

The stated meeting of the Public Safety Committee of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held on Wednesday, October 3, 2018 at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA., with Commissioner Schreiber, Chairperson presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 8:34 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Commissioners SCHREIBER, DiPLACIDO, ROTHMAN, THOMPSON, VAHEY

Township Manager MANFREDI
Assistant Township Manager WEHMEYER
Township Solicitor CLARKE
Chief of Police MOLLOY
Traffic Safety Officer POSEY
Traffic Safety Officer FREED

Also Present: Commissioners LUKER, KLINE, ZAPPONE, BOWMAN, BRODSKY, SANCHEZ, GILLESPIE, SPIEGELMAN, MYERS, CARSWELL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Schreiber made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Vahey to approve the minutes of the September 5, 2018 Public Safety Committee Meeting.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

PRESENTATION:

Red Light Camera Update:

Chief Molloy presented an update on Red Light Camera Program and a copy was provided to the Board.

Commissioner Schreiber questioned the amount of appeals for violations.

Officer Posey replied less than 3%. Violation notice includes directions on how to appeal, and any calls on appealing a violation due to emergencies are taken care of at that time.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff.

Commissioner Thompson asked are photos of violations sent with the notice?

Officer Posey replied violation notice includes a picture and if they go to the website and login they can see the exact same video/pictures as we do.

Commissioner Spiegelman said since GATSO upgraded their technology has their other customers experienced a spike in violations in the past two years.

Officer Posey replied he will look into it; however, most likely. Abington was the first to get the upgrade.

Vice President Kline said he does not understand the correlation between upgrades and increase in violations as this program was supposed to be a deterrent.

Officer Posey replied we see a lot of first-time offenders and upgrade to red light cameras resulted in more nighttime violations, so they are violations we might have missed in the past.

Chief Molloy added that we will research the amount of violations before and after the upgrades and report back on it.

Vice President Kline said it was discussed as being a public service to reduce crashes, so why are violations increasing?

Chief Molloy replied at this time, we do not know what the impact of the upgrade in technology is, but we will get that information as soon as possible.

Vice President Kline said Abington was the trailblazer for this program and it does not seem that any other municipalities in Pennsylvania have taken this on, so what do you attribute that to?

Chief Molloy replied there are a number of impediments for those counties such as not having support by their elected officials. We are willing to experiment in this community when it comes to traffic safety, which is why we are successful.

Vice President Kline said he is not sure the experiment is reaping benefits although he understands there are figures for decreased crashes; however, he does not know how those crashes are cataloged and he does not have information on how those crashes are determined. The deterrent is the points and not the \$100 fine. He also questioned the amount of overtime officers received due to this program.

Chief Molloy replied we will provide all of that information to the Board. Regarding points, many officers do not cite for points. Data suggests that motorists do not want another violation resulting in changed behavior, although we do have repeat offenders, but they have also decreased.

Vice President Kline said he would like to know the amount of repeat offenders.

Commissioner Schreiber asked about changing the signage.

Chief Molloy replied signage is regulated by State law.

Officer Posey added we also put out message boards a few times a year at the red light camera intersections.

Commissioner Spiegelman said he would like to see violation data from GATSO from their other customers after technology upgrades were made.

Commissioner Myers asked what is the fine and points for violations at intersections with no red light cameras?

Chief Molloy replied fine is approximately \$200 and the points would be for a moving violation.

Commissioner Myers said it also costs money to have officers at these intersections.

Chief Molloy agreed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

Item PS-01-101118:

Commissioner Schreiber made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner DiPlacido to appoint candidates Daniel Burgman and Anthony Agudo from the Civil Service Eligibility List to the position of Probationary Police Officer provided that they successfully complete the Background Investigation, the Medical/Psychological screenings, and all other entry requirements of the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission for Act 120 Training, effective Monday, October 29, 2018.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff. There were none.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Item PS-02-101118:

Commissioner Schreiber made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Vahey to accept the FY 2017 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant in the amount of \$117,500.00.

Commissioner Schreiber called on Fire Marshal Rohrer and Mr. Dave Schramm, Fire Administrator.

Mr. Schramm said this grant will be used to increase marketing programs; website; Facebook page; produce a video; graphic designs; trade shows; brochures; power point presentations, etc., as described in our strategic plan. It is a four-year grant.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff.

Commissioner Thompson clarified that there are no matching funds and no cost to taxpayers. Is that correct?

Mr. Schramm replied that is correct.

Commissioner Thompson asked for status of recruitment.

Mr. Schramm replied membership has remained stable for years and it is tracked every month.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Item PS-03-101118:

Commissioner Schreiber made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Thompson to enter into an agreement with ESO Solutions to provide software support to the Fire Marshal's Office and authorize the Township Manager to execute said agreement.

Fire Marshal Rohrer said since 2006, our office has used Fire House software as a platform for inspection programs and it has become outdated. Fire House software merged with ESO Solutions and the new parent company requires an updated licensing agreement that will result in \$4,000 savings this year.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff. There were none.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Mr. Schramm announced that the Fire Department received another grant from the Firemen's Association of the State of Pennsylvania for recruitment programs. Also, next week is Fire Prevention Week and all five fire stations have open houses planned.

Commissioner Schreiber acknowledged that Rich Garrett, Second Alarmers, who was present this evening to answer any questions by the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any general comments relating to Public Safety.

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, asked for a "presentation on red light camera program of the least obtrusive violations."

ADJOURNMENT: 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard J. Manfredi, Township Manager/Secretary

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