

**Cherrytree Township Board of Supervisors
Special Meeting
Thursday, October 10, 2024
4:00 p.m.**

A special meeting of the Cherrytree Township Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, October 10, 2024, at 4:00 p.m., at the township building. In attendance were Jim Waugh, Rob Kellogg, and Shari Nelson, Supervisors, and Christine Kurelowech, Secretary-Treasurer.

Call to Order

Jim Waugh called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance

Moment of Prayer

Jim Waugh led those in attendance in a moment of prayer.

Public Comment

Kristyna Gould asked the Supervisors for permission to erect a 3' by 5' business sign on the township's property at the corner of Cherrytree Road and Buxton Road. She said that she would like to put it near the Cherrytree VFD sign and would make sure it is well-maintained. The Supervisors were in agreement to give Kristyna Gould permission to erect the sign on the township's property if she obtains a zoning permit first. Shari Nelson noted that the sign must not block the view for drivers.

Ken Bryan, Venango County Commissioner, asked the Supervisors to consider passing an ordinance to legalize ATV, side-by-side, and snowmobile use on all or some township roads. The ordinance would require anyone wanting to operate an ATV, side-by-side, or snowmobile on township roads to purchase a permit through Venango County. The township would be part of the Oil Region ATV Association, which would handle permitting and some enforcement activities. A permit would cost \$50.00, with the county receiving a \$6.50 portion, the township receiving a \$20.00 portion, and the Oil Region ATV Association receiving \$23.50 to be used to purchase signs, trail cams, insurance, and private property. The Oil Region ATV Association plans to use the private property that it purchases to create off-road trails. The Oil Region ATV Association would be responsible for signage on township roads. In order to operate on a township road, an ATV, side-by-side, or snowmobile would need to display a sticker to show that it has been permitted to do so. Motorcycles and dirt bikes would be exempt. Each rider would need to be at least 16 years of age and each permitted ATV, side-by-side, and snowmobile must be properly registered and insured. Additionally, riders would be required to wear helmets and mufflers would need to keep exhaust below 99 decibels. Ken Bryan explained that the township could customize the ordinance by limiting speed, limiting the number of roads that could be used, and specifying which hours of the day people could use ATVs, side-by-sides, and snowmobiles on township roads. The Oil Region ATV Association and the state police would handle enforcement. Ken Bryan brought a sample ordinance for the Supervisors to review.

New Business

Prepare 2025 Budget

Chrissie Kurelowech presented spreadsheets outlining the income and expenses for 2023 and 2024. The Board of Supervisors spent a great deal of time going through the spreadsheets, account by account, and budgeting an amount for each account for 2025.

The numbers budgeted for General Fund income remained the same for 2025 as they were for 2024, with the exception of five accounts. Account 310.10 (Recorder) was raised

from \$15,000.00 in 2024 to \$20,000.00 in 2025. Account 310.20 (HA Berkheimer – EIT (Earned Income Tax)) was raised from \$135,000.00 in 2024 to \$140,000.00 in 2025. Also, account 355.04 (Liquor License) was raised from \$200.00 in 2024 to \$300.00 in 2025 and account 356.00 (Game Commission) was raised from \$1,000.00 in 2024 to \$2,800.00 in 2025. This is because the PA Game Commission in lieu tax payment that the township receives recently increased due to legislation that increased the amount per acre that the state must pay. Additionally, a large privately-owned parcel in the township recently sold to the PA Game Commission. Account 362.47 (Zoning Fees) increased from \$1,500.00 in 2024 to \$2,000.00 in 2025.

As for Liquid Fuels income, it is estimated that the township will receive \$191,891.14 in Liquid Fuels tax revenue. As always, the township will receive \$24,240.00 in turnback funds from the state for maintenance of Dempseytown-Gresham Road (within Cherrytree Township) and \$1,680.00 in turnback funds from Oil Creek Township, Crawford County, for maintenance of Dempseytown-Gresham Road (Oil Creek Township, Crawford County, near Route 27). The Supervisors raised account 341.00 (Interest – State Savings) from \$0.00 in 2024 to \$4,000.00 in 2025. This is because PNC significantly increased the interest rate on the township's Liquid Fuels savings account at the beginning of 2024 and it is estimated that the township will receive \$6,185.30 in interest on that account in 2024.

The General Fund income for 2025 is estimated to total \$487,000.00 and the Liquid Fuels income is estimated to total \$221,811.14. The estimated total income for 2025 is \$708,811.14.

Most budgeted amounts for General Fund expense accounts changed little or not at all between 2024 and 2025. Account 404.00 (Legal) was decreased from \$4,000.00 in 2024 to \$2,000.00 in 2025. Account 405.15 (GG Secretary Salary) was raised from \$25,000.00 in 2024 to \$28,000.00 in 2025. This is because the account was over budget in 2023 and in 2024.

The Supervisors increased account 405.34 (Advertising Printing) from \$1,500.00 in 2024 to \$2,000.00 in 2025 due to the fact that the township now advertises in The Derrick because The Titusville Herald closed its doors in late 2022. Advertising in The Derrick is more expensive than advertising in The Herald (when The Herald existed). Chrissie Kurelowech said that, when the Titusville News-Journal (weekly publication) was free, it did not meet the criteria to be considered a “newspaper of general circulation” and the township is required to advertise all legal notices in a “newspaper of general circulation”. However, the Titusville News-Journal now sells subscriptions, so it is an option for the township's legal notices. Chrissie Kurelowech will contact the Titusville News-Journal for information on advertising rates. If the rates are significantly lower than the rates that The Derrick charges, the township might want to consider advertising in the Titusville News-Journal in 2025 and beyond.

The Supervisors also increased account 406.90 (General Government Miscellaneous) from \$3,500.00 in 2024 to \$4,000.00 in 2025. This account consists of many subaccounts, including clothing reimbursement, mileage reimbursement, dues and subscriptions, uniforms, meetings/conferences, and other miscellaneous items. The Supervisors budgeted zero dollars for account 408.00.05 (Engineering Services) because there are no projects that require engineering services planned for 2025. Account 430.12 (Road Payroll) was increased from \$115,000.00 in 2024 to \$120,000.00 in 2025 and account 430.37 (Building Maintenance) was decreased from \$20,000.00 in 2024 to \$10,000.00 in 2025. Discussion was held on replacing windows in the township building and repairing the township garage's leaking roof.

Account 430.74.740 (Equipment Purchased) was set to \$20,000.00 because approximately \$20,000.00 will be needed from the General Fund to be used with approximately \$40,000.00 from Liquid Fuels to make the 2025 payment on the 2024 John Deere 670G grader (3rd of 7 payments). Chrissie Kurelowech said that the township is limited on Liquid Fuels funds that can be spent on purchasing new equipment. Each year,

20% of the Liquid Fuels tax revenue can be used for equipment purchases. If the entire 20% is not used, the remaining balance is carried over to the next year. For the past 2 years, the township has been able to make the \$59,500.08 payment out of Liquid Fuels, but that will not be the case in 2025, so approximately \$20,000.00 will need to come out of the General Fund.

The Supervisors budgeted \$90,000.00 for account 438.00.00 (Roads and Bridges Other), a decrease of \$10,000.00 from 2024. This account includes stone, dust suppressant, seal coating, etc. No money was budgeted for account 439.00 (Highway Construction and Rebuilding Projects), which is the account used most often for paving. The Supervisors discussed 2025 road projects and were not in favor of paving. They were in agreement that they would focus on seal coating some of the paved roads instead of putting down new pavement during 2025.

The township will be required to pay \$6,267.00 in 2025 to the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (PMRS) to meet the minimum municipal obligation (MMO) for the year, down from \$7,075.00 in 2024 (account 483.00 (Pension (Employer Portion))).

Regarding health insurance premiums, Chrissie Kurelowech told the Supervisors that she had not received a renewal notice with 2025 rates from UPMC yet. The Supervisors budgeted \$50,000.00 for 2025 in account 487.00 (Other Group Insurance Benefits) in the General Fund to cover health insurance, life insurance, dental insurance, and disability insurance expenses. The budgeted amount was unchanged from 2024.

As for Liquid Fuels expenses, the Supervisors budgeted \$40,000.00 for account 430.74.740 (Equipment Purchased) to put towards the 2024 John Deere 670G grader payment in 2025. Approximately \$20,000.00 will be used from the General Fund to make the payment in 2025. The Supervisors budgeted \$20,000.00 for account 432.00 (Snow Removal) for salt and antiskid. They budgeted \$160,000.00 for account 438.00 (Roads and Bridges) and zero dollars for account 439.00 (Highway Construction & Rebuilding Projects). This is because they are not planning to do any paving during 2025 and the money will be spent on seal coating, gravel, etc. As always, \$720.00 was budgeted for account 489.00 (Turnback Troy Township) to cover maintenance on part of Shriner Road and \$500.00 was budgeted for account 490.00 (Turnback Oakland Township) to cover maintenance on part of Tarr Road.

The General Fund expenses for 2025 are estimated to total \$484,767.00 and the Liquid Fuels expenses are estimated to total \$221,220.00. The estimated total of all expenses for 2025 is \$705,987.00.

Administrative Action

Adopt Proposed 2025 Budget

On a motion made by Jim Waugh, seconded by Shari Nelson, and carried unanimously, the Supervisors voted to adopt the proposed 2025 budget. Anticipated income for 2025 is \$708,811.14 and anticipated expenditures total \$705,987.00. There will be no tax increase. Unless unforeseen expenses are discovered and amendments are necessary, the 2025 budget will be adopted at the regular monthly meeting scheduled for Monday, December 2, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. A copy of the proposed 2025 budget is available for inspection in the township office.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine C. Kurelowech, Secretary-Treasurer