

Board of Supervisors – October 13, 2026

**TOWNSHIP OF FALLS
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING**

ROLL CALL:

JEFFRY E. DENCE, CHAIRMAN	PRESENT
BRIAN M. GALLOWAY, SECRETARY	ABSENT
ERIN M. MULLEN, VICE-CHAIRPERSON	PRESENT
JOHN W. PALMER, SUPERVISOR	PRESENT
TIMOTHY M. LOTECKIE, SUPERVISOR	PRESENT

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. with roll call and pledge to the flag. All Board members were present with the exception of Member Galloway. Also present were Township Manager John Shepherd, Finance Director Betsy Reukauf, Parks and Recreation Department Director Brian Andrews, Police Chief Nelson Whitney, and Public Works Department Foreman Joe Arnao.

ITEM # 1 EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session held.

**ITEM # 2 PUBLIC COMMENT – FIVE MINUTE LIMIT PER PERSON FORTY–
FIVE MINUTE MAXIMUM**

No one was present this evening.

ITEM # 3 BUDGET WORKSHOP

Mr. Shepherd said this evening they will discuss the capital budget. For the budget timeline, we had the first meeting in September. This is our second meeting. The first meeting was an introduction to get everyone focused on the 2027 Budget. The next Budget Work Session is November 10th. At that point, we will be talking primarily about the Operating Budget for all of the departments. Our goal is to have the board authorize the budget at their November 23rd meeting and ultimately, the 2027 Budget would be adopted in December. Our meeting is currently scheduled for December 21, 2026. This is our first pass at the capital budget and we are looking for input and feedback. Mr. Shepherd's goal is to plan for a \$4M budget on an annual basis from a capital standpoint. One thing that is outside of that \$4M target would be some road reconstruction projects. We are still doing some road reconstruction projects in some of the subdivisions where we have roads that we feel need to be reconstructed and it is from the ground up rebuilding that road. This year we did one half of Willow Drive and next year we plan to do one half of Willow Drive but ultimately there are some additional roads. Once we get a final list from the Township Engineer and Mr. Arnao, we will be including those on an annual basis outside of the \$4M plan to get those done. Once we do those projects, they shouldn't need to be done again for a long time.

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The board has the list in front of them of every project that is proposed. Some of those projects that are listed we have moved out to future years even though they were requested. Because of that \$4M spending target, we couldn't do every project for every department.

Parks and Recreation

Kirby Park \$75,000. That has been a carry-over project for a few years and we want to include that on the plan for 2027. This is resurfacing and relining of the existing basketball court, new hoops, new goals and an overlay of some of the trail system within Kirby Park. There are asphalt trails in there. The next project is Safety Town at Penns Grant. We had this on for 2026 but needed to spend a little bit of time on engineering. The engineering design is now complete and we have an engineer's cost estimate for that. It is ready to be bid out and ready to be constructed in 2027. At the Community Garden in the Community Park is a \$10,000 line item for a plant bed replacement. It is a smaller project, but something we need to do. We have park signage at all park locations. This is a carry-over project from 2026 into 2027. We are recommending two new park security staff vehicles. This is replacement of the current fleet, not an enhancement or additional vehicles. The current vehicles have been somewhat problematic and will be traded in or auctioned off. Chairman Dence asked about the Commemorative Park bench replacement. Are we replacing the ones that are already there? Mr. Andrews said they will be replacing the current wood-style benches that are there and we want to go to recycled plastic like we've done with the memorial benches. That will give us more longevity. These are just regular benches. Member Palmer asked if this comes from the donation fund or is this straight out of capital. Mr. Andrews said that was straight out of capital funds when we did the replacement program. They were originally purchased and then the Township replaced them at our cost over the years. Member Palmer asked about a rehab project at Kirby Park. Is that still ongoing? Chief Whitney said his understanding is that it evolved into the current plan where the Parks and Rec Department is refurbishing some areas of the park. The Police Department plan was designed to align with our 75th anniversary which has passed so he believes the plan has changed. Member Palmer asked if we purchased a sign machine so they can make signs in house? Mr. Shepherd said it depends on the size and type of sign. Street signs and things like that we can do but the signs that we are talking about are something like a more decorative entryway sign for the parks. Ultimately, whatever design we come up with that the board approves, whether we make them in a house or not, we might want to use an outside vendor with the new Township logo that we have.

Public Works

These are projects the board has seen in the past because we did them last year. We try to do at least one road if we can by our Public Works Department, doing the work on a mill and overlay. We have on the list for 2027 East Tyburn Road in the amount of \$75,000. This is one that Mr. Arnao and his staff can do. The other program is the program that is managed by the Township Engineer and that needs to be an annual program. Every year there will be a mill and overlay program. For 2027, the budget is \$945,000 so when you add that amount with the \$75,000 for East Tyburn Road, that is over \$1,000,000. Mr. Shepherd is hoping to do at least a million dollars a year in mill and overlay. We will get

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the exact road list from the Township Engineer with Mr. Arnao's input. If we could do a little bit more than that, it's probably something that we certainly could use. It's just a matter of making that work with every other departmental request we have. Member Mullen asked Mr. Shepherd about what he said earlier that these road projects are included in the \$4 million target, correct? Mr. Shepherd said this is in the \$4 million target. The reconstruction that we have for 2027 - the reconstruction project is the completion of Willow Drive. We did approximately one half of that this year. That is outside the \$4 million. This is within that. At some point when we are done with road reconstruction, the mill and overlay will always be within the \$4 million or whatever number the board determines is appropriate for the capital budget. Mr. Shepherd thinks \$4 million is the proper target. The next project for Public Works is township-wide traffic sign replacement. This is one where they are going to replace street signs, speed limit signs, crosswalk signs, and things of that nature. They are thinking of \$25,000 annually over the next three to four years. This is one they know they need to do because of the federal guidelines on retro reflectivity. That is how well the signs are reflective for the general public. Public Works will need to replace those signs, maybe not on an annual basis, but there is certainly a lifespan of a sign. It could be 10 to 15 years, maybe a little bit longer depending on the location of the sign and how it's impacted by the weather. They will move forward at the direction of the Public Works Foreman. The Public Works street sweeper is a \$400,000 purchase. The plan for this purchase is to pay half of this through the Township funds and half of it would be through the Highway Aid fund or the State Liquid Fuels Fund. We are permitted to use a certain amount of money for capital equipment on an annual basis. This is a significant piece of equipment for Public Works and a new street sweeper for 2027. The current street sweeper is going on its 12th year. Member Mullen had a question about how the Highway Aid Fund works. Mr. Shepherd said it is based on road mileage and population, calculated by a state formula and it changes every year based on the amount of gasoline tax the state collects. Member Mullen asked if we can project how much we're going to get for next year. Mr. Shepherd asked Mrs. Reukauf if she would get the number to put in the budget. Mrs. Reukauf said it is just under \$900,000 and it does fluctuate a little bit each year.

Fire Marshal's Office

The only project for the Fire Marshal's Office for 2027 are security cameras at various locations. There was some carry-over money to be included, about \$18,000, that Mr. Dippolito had planned to do some cameras primarily in the community park. We are still interested in looking at that. We are interested in some of our satellite parks and we are also looking at the community pool, checking into some locations there to see if it makes sense to consider some cameras at the pool itself. The general fund, \$60,000, is not specific to any park but we think that's a good number to work with for cameras in 2027. If there is any specific location that the board is aware of that they want us to look at, please let Mr. Shepherd know. Chairman Dence said Elderberry Park is one that we know is an issue. Mr. Shepherd said they are looking at that one. The biggest challenge right now in Elderberry is limited infrastructure and by that it is somewhere to put it and how to power it. We will try to work through those issues as much as we can and we will figure out the best place to put it there. Chairman Dence asked about the radio communication shed repairs. Mr. Arnao

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said it is either at the boat ramp or the one on Lincoln Highway behind Peruzzi. There used to be something there by the tower. Mrs. Shepherd said he will get the specific location. Member Palmer had a question about the surveillance camera program and who oversees that. Mr. Shepherd said internally he has access to them as well as Mr. Dippolito and the police department. Mr. Shepherd does not oversee the program but different people want access to the cameras depending on where they are. We have a vendor that assists us with the technical aspect of it but ultimately, it is out of the Fire Marshal's Office. This system is not designed to have someone man it and watch it for situations that might come up. We have cameras at our property here inside the building, outside the building, and at the parks. In the event something does happen, we can go back and try to piece together what transpired.

Mr. James Brett (Falls Township) asked if these cameras are dangerous. Chairman Dence said the only place we have them is at the Quaker Penn Park. There are some at the community park and he believes there are some at the pool. They are not on the roads and they are not comparable to flock cameras. They are not monitoring residents. They are just security cameras in remote locations. Mr. Brett asked if there had been trouble in those areas. Chairman Dence said yes. The Quaker Penn Park is not a place that is easy for the police to get to so if there is something going on, they can access the camera and see what's going on down there. If something happens at the pool, they can go back and see what it was as well as the community park. The police did have the capability of accessing the cameras from their patrol cars before they switched everything over. Chief Whitney will check to see if they are still able to access them from their vehicles.

Administration

There are only a few projects for Administration. One project mentioned earlier was the development signage project as a carryover from 2026. We are going to get a design on that for the board to review and then we can move forward with the project. Signage needs to be consistent. Anything we are doing there and at the parks, it is good to have the signage consistent with our new logo. The other project we have in administration is a traffic signal improvement project. This is located at Pennsbury High School at the entrance. This is a Township match and depends on the grant. They pay 80% and we pay 20%. This should not be confused with any of the improvements that are mandated because of the improvements to the high school. The new high school project includes separate improvements that they will have to make outside of the scope of our grant project. PennDOT is aware of what those improvements are so anything that we do from a standpoint of signals, locations, and poles - they will take all of that into account for any improvements that the school is going to make on their site.

Code Enforcement

There is one project regarding blight remediation. We funded this in 2026 and wanted to have money available if we needed to move forward with any properties that fall into blight. We needed to use some Township funds to address that problem and ultimately the goal would be to lien the property to get our money back. We have not spent any money in 2026. The funding level is proposed at \$50,000 for the year and Mr. Takita, our Code

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Enforcement Director, is satisfied with that amount for 2027. Member Mullen asked about the recent motion to lien a house. Mr. Shepherd said our staff handled that so the cost was minimal. It was more manpower than anything for that project.

Police Department

There are a handful of projects proposed for 2027. Some of the projects that the Chief had proposed for 2027, we moved those into 2028 based on funding constraints. The list includes replacement of tasers over the course of a five-year period. They only have a certain life. The budgeted number for tasers for 2027 is around \$25,000. The next item for 2027 is to replace existing computer tablets that are in patrol vehicles. The cost for fourteen of those will be \$100,000. There is replacement of S.W.A.T. ballistic vests at approximately \$15,000. Also included in the budget for 2027, are funds for some additional police drones. The department currently has one drone in their possession and they want to expand their program. This will be used by the Police Department and potentially other departments that may need them. The police are investigating grant funding from different sources so they are taking a look at that. Chairman Dence asked about getting the Aubrey Group involved. Member Palmer asked about the drone and it was mentioned the police and the fire can both utilize it. Mr. Shepherd said he hopes they will and if there are opportunities for grants, that's certainly something we could explore. We want to make sure we know what we're doing when it comes to drone deployment, how it will work, and how it will benefit us.

Township Engineer

Mr. Shepherd already spoke about Willow Drive and the mill and overlay. Some projects we've received from Mr. Jones we have moved to 2028 or even future years. The majority of them are related to MS4, which is our stormwater permit that we get from the state of Pennsylvania. It is a five-year permit and that permit just finalized this year. It will start again sometime next year but there may be a gap between them. There are multiple projects that we need to do and by doing these, we get credits for reducing pollutants which are required under the permit. The MS4 permit started years ago through all the states. When you did it 15 years ago, they just wanted you to map and do things like trace contaminants. They have gotten more sophisticated by requiring these projects to reduce pollutant load and that is a great objective and a goal but they all come with money. Every one of these projects are expensive and the first one is Martin's Creek. Everyone is familiar with that. We applied in 2025 for grant funding and unfortunately, we just received notice recently from the state that we were not selected for grant funding for that project. The Martin's Creek restoration rehabilitation is a great project. Mr. Jones and Mr. Shepherd had the DEP staff here and showed them this project. They think it's a great project, they understand it, and they've seen it. They came out and did an inspection report as part of their review of our stormwater permit about a month ago so this project is on, designed, and ready to go. We were hopeful for getting the grant money from the state and unfortunately, we were not successful. The next project that we have, related to MS4, is the Vermilion Hills bio-retention basin. Mr. Jones can explain those projects from a technical standpoint at a future meeting. These projects are all very similar but in different locations. They will retrofit the stormwater basins to remove pollutants more than they currently do. By doing that, you get

a score from the state and that meets your permit requirements. These projects are in Vermilion Hills, Senior Center, North Park - those are all bio retention basin projects and they're all relatively expensive ranging between \$230,000 all in construction and engineering up to over \$500,000 for the Senior Center basin. Mr. Jones is going to look at the number for the senior center basin and if he thinks it is high, he might come in a little bit lower than that with an update. If he comes back with a number that is significantly lower for the final capital budget, we'll give you that number. The final project is a parks project that Mr. Jones designed. It is for enhancements of the current dog park at the community park. It is very hard to keep grass there as we do not have water there. There is a design for the rehabilitation of the turf with a turf that hopefully will withstand the dogs. It is not artificial. It is still a natural turf, but it's also the extension of a water line and by getting water there, we'll be able to water the grass as necessary and we'll be able to have water for the dogs that are utilizing the dog park. That is already designed and engineered and our budget amount is \$68,500. Our thought is to include that in the 2727 budget. Member Mullen is wondering if there is a correlation on the MS4 projects between cost and credits. For the ones that are more expensive, are we expecting to get more credits and is that something that we think about? With the Martins Creek repairs, we went into that hopeful about the grant. Are we getting so many credits that it still makes sense to proceed on such a large scale or is it something that we should be considering pairing down now that we were not successful with the grant? Mr. Shepherd said Mr. Jones would know the answer better than he would. One of the things that we struggle with are under the existing permit and the permit is expiring. It is a five-year permit. At some point it will be difficult to find projects and when that occurs, Mr. Shepherd is not sure what we're going to do under the permit. We only have so much public property so at some point he is not sure what they're going to expect us to do to reduce pollutant load if we don't have the ability to do it. Mr. Shepherd will ask Mr. Jones the question of credit versus cost and have him follow up with the board.

Mr. James Brett (629 South Olds Boulevard) said there has been an issue with Hanford Road and South Olds Boulevard. Everyone goes back and forth to see who is responsible. He has never had an issue in his back yard but now his shed was floating in the water. He submitted paperwork years ago and had officials out there to see the issue. When Hanford floods it is because the pipe coming from Hanford has nothing to feed into but the woods. Every house from Hanford Road across the street and from Chatham comes down and feeds the creek. The school took out the retention pond and ripped all the trees out. When it rains, Mr. Brett said the inlet at his house had never been more than a foot and a half or two feet from the top of the grade. It went past the grade going down to his neighbor's house and his driveway apron was underwater. This had never happened before. His backyard all the way to Chatham was flooded. There is now a sinkhole there. One year there was a fire engine floating in it and it stalled out, stuck in the water. The school district, county and township came out to look at this issue. The Township guys have been in the sewers and they clean them out all the time because there's leaks in them. There are roots in there clogging the pipes. Chatham's pipe is underwater. Mr. Brett provided additional history of this area and how he contacted TOFA but no one came out. Mr. Shepherd said he would

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like to speak with some township staff and then contact Mr. Brett. Depending on what needs to be done, it could be a future capital project. He would like to get some more background and detailed information on this. Mr. Brett said he has been here for 40 years and now it is worse. He lost a couple of lawn mowers that were in his shed because they got flooded, rusted out, and they weren't any good. Member Mullen said she understands how frustrating this has been for him. Mr. Brett said he needs somebody to come out and look at it. Mr. Shepherd said he has committed to looking at it and will definitely be in touch with Mr. Brett.

ITEM # 4 MANAGER COMMENT

No comment.

ITEM # 5 BOARD COMMENT

No comment.

Member Mullen moved to adjourn the meeting; Member Loteckie seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0) The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

**Brian M.
Galloway**

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Brian M. Galloway
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Brian Galloway, Secretary