

**UPPER MORELAND TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

September 17, 2007

CALL TO ORDER – Comm. Hotchkiss called a meeting of the Public Health & Safety Committee to order at 10:45 p.m.

ROLL CALL – Comm. Hotchkiss, Chairman took roll call. Present: Commissioner Richard Booth.

Others: David Dodies, Township Manager, Richard Watt, Township Solicitor, Lt. Alex Levy, representing the Police Department and Joseph O’Neill, Director of Emergency Services.

NEW BUSINESS:

Traffic Safety – Horsham Road:

Wayne Fritz, 2605 Horsham Road, said there have been four accidents in five weeks. It is a 25 mph area and we had a vehicle come through so fast that it hit his work van, went across his front yard ending up in his driveway. Another car went through his neighbor’s front yard uprooting a tree and ended up a foot from her front window and there have been two other accidents ending up on front yards. This is the second company van he has lost in five years and he is no longer allowed to bring his van home. We need help in this area with safety and speeding. He has photos of damage done by these accidents. It is getting so close that one of these accidents will result in a car going into someone’s home.

Lt. Levy said everything that Mr. Fritz said is correct. Statistically, we averaged one accident a month in the last eight years; however, in the last month, we had four accidents. A traffic study was done several years ago, which indicated that the speed limit is not correct; however, we do enforce the 25 mph speed limit and issue citations.

Mr. Fritz noted that the Horsham Police sits at Blair Mill and Rt. 611 on a regular basis so that has increased traffic in his area.

Comm. Booth asked about metal guard rails.

Lt. Levy replied he does not think the homeowner would want guard rails in front of their home. We do patrol that road heavily and we will increase enforcement there.

Mr. Fritz said there are a lot of kids on this road and he is not opposed to a guard rail.

Lt. Levy said it is a State road.

Mr. Dodies suggested that our Traffic Engineer look into it and make a recommendation for alternatives.

Comm. Hotchkiss noted there are three different municipalities involved.

Lt. Levy added we will increase enforcement over the next couple of weeks.

Comm. Hotchkiss said this item will remain on the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Comm. Hotchkiss accepted the minutes of the July 9, 2007 Public Health & Safety Committee meeting into the record as submitted.

REPORTS:

Police Department:

Comm. Hotchkiss noted that traffic stops and citations have increased as well as arrests. He thanked Lt. Alex Levy for his efforts in the Township as our highest ranking police officer on active duty at this time.

Department of Emergency Services:

Comm. Hotchkiss thanked Mr. O'Neill for putting in extra hours in making preparations for a funeral in the sudden death of one of our firefighters.

FIRE PROTECTION:

Mr. O'Neill said the Fire Company will have a Family Day on Saturday, October 6th at 9:00 a.m., which will be held at the Elementary School Complex on Orangeman's Road.

Comm. Hotchkiss announced that October is Fire Prevention Month.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

There were no comments.

OLD BUSINESS:

Woodcrest Road to Edgehill Road:

Mr. Dodies noted that we are waiting for a written report from PennDOT so he asked for this matter to be continued.

Sexual Offender Ordinance:

Comm. Hotchkiss said in May 2006, we received a proposal to prepare a map to identify all of the areas in the Township where children may be present. Unfortunately, our insurance carrier, DVIT sent a letter dated May, 2006 strongly recommending that we not adopt an ordinance, but instead to write letters to encourage the General Assembly to pass legislation imposing residency restrictions on convicted sexual offenders. We did that and there are currently several Bills pending in State committees. A call was made to our carrier again and they responded in a letter dated July, 2007 requesting that we write two more letters to our legislators and sent two sample letters supporting the legislation that they propose. Our Solicitor has recommended that we not enact any ordinance.

Our mission says that we are to protect the health and welfare of our residents, but we also have to protect our financial ability to support something like that.

Solicitor Watt said if we pass an ordinance; litigation would be generated by how we are enforcing the ordinance.

Comm. Booth asked Mr. Dodies to call the First Class Township organization on the status of the Bills pending.

Comm. Hotchkiss said this item will remain on the agenda.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Comm. Efkowitz commented we have a new towing company in town and there has been a lot of police activity, and asked Lt. Levy to elaborate on it.

Lt. Levy replied that the towing company tows cars out of Philadelphia that are parked illegally and they charge people a lot of money to get their car back.

VISITOR COMMENTS:

Jonathan deJonge commented in August, 2007, an elderly lady who was disoriented and did not speak English was found on her lawn on his street. The Second Alarmers were called and Ken Johnson helped the woman be reunited with her family. He commended Mr. Johnson for his work.

Kevin Spearing encouraged neighbors to check the Megan's Law website. He was under the impression that a violent predator had an obligation to report their residency.

Solicitor Watt replied the State law is just for registration at this time.

Chris Haywood commented these people look for places to live and, if Upper Moreland doesn't do anything about it; it will be a safe haven for them.

ADJOURNMENT: 11:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. Elizabeth Vile