The duly advertised regular meeting of the Rice Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, December 6, 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:

General Fund total income for November was $126,835.64. General Fund total expenses were $162,075.26. Liquid Fuels had expenses of $50,000.00, the payment for the Laurel Culvert Project. The Recreation account had no activity for the month.

Balances as of November 30, 2016, as presented on the paper report:

General Checking: $117,079.53 General Money Market: $35,408.13 First Keystone $50,035.36

Liquid Fuels Checking: $1,429.95 Liquid Fuels Money Market: $66,517.30

Recreation Checking: $1,277.75 Recreation Money Market: $10,016.15

Total Cash on Hand: $281,764.17. Total bills presented for payment: $35,466.38.

**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.

Thomas thanked Barbara W for all her help with Jeff and being the Treasurer when the Township was in a pinch.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Ann Kijek asked if there was any update on the status on the Blytheburn Road bridge repair. Chief Franks reported that the County was paving today and the bridge should be reopened in a day or two. This is a County project.

REPORTS:

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to accept the Minutes of the Regular meeting held on November 1st, 2016.  
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes  
MOTION CARRIED.

Received the Roadmaster's Report for November, 2016: The Roadmaster, Robert Pipech, reported that the leaf collection was complete but close to 3000 bags were taken. This program will be discussed for next year. He noted the water problem developing in several areas of the Township caused by beaver dams flooding roads and was working with the game commissioner to remove the beaver. The Public Works crew was working with the Wright Township road crew with their 4-wheel drive backhoe to remove the lodges to relieve the flooding, as this was a safety issue. The two crew will be responsible for snow removal, and will be sure that they get appropriate rest. The crew will go home at midnight to get rest since there a few on the road at that time.

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

Received the Police Report for November, 2016:   
**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 November, 2016: While the Zoning office could not be present, he did submit a report. Secretary Beck noted that some outstanding items remained, primarily fencing around swimming pools. Beck and Jack Dean, Solicitor, confirmed that the deck addition in Pinnacle Court which required considerable research had been successfully resolved.

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

There was not activity for the Sewer Enforcement Officer.

The Rice Township Planning Commission met on Wednesday, October 26, 2016 with a continuance of that meeting on Monday, November 14, 2016. Minutes are available for public inspection. The Planning Commission meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 2016, was canceled.

Wright Township Volunteer Fire Company Report is available to the public, and Fire Police Incident Recap is available to the public. Richard Arnold reported that the Fire Department and the Township were working to move trucks from the Public Works garage over to the RTVFD garage. He also noted that the WTVFD will have Santa going through Wright and Rice Townships Sunday, the 18th, with goodies for the kids. He also asked for support for the annual letter drive, and extended a happy, safe and healthy New Year. Pipech noted that Arnold is working to get the trucks moved over to the RTVFD bay, waiting on the garage door company to install a button code opener and deliver vehicle remote openers.

**ENGINEER'S REPORT:** Andrew Pasonick reported that they are waiting for the final payment request from Latona Trucking and presentment of the performance bond. He also reported that they expect the Letter of Amendment to be ready to send to DEP by the end of the week. Pasonick explained that the study had to be done to ensure that the frog was not going to be harmed by the project, and that this is normal, and there is no choice in the matter. Beck will distributed the proposals from Herpetological Associates and Skelly and Loy, Inc., to the Supervisors. He asked for the following motion to be made to accept the lower quote to do the frog survey:

Motion by Arnold, second by Pipech, to accept the Herpetological Associates, Inc. proposal for Northern Cricket Frog habitat study in the amount of $1,743.00 as required for the Ice Lakes Dam Letter of Amendment and to authorize PennEastern Engineers to engage Herpetological Associates, Inc. accordingly.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes  
MOTION CARRIED

**BUSINESS MATTERS:**

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to approve Resolution 2016-14 to appoint Grevera & Associates, Certified Public Accountants, to perform an Audit of the Rice Township financial records for the fiscal year 2016, as awarded as the low bidder at the November 1, 2016 Board of Supervisors meeting..  
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes  
MOTION CARRIED.

In compliance with the Police Contract:  
**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to approve Resolution 2016-15 that payments into the police pension fund by members of the police department are eliminated for the year of 2017, and no deductions should be made from the pay of the members for the purpose of contributing to the police pension fund.  
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes  
MOTION CARRIED.

**MOTION** by Pipech, second by Arnold, to approve Resolution 2016-16 for the Local Share Account (Gaming) Grant, the application fees, and appoint Robert Pipech to execute all documents. The grant is for the repavement of Nuangola Drive, Laurel Drive and Basswood Court and the replacement of the 1995 Backhoe at an estimated total cost of $236,370.40.  
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes  
MOTION CARRIED.

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to approve Resolution 2016-17 PEMA-DAP-2 appointing Robert Pipech successor to Miller Stella, Jr. as the Township's agent regarding Project 2679 for PEMA funding, and authorizes Mr. Pipech to execute any and all documents as necessary to close this project for PEMA and FEMA as required.

ROLL CALL: Arnold- Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED

Thomas thanked the Chief for the great job he and his staff are doing in support of the Borough of Nuangola.

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to approve the Nuangola Police Contract, prepared by Rice Township and approved by Nuangola Borough on November 15, 2013, for the period January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2019 at $2,280.00 per month for 2017, $2,349.25 per month for 2018, and 2,419.66. per month for 2019.

ROLL CALL: Arnold- Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED.

**MOTION** by Pipech, second by Arnold, to enter into an agreement with Engie to provide electricity at $0.05607 per KWH for 3 years, with the expected contract savings of approximately $4,800.

ROLL CALL: Arnold- Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED

The Davis reverse subdivision was presented to the Planning Commission, resulting in no comment. The Solicitor has no objection to waiving the requirement of for reverse subdivision approval for this request.

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to waiving the requirement of reverse subdivision as presented by Glenn Davis regarding his specific property.

ROLL CALL: Arnold- Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes

MOTION CARRIED

Under IRS regulations, the Township has been providing health insurance reimbursement to the Secretary under payroll, but this is NOT compensation. In order to provide the health insurance reimbursement and ensure that it does not apply as compensation, pending the Solicitor's review, the Township will create a Section 105 Plan with Zane Benefits. This requires a one-time set-up fee and an annual software fee of $1,255.00 to Zane Benefits, the plan administrator. John Dean noted that the purpose of this effort to continue to provide health insurance to the Secretary just like other employees without it being deemed taxable income because it is not compensation and will save the Township many thousands of dollars. Upon discussion with Dean, the Township Solicitor, the motion to approve a Section 105 Plan was tabled pending further research, and will be taken up at the January, 2017 meeting.

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to hire Pinnacle Cleaning Service for monthly service at a monthly rate of $80.00. Pinnacle Cleaning Service is bonded and insured.  
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes  
MOTION CARRIED.

**MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to approve the following dues payments for 2017:

$275.00 to Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance;

$125.00 to Pa State Association of Boroughs Training Discount Program;

$25.00 to the Luzerne County Boroughs and Townships Association

$150.00 to the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association  
  
ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes  
MOTION CARRIED.

**BUDGET PREPARATION:**

The Proposed 2017 Budget has been prepared and is available for review and will be posted and advertised. Adoption of the budget will be considered at the regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors to be held Tuesday, December 6th, at 7:00 p.m. at the municipal building.

**RICE TOWNSHIP  
PROPOSED 2017 BUDGET**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **RICE TOWNSHIP BUDGET 2017** | | |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | **BUDGET** |
|  |  |  |  |  | **2017** |
| **SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED RECEIPTS:** | | | |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **RECEIPTS FROM TAXES** | | |  | $815,000 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **LIQUID FUELS RECEIPTS** | | |  | $123,902 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **LICENSES AND PERMITS (CABLE TV)** | | | | $18,207 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **RECREATION FUNDS** | |  |  | $300 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **INTEREST, RENTS AND ROYALTIES** | | | | $11,234 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **CONTRACT POLICE SERVICES** | | |  | $41,370 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **PENSION SYSTEM STATE AID** | | |  | $57,000 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **FEES, UCC INSPECTIONS, RECYCLABLES** | | | | $11,200 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **MISC. RECEIPTS** | |  |  | $1,787 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL ESTIMATED RECEIPTS:** | | |  |  | **$1,080,000** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES:** | | | | |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **ADMINISTRATION** | |  |  | $54,971 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **TAX COLLECTION** | |  |  | $18,800 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **LEGAL SERVICES** | |  |  | $14,000 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS** | | |  | $28,700 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT** | | |  | $1,200 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **POLICE DEPARTMENT** | | |  | $356,730 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **FIRE DEPARTMENT** | |  |  | $39,665 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **ZONING AND PLANNING** | | |  | $7,400 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **RECYCLING AND SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT** | | | | $15,500 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **PUBLIC WORKS/GENERAL SERVICES** | | | | $126,050 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL (SUPPLIES)** | | | | $13,800 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **GENERAL HIGHWAY SERVICE** | | |  | $23,200 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS** | | |  | $1,000 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **DEBT INTEREST** | |  |  | $2,550 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **POLICE PENSION** | |  |  | $59,683 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **NON-UNIFORM PENSION** | | |  | $16,056 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **WORKERS COMP INSURANCE** | | |  | $40,000 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **PROPERTY AND BONDING INSURANCE** | | | | $86,300 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **EMPLOYER PAID BENEFITS** | | |  | $174,395 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **MISC. EXPENDITURES** | | |  | $0 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES:** | | | |  | **$1,080,000** |

|  |
| --- |
| Rice Township Tax Rates  Total.............................................................0.26 mills (property assessed value x $0.00026)  Real Estate Transfer Taxes...........................1/2 of 1% collected  Local Services Tax.........................................$5.00 Township; $5.00 School District  There is NO tax increase for 2017  Thomas pointed out that we do not follow a line item budget, and we have over $100,000 for road maintenance. Mr. Pipech commented that we have a balance of Liquid Fuels funds that will supplement the line item for Snow Removal and Supplies. Otherwise, this item would be higher. Thomas also noted that the taxes are the lowest in the Mountaintop area.  **MOTION** by Thomas, second by Pipech, to approve the budget for Rice Township for 2017 as presented, and to adopt it as of December 6, 2016. ROLL CALL: Arnold- Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes MOTION CARRIED.  **MOTION** by Thomas, second by Arnold, to pass Resolution 2017-1 that the above millage and tax rate for Rice Township for 2017 be adopted as presented.  ROLL CALL: Arnold - Yes Pipech - Yes Thomas - Yes MOTION CARRIED.  An executive session will be held prior to the 2017 Reorganization. Copies of the Township Officials list will be given to the Board of Supervisors.  The reorganization meeting of the Board of Supervisors will be held on Tuesday, January 3, 2016 at 7:00 p.m., and the first regular meeting of the Board will be held immediately following. The reorganization meeting of the Township Auditors will be held on Wednesday, January 4, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.  The Board of Supervisors, Police and Employees wish everyone a very happy, safe and healthy Holiday Season.  **SOLICITOR'S REPORT:** The Solicitor had no additional report to make. |
| **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Pipech noted that the Ice House Pub lease should be raised above the current amount for the next year. Any increase would go to the Recreational Fund. Dean will contact the owners and report back at the next meeting.  **MOTION** by, Thomas, second by Pipech, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.  Respectfully submitted,  Jeffrey D. Beck Secretary | |