



West Pikeland Township

| ATTENDING BOARD OF SUPERVISORS | ATTENDING TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Noreen Vigilante, Chair | Dorene Guistwhite, Township Treasurer |
| Harold Hallmann III, Vice Chair | Shane Clark, Chief of Police |
| Steven Costa, Supervisor | Joseph L. Romano III, Township Manager |
| Tom McLewee, Supervisor | Theresa Stockdale, Assistant Secretary |
| Carin Mifsud, Supervisor | |

Ms. Vigilante called the meeting to order on January 21, 2025, at 7:30 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Vigilante explained that the Board held an executive session on January 21, 2025, at 6:30 PM. The topic of discussion was personnel.

AGENDA MODIFICATION & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Vigilante moved New Business, the swearing-in of Animal Control Officer Swearing-In, to follow Approval of Minutes. The Board unanimously approved the proposed modification to the agenda. With the modification approved, Mr. McLewee motioned to approve the agenda as presented for the January 21, 2025, Board of Supervisors meeting. Seconded by Mr. Costa. Motion unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Hallman to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2025, Board of Supervisors meeting. Seconded by Mr. McLewee. Motion unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Glenn Deery, Sr., was sworn in by Noreen Vigilante, Chair as the Township's Animal Control Officer. Officer Deery will monitor and enforce our Animal Control Ordinance 2025-02 and Township's Animal Control Policy dated 6 January 2025.

REPORTS

a. Police Report: Chief Shane Clark presented the January report. The Board thanked the Chief for the information.

b. Treasurer Report/Approval of Bills: Ms. Dorene Guistwhite provided a written report to the Board. Motion by Mr. Costa to approve the bills as presented. Seconded by Mr. McLewee. Motion passed unanimously with Mr. Hallman abstaining from approving check the WEX Bank expenditure of \$1692.72 due to a declared conflict of interest.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Vigilante acknowledged the larger than normal public turnout attributing it to the Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) Police Management Assessment Study out-brief. Ms. Vigilante shared with the public, comments would be limited to ensure the meeting remained orderly and on schedule.

-Resident, Mr. Edward Gallen, a 50-year resident and former police officer, commended Chief Clark for his service. He expressed his perspective that if the township were to consider a regional police department, it would result in a loss of personalized service and would not yield cost savings.

-Resident, Mr. Alex Bratic, a 21-year resident stated that the value of the township's police department cannot be measured solely in financial terms. He expressed concern that transitioning to a regional police model would result in a loss of personalized service. He also noted that he considers the township's current police budget to be modest.

-Resident Ms. Marguerite Gripton, a 30-year resident, expressed a safety concern, stating that first responders are always the police department. She also noted that she is uncertain about what regionalization of the police department entails.

Consultant, Chief David Steffan clarified that regionalization is one of several police service options available to the municipality leadership. Later in the meeting, Ms. Gripton asked for a definition of regionalization in relation to the police force and expressed concern that it meant that the State Police would take over. Mr. Romano shared that regional policing pools neighboring municipalities resources and funding while improving uniformity and consistency of enforcement; coordination of law-enforcement services; recruitment, distribution and deployment of police personnel; training and personnel efficiency; management and supervision; and career enhancement opportunities.

-Resident Ms. Barbara Powers stated that her street has experienced several health emergencies in recent years and that the police have consistently been the first to respond and assist. She also expressed difficulty navigating the township's website.

-Resident Benneth Thompson stated that he attended the meeting to voice his support for the police department. He emphasized that police officers are typically the first responders in emergencies and noted that while the township is rural, its wealth makes it a potential target for crime. He expressed his belief that a strong police presence is essential for maintaining safety and preventing crime.

-Resident Ms. Mary Jo Marian stated that her household has made two 911 calls in recent months and that the police have consistently arrived first. She emphasized that the officers are familiar with her home and understand the concerns of residents. She expressed concern that any changes to the current police structure could result in slower response times.

-Resident Mr. Edward Gallen suggested that the township should conduct physical mailings to provide information updates on the police topic, as many residents do not use email or visit the website.

Ms. Vigilante reminded residents to email any questions to office@westpikeland.com.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) Police Management-Technical Assistance Update (Ms. Anne Weaver Morrow and David Steffan):

Ms. Anne Weaver Morrow, DCED Local Government Policy Specialist and Chief (Ret) David Steffan, Police Peer Consultant, briefed the public on leadership's request for management assessment of police services, following an earlier executive brief.

Ms. Morrow stated that the Board of Supervisors submitted a letter of intent in September 2024 to evaluate the police department. She explained that data was collected to provide a study and report to the Board to assist in making data-driven decisions. The team presented recommendations and will be available to assist with implementing any of them, should the Board choose to do so.

She provided Chief Steffan's background and stated that he would present an update. Before doing so, she extended best wishes to Chief Shane Clark on his upcoming retirement.

Chief David Steffan shared:

1) that he conducted a comprehensive review of the police agency. He noted that exploring regionalization was a recommendation in the report, as were others, to provide police services. He also reviewed police accreditation standards and stated that, in their current form, the township's police department would not qualify for accreditation.

2) the importance of controlling exposure to risk and stated that the report outlines recommendations, but the governing body is not required to implement any of them.

3) department policies and procedures were reviewed for comparison with accepted best practices in the law enforcement profession. The review was not limited to comparison with Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation standards (PLEAC) but rather extended to additional law enforcement responsibilities and practices not addressed by PLEAC.

4) the WPTPD currently lacks adequate functional internal controls for certain operational, administrative, risk reduction, cost control /containment, and sustainability aspects.

5) the WPTPD currently lacks a strategic plan. This is common in smaller agencies; however, this management failure negatively impacts the agency in the budgetary arena. A budget supports what a municipality and its citizens want to accomplish – now and in the future.

6) the fiscal analysis conducted must be viewed from the perspective that the WPTPD typically provides less than 24 hours of daily police coverage. The cost per capita and the cost per officer calculations were based upon the total costs attributed to the WPTPD including capital costs for the period. The current 2024 police department budget for WPTPD was reported as \$1,039,299.00 and includes an officer's salary, benefits, uniforms, equipment, vehicles, support staff, and all other items required to maintain one full-time officer position.

Chief Steffen concluded by thank both township leadership, Chief Clark and members of the police force.

Ms. Vigilante stated that this process has been public and encouraged residents to attend the bimonthly Board of Supervisor meetings.

Mr. Costa noted that the police management assessment is an ongoing process and reminded the public that they are welcome to share concerns and input during the public comment section at any Board meeting, regardless of whether the topic is on the agenda.

Mr. Hallman invited the public to attend Chief Clark's Clap (Walk) Out at the township building on Friday, February 7, 2025, at 1:00 PM.

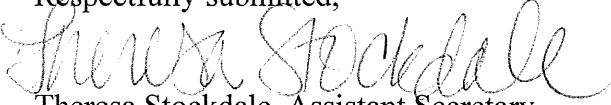
ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Board of Supervisors meetings are scheduled for: Monday, February 3, 2025, at 7:30 PM, and Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 7:30 PM

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Costa to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 PM. Seconded by Mr. McLewee. Motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Theresa Stockdale, Assistant Secretary