

**SOUTH STRABANE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REGULAR MEETING**

November 23, 2021

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The November 23, 2021 Regular Meeting of the South Strabane Township Board of Supervisors (“Board”) came to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Mae C. Reynolds Meeting Room of the Municipal Building (550 Washington Road, Washington, PA 15301).

The following were present:

Board of Supervisors Bob Weber, Chair; Mark Murphy, Vice Chair; Bracken Burns; Russell Grego; and Richard Luketich.

Absent None

Also Present Township Manager Brandon Stanick; Assistant to the Township Manager Jim Sutter; Police Chief Drew Hilk; Fire Chief Scott Reese; Finance Analyst Marie Coffman; Township Solicitor Dennis Makel; and Township Engineer Kevin Creagh.

Chair Weber wished everyone in attendance a Happy Thanksgiving.

Chair Weber reported the Board had met in Executive Session on November 23, 2021 to discuss personnel matters and potential litigation.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Weber lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

4. CONSIDERATION OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 26, 2021

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the October 26, 2021 Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes as presented. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

5. FINANCIAL BUSINESS

The Board considered the following financial business:

- Payroll: \$ 108,041.87 (pay date of October 22, 2021)
- Payroll: \$ 113,356.49 (pay date of November 5, 2021)

• General Fund:	\$ 286,840.00
• Liquid Fuels Fund:	\$ 30,669.53
• Capital Improvement:	\$ 70,145.46
• <u>Escrow:</u>	<u>\$ 5,625.65</u>
Total Expenditure:	\$ 614,679.00

• Overtime costs for the period include:

○ Police:	\$ 2,568.60
○ Fire:	\$ 902.76
○ <u>Public Works</u>	<u>\$ 91.84</u>

Total OT: \$ 3,563.20 (pay date of October 22, 2021)

○ Police:	\$ 5,129.33
○ Fire:	\$ 189.23
○ <u>Public Works</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>

Total OT: \$ 5,318.56 (pay date of November 5, 2021)

General Fund:

• cfs Bank (General Obligation Note)	\$ 54,893.00
• Municipal Employees Insurance Trust (October Coverage)	\$ 49,776.62
• Selective Insurance Co. (General Liability Insurance)	\$ 33,604.00
• Watchguard Video (Body Cameras, Server, Software, Stations)	\$ 57,198.00

Liquid Fuels:

• American Rock Salt	\$ 27,062.29
----------------------	--------------

Capital Improvement:

• KS Statebank (2021 John Deere Wheel Loader)	\$ 45,970.00
• Washington Ford (2018 Ford Escape – Code Enforcement)	\$ 24,174.47

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the payroll for the periods October 3 through October 16, 2021 and October 17 through October 30, 2021 and Bills for the period October 23, 2021 through November 19, 2021. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Township Manager Brandon Stanick reported the Township's annual curbside leaf pickup is ongoing and will continue every Monday through December 6, 2021.

Chair Weber thanked the voters of South Strabane Township for electing him to his second term as Township Supervisor. He stated he will respectfully and responsibly represent the Township.

Mr. Grego thanked the voters of South Strabane Township for electing him to a full term as Township Supervisor. He stated he will do his best to represent the Township.

7. TOWNSHIP REPORTS

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Report

The Board of Supervisors allocates a period of time during this item for comments regarding the topic of stormwater. Each person addressing the Board of Supervisors is asked to limit their comments to a maximum of three minutes.

There were no public comments relating to stormwater.

New Firefighter

Fire Chief Scott Reese introduced new firefighter Scott Bowlin.

Township Manager's Report

Mr. Stanick provided an update regarding the following:

Census Update – 2020 Census Count Question Resolution Operation

The 2020 Census Count Question Resolution Operation (“CQR”) gives tribal, state and local governments an opportunity to request a review of their official 2020 Census counts. This involves reviews regarding legal boundary discrepancies and potential errors in processing housing and population counts. As reviewed previously with the Board, this process begins after the first of the year with a deadline of June 30, 2023.

Citizens Library

Ms. Kathy Pienkowski was in attendance to provide an update on the activities of Citizens Library. She presented on the activities of the library in the immediate aftermath of the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in Spring 2020. She stated much of the staff needed to be furloughed, but five were brought back by May 2020. At this time, they had curbside services for one month and reopened in June. In September they were required to go back to curbside only, which was in effect until March 2021.

Ms. Pienkowski stated they greatly appreciate the Township's support. She stated they were fortunately able to obtain a Paycheck Protection Program loan and are financially managing adequately. She stated the staff are fully vaccinated and are wearing masks due to the many children who utilize library services. She invited all of the Supervisors to visit to view changes that have been made since the previous Spring. She stated they are hoping to do a fundraiser next year, which they have been unable to do for the past two years. They are also hoping to do more activities in coordination with the schools. She stated they have not been charging fines and will continue not to do so. She concluded by thanking the Board for their continued support.

Chair Weber thanked Ms. Pienkowski for taking the time to attend and present on their activities. He stated he appreciates what they have done. He asked if high school students come in to do research. Ms. Pienkowski stated they are seeing this frequently and also many tutors coming in as well.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report

The following was transmitted to the Board through the Secretary/Treasurer's Report:

Minutes and Agendas:

- a) Zoning Hearing Board Regular Meeting Minutes – September 13, 2021;
- b) Green Team Meeting Notes – September 16, 2021;
- c) Sanitary Authority Meeting Minutes – September 22, 2021;
- d) Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes – October 7, 2021;
- e) Sanitary Authority Meeting Agenda – October 27, 2021;
- f) Planning Commission Regular Meeting Agenda – November 4, 2021;
- g) Zoning Hearing Board Regular Meeting Agenda – November 8, 2021; and
- h) Green Team Meeting Agenda – November 18, 2021.

Reports and Publications:

- a) Finance Report – October 2021;
- b) Tax Collector's Report & Interim Collection Only – October 2021;
- c) Fire Department Report – October 2021;
- d) Volunteer Fire Department Transaction Detail – October 2021;
- e) Public Safety Department Report – October 2021;
- f) Animal Control Officer's Report – October 2021;
- g) Township Engineer's Report – November 23, 2021; and
- h) OR Legal Notice for Budget Meeting – November 17, 2021.

Correspondence:

- a) Letter (*w/ attachments*) dated November 9, 2021 from Teresa Matinko, Lead Regulatory Compliance Technician for Range Resources – Appalachia, LLC providing notification of the modification of Mele Unit 10H well;
- b) Letter (*w/ attachments*) dated November 15, 2021 from South Strabane Township Resident Charlene McVay regarding fire services in the Township.

Copies of those items in italics are not attached, but available upon request.

Township Solicitor's Report

Solicitor Dennis Makel reported they have assisted and advised the Township on developer reviews, personnel issues, labor negotiations and potential litigation over the past month.

Township Engineer's Report

Township Engineer Kevin Creagh reported on the following activities:

Community Park

KLH completed the as-builts of the forcemain for potential adoption by WEWJA.

Billy Bell Park

DCNR has scheduled a site meeting for Monday, November 29th. After that meeting, the Township will be eligible to apply for the final 10% of grant reimbursement.

Aboveground Storage Tank

KLH is awaiting further direction from Township staff on this project.

Developer Review Letters

KLH has reviewed the Modwash car wash for the Planning Commission.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business

9. NEW BUSINESS

9A: Motion extending the time required to meet certain conditions of the Burkett Manor Planned Residential Development Plan No. 1 along Burkett Lane

Mr. Stanick reported although the Burkett Manor Development is a planned residential development, the subdivision recordation timeframe of 90 days from approval is still required. The deadline was not met and the engineer for the project, The Gateway Engineers, Inc., is requesting the Board extend the timeframe an additional 90 days to record the approved subdivision plat at the County Recorder of Deeds Office.

Mr. Burns moved to extend the time required to meet certain conditions of the Burkett Manor Planned Residential Development Plan No. 1 along Burkett Lane. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9B: Consideration of an Application for Preliminary and Final Land Development from PVT 1193, LLC (d/b/a/ Modwash) to construct and operate a car wash located at 105 Murtland Avenue in the C-2 Commercial Zoning District

Mr. Stanick reported on August 12, 2021 the Township received an application for Conditional Use approval from PVT 1193, LLC ("Applicant") for a proposed car wash ("Development") located at 105 Murtland Avenue ("Property") in the C-2 Commercial Zoning District. Following a Public Hearing, the Planning Commission recommended Conditional Use approval at their September 2, 2021 meeting. The Board of Supervisors then granted Conditional Use approval following a Public Hearing at their September 28, 2021 meeting.

Subsequently, on October 19, 2021 the Township received an application for Preliminary and Final Land Development Approval from the Applicant. Following a meeting on October 28, 2021 with Township Engineers and Township Staff, the Applicant revised the site plan from the version originally submitted to mitigate potential traffic issues. The Planning Commission, at their November 4, 2021 meeting unanimously recommended approval of the application.

Mr. Burns moved to approve the application for preliminary and final land development from PVT 1193, LLC (d/b/a/ Modwash) to construct and operate a car wash located at 105 Murtland Avenue in the C-2 Commercial Zoning District. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9C: Motion approving the proposed 2022 tentative annual budget

Mr. Stanick reported on the submission of the Tentative Budget (“Budget”) of South Strabane Township, Pennsylvania (“Township”) for the fiscal year commencing January 1, 2022 and ending December 31, 2022. The General Fund is in the amount of \$6,521,853 plus \$524,335 in inter-fund transfers and the Liquid Fuels Fund is in the amount of \$589,388. The accompanying projection of revenues and expenditures with fund balances is provided to show how current economic trends could and may influence future cash balances and tax levies. When creating financial projections, known quantities such as actual revenues, expenditures, and balances interact with a set of key assumptions to determine a possible outcome at the end of the budget process and fiscal year.

It is important to note that there are a number of unknowns in this statement, which are projected based on the availability of information on current economic conditions and historical actual financial status of the Township. However, forecasting is a useful tool in developing financial policy statements, such as the Annual Budget. Financial projections presented in this policy document are intended to advise policymakers of the current potential financial conditions of the Township. This statement does not however represent a legal obligation of the Township Staff or the Board of Supervisors.

The 2022 Budget addresses the following:

1. The financial requirements for the construction, maintenance, repair and improvements of roads and stormwater facilities;
2. The financial obligations of the Township to provide zoning protection, legal services and general government services;
3. The financial requirements to provide public safety to residents and businesses; including: police protection, emergency management and fire protection services (through a Combination Department comprised of career and volunteer firefighters);
4. Long-Term debt service undertaken by the Township for the construction of the Police Station and the Public Works Facility;
5. Capital projects and expenses to implement designated capital projects, along with the personnel and contracted entities to provide services beyond Township organizational capabilities; and
6. The allocation of resources consistent with the Township’s 2017 Comprehensive Plan and the 2021 Community Park Master Plan.

REVENUES

The General Fund Budget projects \$7,046,188 in total revenues and budgets the same in expenditures establishing a balanced budget for the 2022 calendar year. This is an 8.10% increase over the Budgeted Revenues for 2021. It is important to know that this projection does not include a Real Estate Tax increase, any new short-term debt proceeds or additional long-term debt service next year.

The General Fund Budget is supported using tax and non-tax revenue sources, including:

The Real Estate Tax for 2022 will be maintained at 1.1 mills (or a multiplier of .0011) for a total projection of \$1,425,195. Based on a property value of \$200,000, a resident will pay approximately \$220 for the Township's share of the property tax bill. As of 2022, the Township will only comprise 6.31% of a resident's tax bill. This has slightly decreased from 6.40% from the previous year as a direct result of the increase levied by Trinity School District for its 2021-2022 Fiscal Year. Also, at the time of publication, the average millage rate of our neighboring Washington County communities is 1.1059, 0.5% greater than the Township. Established by Washington County, the 2022 assessed taxable valuation of all property in the Township is \$1,244,514,375, an increase of 0.39% over 2021. Additionally, the Township accounts for 6.90% of the total taxable assessed value in Washington County which is \$18.032 billion.

Local Enabling Taxes for 2022:

• Per Capita Tax	\$31,648
• Real Estate Transfer Tax	\$325,840
• Earned Income Tax	\$1,711,503
• Mercantile Tax	\$788,233
• Local Services Tax	\$363,385

Significant Non-Tax Revenue sources for 2022:

• Licences/Permits/Fine & Forfeitures	\$247,774
• Intergovernmental Sources	\$359,001
• General Government/Public Safety	\$304,675
• Miscellaneous Revenue	\$170,900

The 2022 revenue projection is also based on the Township's Comprehensive Fee Schedule ("Fee Schedule"). There are no changes proposed to the Fee Schedule for 2022.

Other Funds

In addition to the tax and non-tax revenues received by the Township each year, the following is a summary of the 2021 projected revenues either received from the Commonwealth that must remain separate from the General Fund or remain separate to allow the Township to plan and allocate resources for specific improvements and programs:

• Gaming Fund	\$161,363
• Act 13 Gas Well Fund	\$190,000
• Act 101 Recycling Fund	\$ 40,000
• Park & Rec Fund	\$ 35,300
• Capital Improvements Fund	\$308,798

- Liquid Fuels Fund \$336,125
- Fire Relief Fund \$ 30,000

Additionally, revenues from these funds are being used to not only support operational costs that are typically covered by the General Fund, but also special projects that are eligible and qualify under certain requirements.

EXPENDITURES

The budgeted General Fund expenditures for 2022 are \$7,046,188 (increase of 0.69% from 2021), including Interfund Transfers out to the Capital Fund in the amount of \$257,281. This change is the direct result of personnel services, including wages benefits and insurance, capital expenditures and investment, and meeting the Minimum Municipal Obligation for Non-Uniform, Fire and Police pension plans which is further reviewed below.

➤ **Personnel Services including wages, benefits and insurance:**

- Personnel changes planned for 2021 were accomplished with the hiring of one part-time Building Inspector and the Township is currently recruiting for a full-time Code Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector in addition to hiring of one additional full-time Firefighter. The Township will hire a part-time Finance Clerk to assist with reception and provide clerical support with finance functions before the end of 2021. Changes to personnel for 2022 include: hiring of two additional full-time Firefighters (starting April 1 and July 1, 2022) as well as funding for part-time Firefighter support. With the planned retirement of Fire Chief Reese, the Township will be recruiting for a new Fire Chief to lead our Combination Department into the future that will accomplish the goal of the Board of Supervisors to provide 24/7 fire and EMS services.
- Wage increases to adjust for union anniversary increases over prior year, in addition to responding to the ongoing negotiations with the International Assoc. of Firefighters, Local 5006 and the United Steel Works, Local 272M, and merit increases for non-union staff.
- In 2021, the Police Department successfully launched a new K-9 unit with Officer Zenkovich and the newest member of the force, Tornado.
- Overall, medical benefits will increase to 3.5% in 2022 and overall costs remain modest since 2020, during which time the Township was successful in restructuring the medical plan offered to Public Works and non-union staff, as well as Township Firefighters, and moved employees to a \$250/\$500 deductible plan with the Township covering the deductible. Additionally, the Township provides employees an opt-out provision should employees have access to other insurance. As a result of the 2019 Police Contract, Sworn personnel will maintain the medical insurance contributions at 12.5% in 2022 as the Department remains under a non-deductible plan.
- The Board and Township Administration have engaged in negotiations with the Public Works Department and Fire Department as their respective contracts expire December 31, 2021. The Township will also commence with negotiations with the Police Department in 2022 as it will expire at the end of the year.

- The Fire Department and Administration will continue to work with the Board of Supervisors to further understand the resources required to properly plan for 24/7 fire protection services and coverage.

➤ **Capital Expenditures and Investment:**

- **Administration** Fixed Asset Register – \$15,000 to engage a consultant that will establish values for all public assets owned by the municipality, an important step in meeting Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) compliance. GASB is the source of generally accepted accounting principles used by state and local governments in the United States; and
Staff will continue to improve upon communications with residents by publishing a quarterly newsletter - \$12,000.
 - **Stormwater MS4** With \$150,000 in the Capital Fund, as well as a \$150,000 grant from the Local Share Account (County LSA), the Township will pursue engineer design services for the Manifold Rd. Streambank and Restoration Project.
 - **Public Works** lease to own option for 2020 Ford 550 – \$30,467 (Yr. 3/3); lease to own option for Tiger Mower and Tractor - \$53,753 (Yr. 3/3); lease to own option for a new Front-End Loader - \$46,073 (Yr. 2/3); lease to own option for 2022 F-600 – \$40,388 (Yr. 1/3) through the Liquid Fuels Fund; and electricity for Cold Storage Building garage doors – 10,000.
 - **Park & Recreation** Billy Bell Park pavilion maintenance - \$3,500; and Dog Park at Community Park consistent with the 2021 Master Plan – 47,300.
 - **Police** lease to own option for four 2020 SUV Ford Interceptors - \$55,486 (Yr. 3/3); lease to own option for one Ford F-150 Patrol (Yr. 3/3) - \$13,177; lease to own option for a 2020 F-150 K-9 Squad – \$13,176 (Yr. 2/3); lease to own option for two 2022 SUV Ford Interceptors - \$31,244 (Yr. 1/3); lease to own option of an unmarked squad - \$13,905 (Yr. 1/3); intersection cameras - \$17,000; and Department issued handguns and ammunition, body armor, etc. - \$54,700.
 - **Fire** purchase of turnout gear and other equipment - \$57,500. In 2021, the Township purchased a 2000 fire truck from the Village of Falconer, NY in the amount of \$60,000 and equipped the apparatus in the amount of approximately \$70,000 in response to ensuring that fire and EMS services are maintained.
 - **Building Department** In 2021, the Township purchased a 2018 Ford Escape for use as a Building and Code Enforcement vehicle - \$24,174. No capital purchases are planned for the Building Department in 2022.
 - **Liquid Fuels Fund** paving and seal coating - \$354,000; snow/ice removal - \$120,000; streetlights - \$25,000; and stormwater replacement and maintenance - \$40,000. As noted previously, a lease to own option for a 2022 F-600 – \$40,388 (Yr. 1/3) will be paid through the Liquid Fuels Fund.
- **Pension Costs:**
The Township's 2021 Minimum Municipal Obligation ("MMO") was a total of \$606,624, of which \$266,017 was paid using General Fund revenues. The 2022 MMO is \$619,820, a 2.18%

increase over 2021. The figures below are reflective of the 2019 valuation, which will be used through 2022 to determine the Township's pension obligation.

Pension Plan	2019 MMO	2020 MMO	2021 MMO	2022 MMO	% Change from 2021 to 2022
Non-Uniform	\$ 65,996	\$ 62,288	\$ 67,571	\$ 67,858	+0.004%
Fire	\$125,628	\$119,479	\$155,954	\$152,094	-0.025%
Police	\$320,173	\$358,395	\$383,099	\$399,868	+4.38%
Total	\$511,797	\$540,162	\$606,624	\$619,820	+2.18

The significant increase recently is the result of Ordinance #1-16, an ordinance amending the Fire Pension Plan, that was a requirement of the arbitration award with the Fire Fighters, Local 5006 for the 2015-2018 contract term. As of December 31, 2021, after the 2021 MMO has been paid, we project the funding levels of the Township's pensions to be approximately:

- Police 100.00%
- Fire 77.87%
- Non-Uniform 97.23%

The percentages noted above will most likely change as the 2021 Actuarial Valuation will be complete sometime during the first half of 2022. The updated report will provide information for the 2022 and 2021 plan years.

As of December 31, 2020, we anticipate the Police pension to maintain a non-distress level and the Non-Uniform pension is not quite out of Distress Level 1 (minimum 90%). In 2019, with the additional contribution of ~\$52,000, and ~\$15,000 in 2021, over the MMO requirement, the Fire pension has emerged from Distress Level 2 to Distress Level 3 as planned.

Over the past two years, the Board of Supervisors and Administration have developed a planning tool to better assist in understanding State Aid contributions and the impact that can be anticipated on the General Fund in the future.

BUDGET FORMAT

Over time, the Township's budget document will continue to undergo changes to its format and design. The changes seek to: increase transparency, create consistency with the State's Chart of Accounts for line item classification codes, establish separate governmental funds to provide a more accurate picture of non-General Fund revenues and expenses, as well as enhance the format to facilitate understanding of the Township's financial goals and overall position.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Without the coordination and ability of the Township's Department Heads, Administrative staff and the oversight of the Board of Supervisors, presentation of this budget document would not be

possible. I would be remiss if I did not directly acknowledge the work of Marie Coffman, Financial Analyst, for her support in preparing the final document.

Mr. Burns moved to approve the proposed 2022 tentative Annual Budget. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9D: Motion approving a salary adjustment for the Police Chief contingent on signing a three-year contract (tabled)

Mr. Burns moved to remove the item from the table. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Stanick presented for the Board's consideration a motion to approve an adjustment to Police Chief Drew Hilk's salary to \$110,000 effective January 1, 2022. The motion is contingent upon Chief Hilk signing a three-year contract, where in the second and third years, the salary will be raised at an identical rate as that of the sworn officers pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement.

Mr. Burns moved to approve a salary adjustment for the Police Chief contingent on signing a three-year contract. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 4 to 1 voice vote with Mr. Luketich voting no.

9E: Motion authorizing a firefighter recruitment process

Mr. Stanick presented for the Board's consideration a motion authorizing a firefighter recruitment process. Recall the current Eligibility List is comprised of five individuals and four of those individuals have been hired by the Township starting by mid-December 2021. As only one candidate remains on the list, and there are two such positions authorized for 2022, this will allow time for the second hire starting third quarter of next year.

Should the Board authorize the recruitment process, it is anticipated to start after the first of the year.

Mr. Burns moved to authorize a firefighter recruitment process. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9F: Motion renewing the South Strabane Fire Department's General Liability Insurance

Mr. Stanick reported on an annual basis the Township covers the cost of insurance coverage for the South Strabane Fire Department. Coverage is provided for property, general liability, management, cyber liability and commercial automobile by American Alternative Insurance Corp. and boiler and machinery. The annual premium offered by Huntington Insurance, Inc. for 2022 is \$32,978, an increase of \$1,245 or 3.92% from 2021.

Mr. Burns moved to renew the South Strabane Fire Department's General Liability Insurance. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9G: Motion Appointing a part-time Finance Clerk

Mr. Stanick presented for the Board's consideration a motion appointing Lisa Carrier as Part-Time Finance Clerk. Ms. Carrier would work 20 hours per week with a starting wage of \$18 per hour.

Mr. Burns moved to appoint a part-time Finance Clerk. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

10. ADJOURNMENT

As no further business came before the Board, Mr. Murphy moved to adjourn the meeting. Chair Weber seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon J. Stanick
Township Manager