COLLEGE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

SEPTEMBER 22, 1983

Chairman Gale Dargitz called to order the regular meeting of the College Township Council at 4:00 P.M. on Thursday, September 22, 1983, in the College Township Municipal Building.

Members present: Donald E. Bailey, Gale L. Dargitz - Chairman, Herbert W. Stewart, Dolores A. Taricani

Members absent: J. Carroll Dean

Others present: C. Thomas Lechner - Manager
Beulah Houser - Administrative Assistant

BUSINESS 1 - POLICE CONTRACT DISCUSSION

Chief of Police Elwood G. Williams, Jr. and Theresa McElwain were present to discuss the proposed 1984 Police Contract with Council. Chairman Dargitz opened the discussion by saying that some of their differences had already been resolved; however, the one major item with which Council took issue was the 10 percent service charge. Dean had especially felt strongly about reducing that figure at the last meeting. Dargitz added that, as Council's Representative, he had attended the State College Borough's Public Safety meeting the previous week. Although the 10 percent number was an area of disagreement among State College Council, the fact emerged that the item, at least for now, the percentage number was fixed.

Chief Williams substantiated that point and said although it was not negotiable at this time, if another study were done which showed that the figure could be reduced, they would be willing to discuss it again.

Dargitz emphasized that the 10 percent figure was established by the Borough Council, not the police. After more discussion, Council seemed to arrive at a consensus of "reluctant acceptance" of the service charge, but stated that Dean should air his concerns with the police before a final decision could be made.

Stewart then posed two questions: (1) If the Township could not afford the services offered in the contract and had to cut services, would there be hard feelings; and (2) Could the hours in which the Township was not patrolled (if the Council decided on reduced services), be changed intermittently or must they adhere to fixed schedule?

Chief Williams indicated that no resentment would occur if services were cut. He preferred that Council look at correspondence between Lechner and himself rather than mention possible unpatrolled time periods. Even during those time periods, a random check would prevent the Township from being entirely unprotected, he said.

Lechner reminded Council of the time frame they were working with by referring to Page 6 of the Contract. "By September 15 of each year, the Chief of Police shall notify the Township of the level of service required... By October 15, the Township shall notify the Chief of Police of the level of service requested weekly...".

Lechner then asked if in the next paragraph on Page 6, the "it will be necessary" could be changed to "it may be necessary", a correction suggested at an earlier meeting by Dean. Chief Williams agreed and added that another requested change on Page 5 -- that the hours per week be based on an average of 52 weeks -- could be incorporated also and any increase would be changed accordingly.

Dargitz, in clarifying the issue of Special School Police, said it was his understanding that if we ask you to supervise, then you would hire. If we continue to hire, then you would not supervise although we are interested in our police attending your training session. Chief Williams indicated there was no problem with that issue.

Asked about Item D, Page 4, "Conduct residential and commercial surveys...", Chief Williams explained that this was a special program in which, on request, trained officers would conduct security surveys on properties and make recommendations for added security. The network, also mentioned in that paragraph, was formed to reduce retail theft; it consisted of business people calling other pre-assigned business people to alert them if a threatening crime element was working in the area.

Then Dargitz asked how the service in 1983 -- the 168 weekly patrol hours and the 49 backup hours for 217 hours weekly at $169,000 -- would compare to 1984. Lechner answered that the 1984 service was proposed at 195 patrol hours, 20 backup hours for 215 hours weekly at a cost of $197,000. The item would be divided among 6.15 officers at $17.63 per hour (including service charge).

As the discussion progressed, Chief Williams stated that these figures were based on the same formula used to achieve the Borough's Police Budget, that these were very preliminary figures that could change and if the budget were to be reduced, the $17.63 figure would decrease also. The annual charge of $197,000 is a preliminary figure, he said, subject to final budget approval since we're in a negotiating year with the Union.

Although Dargitz avoided specifics in reduced service, he did say a possible decreased service level would be 201.5 hours instead of 215 hours which, at $17.63, would be $185,000. Taricani said she hoped the level of service would not be decreased; we don't have too much police service now.

BUSINESS 2 - COMMUNITY RELATIONS/CRIME SPECIALIST AND VANDALISM IN THE POST OFFICE AREA

Lechner asked Chief Williams to explain special services provided by the Police that would help solve the vandalism problem in the Post Office area. Citing an example in which a number of burglaries were occurring in a local area, Chief Williams said that the Community Relations/Crime Prevention Specialist organized several neighborhood coffees. Soon a watchful concern developed among the residents and the burglaries subsided.

The Lemont Village Association, speculated Dargitz, seemed like an appropriate place to start. By determining who in that group was interested, a new neighborhood watch group could be formed. Lechner added that they have 45 paid members with a quarterly newsletter that would be sent out next in December. He had talked to the President of LVA who was agreeable to using the LVA Newsletter as a vehicle for transmitting the information.

Concurring with that direction of action, Taricani stressed that the Police could not be present near the Post Office all the time; the solution had to come from the neighborhood itself. Bailey noted there were few private homes in that vicinity which was not conducive to keeping watch.

Taricani suggested that perhaps Council and LVA together could sponsor a newspaper ad to the effect that the Post Office had been constructed with the combined efforts of many people but lately a deep concern has grown over conditions destructive to it.... People will read something like that, said Taricani.

Maybe it will catch the attention of parents whose children are involved in the vandalism.

Chief Williams responded by saying he would look into the situation in depth. Lechner said he would get back to David Caster, Community Relations/ Crime Prevention Specialist, and then take direct action. All agreed the Lemont Village Association was a good place to begin compaigning for help. Lechner offered the Township building as a meeting place.

BUSINESS 3 - UPDATE ON ADVISORY TAX REFERENDUM

Briefly reviewing the situation, Dargitz stated that one and one-half weeks after the Board of Elections decided not to place the question on the ballot, he received the letter notifying Council of their decision. The reasons for their decision were:

(1) from a legal standpoint and upon consultation with the Solicitor, it would be safer not to place such a question on the ballot, and

(2) by establishing a precedent of placing an advisory question on the ballot, it would be difficult to refuse requests from other townships and boroughs.

In asking for a copy of the letter stating the Solicitor's opinion, Dargitz said he was refused. However, the Council members could go to the Court House to read (but not copy) it. Council agreed with Taricani that not only was the result disappointing but the logic within producing the result was equally disappointing.

Taricani asked if they were turned down because the question was advisory. Dargitz responded that they didn't appear to make a distinction between advisory and a binding referendum. Taricani suggested the Board of Elections be contacted again in whatever way Dargitz felt appropriate. Council concurred.

BUSINESS 4 - UPDATE ON PIKE STREET TURNBACK

Lechner reported that he had received a reply from PennDOT's District Manager Dave Zazworsky who was responding to the cursory report of improvements needed on Pike Street. Zazworsky stated that if PennDOT would make some of these improvements, was it Council's intent to take over Pike Street, i.e., Lechner explained, is the intent real as opposed to our just trying to get them to shape

up Pike Street. Lechner thought Zazworsky didn't necessarily agree with everything in the report. To which Dargitz replied that Zazworsky should indicate in writing which the improvements PennDOT is willing to make and we will give him our intent in writing as to whether we intend to take over the street.

Taricani agreed saying Council would have good information on which to evaluate their decision.

Asking if it were safe to assume that we are not willing to take back Pike Street until they (PennDOT) make some improvements, Lechner received a positive response from Council.

BUSINESS 5 - NEW NAME FOR OLD GERALD STREET

Explaining the problem, Dargitz said the portion of Gerald Street between East College Avenue and new Gerald Street needed another name to avoid confusion. Lechner added that the resolution for the name change was drawn up and it was just a matter of inserting the name.

Bailey suggested they follow the pattern of people's names for streets running in that direction. However, after some futile discussion, Taricani suggested the issue be tabled until the next meeting. Dargitz added that Dean should be notified of the street name issue so he could be prepared with some input.

BUSINESS 6 - SIGNING THE SALT CONTRACT

Council members signed the contract with International Salt, the Company who they had voted at a previous meeting to accept its bid to provide salt for College Township's roads this winter.

BUSINESS 7 - APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL SCHOOL POLICE

Lechner presented Resolution 73-B which listed the names of people to serve as Special School Police from September 6, 1983 through June 6, 1984. Taricani moved that Council adopt Resolution 73-B, Stewart seconded, and the motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dargitz announced that (1) a Work Session with the Planning Commission would be held on September 29 at 7:30 p.m. in which the proposed Temporary Use Amendment and the Subdivision and Zoning Amendments would be discussed; and

(2) the dates for riff-raff and brush collection to be scheduled for October 11 through 14 and October 17 through 20.

Bail announced an upcoming workshop on Urban Development that was described in a letter he had received from Senator John Heinz.

Taricani asked that the letter she received from Arthur A. Hower, III concerning suggestions for improving safety on Route 322 (South Atherton Street) be forwarded to PennDOT and the Metropolitan Planning Organization and that Mr. Hower be notified of that action.

Everhart Village was the only area in College Township to be listed as the area to be sprayed as part of the Centre County Gypsy Moth Program, said Dargitz; the County Commissioners need a reply by October 10 (re: letter dated September 16, 1983 from the Centre County Board of Commissioners to Thomas Lechner). Taricani responded that in their judgement (and she added I have to trust their judgement) it's necessary, then I move we participate in the Centre County Gypsy Moth Spraying Program as they have recommended. After Bailey seconded, the motion passed.

Taricani also moved that Council be adjourned at 5:05. Bailey seconded and all happily agreed.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Thomas Lechner
Secretary

CTL:jh:bh