, second by , to extend the hours of the recycling center to include every Thursday from May to August for a 3-hour period.

ROLL CALL: Stella - Taney - Thomas - MOTION DIES FOR LACK OF SECOND.

Mark Taney explained that extended summer hours would accommodate schedules of residents who are out of town on the weekends. Marcia Thomas stated that she would like to take a look at the budget in regards to what we are paying now for the recycling program. She stated that other municipalities are getting paid for recycling pick up while we are paying out, so before we add more hours, we should look at the big picture of the program to see where we can save money. Miller Stella agreed that the whole program should be looked at before making any decisions.

Marcia Thomas stated that it wouldn't hurt for the Township Secretary to periodically check with Liquid Fuels to see if any other salt becomes available.

Denise Manosky asked if the Township has ever reached out to PennDOT for salt. She cited an article which explained how PennDOT reaches out to municipalities in need. Marcia stated that she would very much like to do that, and that we have reached out to them in the past. Miller asked if our piggyback program would carry us into that situation with PennDOT. Marcia explained that they have expanded the contract for municipalities in the past, so that even if there was an escalation in charge, we wouldn't have to put it out for bid, the state did it for us. Marcia also said that she would like to look into every opportunity we can to remedy the salt situation.

MOTION by Thomas, second by Stella, to accept the Roadmaster's Reports as presented.

ROLL CALL: Stella - Yes Taney - Yes Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Received the Police Report for February 2015: 337 Incidents, 90 Complaints, 3 Automobile Accidents, 28 Assist Calls. There was an overabundance of ambulance calls relating to the weather in general. 2 Traffic Citations, 1 Non-Traffic Citation for Disorderly Conduct, 4 Parking Tickets, 2 Criminal Arrests: one for theft and one for an Act 64 violation, 1 Search Warrant served.

Marcia Thomas praised the Police Department and Road Department for their excellent service during the rough winter. She also thanked the Township Secretary and explained that everyone must work together or we could never accomplish what we do. Marcia said that congratulations were in order for the job the Police Department has done in busting a Meth Lab, solving a major crime, as well as participating in a rescue. They do what needs to be done without a great amount of recognition. Mark Taney added that it's amazing to see a case in action, between the work that is done here and the resources available to the department. Mark thanked Chief Franks for letting him hang out and see what the Officers do.

MOTION by Thomas, second by Taney, to accept the Police Report as presented.

ROLL CALL: Stella - Yes

Taney - Yes

Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Received the Zoning Officer Report: No permits issued. There will be more activity next month.

MOTION by Thomas, second by Taney, to accept the Zoning Report as presented.

ROLL CALL: Stella - Yes

Taney - Yes

Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED.

The Planning Commission meeting for February 2015 was cancelled for lack of agenda.

Mountain Top Area Joint Sanitary Authority Minutes for January 2015 (regular and reorganization) are available to the public.

Wright Township Vol. Fire Co. Report--Gregg Gerko reported 32 incidents for the month, most weather related like car accidents, but there were a few reported house fires. The Department completed their HAZMAT refresher course, which is mandated by the State to be completed annually. Maintenance was done on all apparatus.

A free "Light Audit" was performed by Lenape Solar, a contractor for PPL electric. It was determined that all light fixtures installed in the Municipal Building, Police Department, and Public Works building are outdated. The fluorescent bulbs currently utilized are being phased out. PPL Electric will pay a portion of the cost to the Township if the fixtures are updated through Lenape Solar. Total cost to the Township: \$2,336.10. Projected yearly savings: \$744.86. This agreement includes a 3-year warrantee on all fluorescent bulbs and a 5-year warrantee on all ballasts and exit signs.

Marcia Thomas stated that we are trying to move in a more environmentally friendly direction.

MOTION by Thomas, second by Taney, to approve the agreement presented by Lenape Solar in conjunction with PPL Electric to replace all light fixtures in the Municipal Building, Police Department and Public Works building.

ROLL CALL: Stella - Yes

Taney - Yes

Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED.

The Township Secretary registered for the Dirt & Gravel Road Seminar; the Seminar will be held in Wilkes-Barre on May 26th and 27th and there was no registration fee for Municipal employees.

A direct deposit of \$103,260.34 was made to the Liquid Fuels Funds on March 2, 2015.

The AG-385 form for Municipal Pensions and Foreign Fire Relief Programs, due March 31st, was completed and submitted on February 27th.

MOTION by Thomas, second by Taney, to make a payment in the amount of \$9,539.01 to the Wright Township Volunteer Fire Department for the first quarter payment of 2015 under the contract that was approved in 2013. Check will be issued March 31, 2015.

ROLL CALL: Stella - Yes

Taney - Yes

Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Thomas, second by Taney, to name Alicia Stier the Rice Township Open Records ("Right to Know") Officer for the year of 2015.

ROLL CALL: Stella - Yes

Taney - Yes

Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Holly Guydish has agreed to volunteer her time (along with several of the Brownies and their mothers who volunteered last year) to organize the Rice Township 2015 Easter Egg Hunt.

MOTION by Thomas, second by Taney, to hold the Township Easter Egg Hunt at the Township Park on March 21st from 10 a.m. to Noon, and to approve payment of \$1,000 from the Recreation account for this purpose.

ROLL CALL: Stella - Yes

Taney - Yes

Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Taney, second by Stella, to place two patron listings in the "Theatre at the Grove" Playbill that will appear for their 9 plays. (Board of Supervisors \$75, Police Dept. \$50)

ROLL CALL: Stella - Yes

Taney - Yes

Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Thomas, second by Taney, to make a donation of \$100.00 to the SPCA of Luzerne County for their annual campaign.

ROLL CALL: Stella - Yes

Taney - Yes

Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED.

With the snow season here, the Police Department asks that residents remove all portable basketball hoops and refrain from parking on township roads or rights-of-way during storms for safe snow removal.

Chief Franks stated that this has been an off and on problem. Weekends are where it really becomes an issue because people are having parties.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Last week, Solicitor Dean, Attorney Rodgers and the Attorney General appeared before a Judge in Orphan's Court regarding the Independence Fire Company matter. The Judge appointed Don Karpowich, an Attorney in Drums, to serve as Receiver for the Independence Fire Company. He also authorized Attorney Karpowich to engage a Certified Public Accountant to perform an accounting of the Fire Company to some extent, as not all records are available. The purpose of the Receiver will be to perform an accounting to the satisfaction of the

Attorney General, and then to identify the assets and liabilities. Assets will be disposed under court approval, with review and consent of the Attorney General. The first conference call with the Receiver is scheduled for this Friday at 10 a.m. to discuss his roles and his timing.

Solicitor Dean clarified: John Rodgers represents Independence, Jack Dean represents the Township.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Marcia Thomas thanked everyone for coming and asked everyone to be safe getting home.

MOTION by Thomas, second by Taney, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 7:27 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia E. Stier Secretary