

Williamsburg Township Board of Trustees Minutes December 17, 2009

The Williamsburg Township Board of Trustees met on Monday, December 17, 2009 to transact business. Chairman Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, and all joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Guy Bainum, Bari Henning and Jim Taylor answered the roll call. Also present were Fiscal Officer, Gregory W. Carson, Jason Pollitt, Angie Pollitt, Charles Wilson, Mark Burba, Trevor Spencer, Daniel Bainum, Gary Jordan, Keith Patton, Richard Malott, Michael Hoh, Josh Brown, Missi Brown, Jodi, Wiedemann, Chris Mullins, Laura Mullins, Mary Marshall, Randy Gadzinski and Mable Sheppard

Mr. Taylor said that we are having this special to announce who the next fire chief will be. He said that they would do the motion to hire at the regular board meeting on December 28. He said that we looked at several people and after talking with them, we realized that salary was going to be too high for our budget. He said that has led us to hire a part time person instead of a full time person so that we can maintain the high level of service that our residents deserve without having to go to the tax payers for more money. He said that we are hiring Trevor "TJ" Spencer as the new fire chief. He said that there were tons of rumors that he heard over the past few months and most of them were false. Mr. Henning said that he wanted to explain what happened as to where we started and how we arrived at this decision. He said that this decision was very tough. He said that he lost a lot of sleep over this decision. Mr. Henning said that he heard that the trustees wanted to get rid of volunteers and cross train everyone. He said that we do not want to get rid of the volunteers. They are a tremendous asset to this township and we could not function without them. He said that there is no way we could ever expect everyone to be cross trained. He said that when we first started this process, we realized that the new chief needs to be a Leader and have good people skills. He said that we advertised that we wanted a Firefighter/EMT and a paramedic preferred. He said that a lot of changes have occurred in the past 20 years and he said that we were trying to look toward the future. He said that we thought we could use the salary of the part time medics that cover us 40 hours during the week and combine it with the current fire chief salary to try to justify the salary of a full time chief that could also be a paramedic. He said that we got stacks of applications/resumes for the position. He said that we pulled six interviews with six paramedics to have interviews with. Right before we interviewed the first three, one of them pulled out, we had a knee jerk reaction to fill that 1 hour interview spot and interviewed a non paramedic. He said that we could have pulled a Williamsburg person to fill that slot, but since there was more than one, we didn't think it would be fair to only pull one, so we pulled an out of town person. He said that was the wrong decision and apologized for it, because it sent the wrong message to our Williamsburg people. He said that we interviewed several good paramedics, but during the interview process, we heard some of the salaries that the interviewees expected and was very surprised at how high it was. He said that he discussed our scenario with one of our volunteers and they told him that it wouldn't work. He said that all of those factors combined made us to start realize that it may not be the right time to hire the full time fire chief/paramedic. He said that he believes things happen for a reason and we realized that TJ Spencer had been interested in the job, but he didn't apply, because he didn't meet the criteria of being a paramedic. At that point, we decided to talk to Mr. Spencer and discuss the possibility of a part time fire chief. Mr. Bainum said that he thanked the volunteers for all that they do and respect them greatly and hopes that we didn't offend anyone during this process. He said that this is the first time he's ever hired a fire chief and we were all a little green in this process as the current fire chief has been here for 32+ years. He said that he cares about each of them and their families very much. Mr. Malott said that the trustees explained what happened correctly. Mr. Taylor said that he had heard that everyone complained about how long the process took. He said that everyone needs to understand that the process is very lengthy when it involves government. There is a timeline that has to be followed. He said that the rumor was going around that not all of the trustees were involved in the interview process and he said that was false. He said that all three trustees, the fiscal officer and Chief Malott were involved in every interview.

Mr. Taylor said that when you try to replace an "icon" in the community that everyone looks up to such as Chief Malott, it's hard to do, because he has such huge shoes to fill. He said that he is always worried about people saying, "Chief Malott didn't do it that way", but we need to move forward and embrace any changes that may occur. He said that Chief Malott may be retiring as Chief, but he is still going to be around to volunteer and mentor the new Chief for as long as he's healthy.

Mr. Spencer said that he is honored to accept the position and scared to death. He said that he knows he has big shoes to fill and knows that changes may occur and hopes that people will embrace them. He asked for everyone to give him a fair shake. He said that he plans to rely on each of them, because they are all experts. He said that there are going to be growing pains, but the door is always open and the phone is always there to talk to him.

Mr. Taylor asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Mr. Taylor made a motion to cancel the special meeting that was set up on Monday night in case tonight's meeting didn't work out. Mr. Bainum second. All yeas.

Mr. Bainum motioned to adjourn at approximately 6:35 p.m. Mr. Henning second. All yeas.

Fiscal Officer

Chairman