COUNCIL FOR THE BOROUGH OF DUNMORE

HELD:
Monday, November 25th, 2019

TIME:
7:00 P.M.

LOCATION:
DUNMORE COMMUNITY CENTER
1414 Monroe Avenue
Dunmore, Pennsylvania

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
MICHAEL DEMPSEY, President
THOMAS HALLINAN, Vice President
MICHAEL MCHALE
CAROL SCrimalli - absent
VINCE AMICO
THOMAS EHNOT - absent
MICHAEL HAYES
THOMAS P. CUMMINGS, Esquire, Solicitor
TIMOTHY BURKE, Mayor

MARIA McCool, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
(Pledge of Allegiance.)

ATTY. CUMMINGS: Mr. Amico.

MR. AMICO: Here.

ATTY. CUMMINGS: Mr. Dempsey.

MR. DEMPSEY: Here.

ATTY. CUMMINGS: Mr. Ehnot. Mr. Hallinan.

MR. HALLINAN: Here.

ATTY. CUMMINGS: Mr. Hayes.

MR. HAYES: Here.

ATTY. CUMMINGS: Mr. McHale.

MR. MCHALE: Here.

ATTY. CUMMINGS: Mrs. Scrimalli.

Mr. Burke.

MAYOR BURKE: Present.

ATTY. CUMMINGS: Item Number three, Dunmore School District presentation.

MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Marichak.

MR. MARICHAk: I'd like to thank the Borough, Borough Council, Mayor for receiving us tonight. We've been at work for a little bit of time. I want to -- if you'll indulge me, give me a couple seconds to explain why we're here and the steps that took place.
If everybody remembers back to the tragedy that took place in Florida it was a snowball effect of other school problems of shootings and tragedies and so on. And at the time everybody was trying to double down and make sure that we were as safe and did everything within our power to ensure the safety of our students, our staff, our neighbors, everybody involved in the school community.

At that time this Borough Council as well as the Mayor did not hesitate, did not balk, did not think one second. They reached out and met with us and basically said what can we do as a governmental body to ensure the safety of those parties?

And what the Borough did, again, without hesitating, without balking is they provided us with a second, mind you, a second school resource officer. Both of our buildings are covered by the Dunmore Borough, by the Council and by the taxpayers of Dunmore and we get it for free. And that's an unbelievable situation.

And the reason for it again, is to
provide the safety of the people that come and go through our school doors every day. So in the meantime, the state passes a piece of legislation known as Act 44. It called for certain mandates. Of course, the state is quick to hand out mandates but they don't fund those mandates.

So PCCD, Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency then did put out some competitive bids. We were able to -- and everybody shared in the first waive and got about $25,000 which was earmarked for structural improvements at the school district.

Those blocks that you see on our circle, cameras, you know, tape to strengthen the door, windows, and make the door and windows bullet proof and so on and so forth. We put many systems in. There was a second phase, very competitive part of the bid through PCCD of which our business manager, Mrs. Antoinette Lopatka did a vast majority of the heavy lifting.

There was 40 million dollars available. The schools throughout the state put in requests for 400 million dollars. PCCD
turned around and said are you sure you really want that? Please rebid it and do the paperwork again. And we didn't think we had a snowball's chance in you know what to get any money.

The second part of that phase Antoinette stayed determined. Every day there was something that they were asking. It was almost like they were almost trying to make you quit the process. But she persevered. We persevered as a district. We got the big golf check here.

The second phase was earmarked for an additional school resource officer. Again, the Borough did not hesitate one second. They took a little bit of time. But we are here as a group tonight to say thank you so much. We're going to kind of give back $100,000 to the Borough for what you've done for us and our children and our staff.

We know that it doesn't cover the entire expense because if you look at the different salaries and benefit packages, but it's the best we can do right now. And we wanted to get this to you as soon as possible
and say from the bottom of our collective hearts thank you very much for your efforts. I don't know if anybody from the Board would like to add anything or Antoinette.

But we have a golf check here. It's the closest I'm ever going to get to a golf check. We'd like to present that to the Borough. I don't know the best way to do it. Mr. Dempsey, you're the president. I believe. Mr. Hallinan, do you want to get in the picture?

MR. DEMPSEY: I think everybody should come up.

MR. MARICHAK: Board members, do you want to join us?

MR. DEMPSEY: Just quickly on top of that, Mr. Marichak, thank you and Antoinette and the school board members who are here. We appreciate that. Also, I want to thank Chief Marchese who is here and the police officers, especially the SRO officers, Springer and Bill Bonavoglia. Without the cooperation of the Police Union as well who didn't balk, you know, there was some shift changes and things like that.
So I want to thank the Police Union as well because without them -- without their cooperation, this wouldn't have been possible either. So thank you very much. If anybody else wants to say something -- Michael, do you want to start if you want to say anything?

MR. HAYES: Me?

MR. DEMPSEY: Yeah.

MR. HAYES: Just thank you very much, Mr. Marichak, and the school board for presenting that and coming down, giving back to the Borough. I think I speak for everybody up here when I say that. Obviously when it comes to safety, the security of our residents and our children, money is no object, right?

I think we have all that same kind of mindset, you know, when it came to those tragedies. So it's great to see some funds coming back in through the system, through the state process. I'm glad that we as a borough, not only as a borough but as a school district we were able to move quickly in order to ensure the safety of our children. Thank you again guys for coming out.

MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Amico.
MR. AMICO: Just thank you for coming out tonight and thanks for doing the hard work with the grant writing. I know it's not easy and it's very tedious sometimes. It's a challenge. So thank you very much for the work.

MR. HALLINAN: Thank you guys for everything. It really is -- it's nice to be working together with everybody. You guys put the children first. And I'm glad we can help and help each other. So thank you for doing this.

MR. MCHALE: Just to echo what everybody else said. This is, you know, we've had a school officer, geez, I think for probably four years now, at least one and two for the last couple years. And it's something that I don't even know who or what and we don't take credit like that up here for individual honors.

But we do complain to each other about spending any money on anything. There is always a fight or something. But, you know, we have a -- the ability to fight and then right afterwards come back and do the right thing.
This was unquestioned the right thing to do.

I think probably the majority of the people in this room outside of the Borough -- school board members, didn't even know we were doing it outside of the Dunmore Police officers.

So we don't do it for the reason to get our names in the paper or anything like that. We do it for the right reasons. I have kids in the school. That's not necessarily why I did it. But it's for the entire community. So I'm happy you're here. I'm happy that we got an offset to some of the cost.

It definitely helps and hopefully continues if you guys can do anything we appreciate it. But I'm proud to have done this and participate. I think it was unanimous to -- the Council who did it. So thank you. That's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEMPSEY: Mayor Burke.

MAYOR BURKE: Yes, thank you, John, Antoinette, and school board members. Much appreciated. We all worked together. And I'm glad, Antoinette and John, you were persistent because I know it's tougher and tougher to get
these grants. And we can definitely use it. Like Mike said too working together for the two officers and it's great to work together with you guys. Thank you for all of your hard work.

MR. DEMPSEY: Attorney Cummings?
ATTY. CUMMINGS: I'm good. Thank you.

MR. DEMPSEY: Vito?
MR. RUGGIERO: No.

ATTY. CUMMINGS: Item Number four is a motion to introduce the proposed 2020 budget, which is available at the Borough Building for review.

MR. MCHALE: So moved.
MR. DEMPSEY: I have a motion.
MR. HALLINAN: I'll second it.
MR. DEMPSEY: On the question?
MR. MCHALE: This is the presentation of the first reading of the budget. I guess the next one is December 9th. Don't hold me on the date but our first reading. It was distributed to Council early this week with some changes in it. And this is a meeting that -- it's very proud.

Again, we don't get a lot of press
from it. But this is the 10th or 12th, correct me if I'm wrong. I think it might be 11 but at least the tenth meeting in a row that we're presenting a balanced budget with no tax increases.

And this is, as I said before, the culmination of challenging every dollar. I don't think you've seen a Council forever. When I got here ten years ago what was said to me is just pass the budget. It's a placeholder. Don't worry about it. We'll worry about expenses come September. We just won't pay bills.

And we turned that around. We -- every one of our -- every one of the Council members is assigned to a different union. Chief knows that. Chris knows that. And we analyze every expenditure. Anything over a thousand dollars has to be approved by a Council member. Vito approves anything I think over 50 or 100 bucks. He looks at everything.

So it's got -- we put in a lot of stop gaps to control the spending. And quite honestly we've made a lot of enemies out of our union members for stopping. We're not perfect.
There's mistakes. There's definitely areas that we can improve. But we use the budget as a tool on an everyday basis that has never been done in the past.

So ten years ago we sat here and spoke of bankruptcy by the state. The state was literally at the meeting, one of my first meetings that I was here. They talked about taking over Scranton. And a lot of people on Council at the time thought it was the best thing to do.

What we did is, we took a look at all the expenditures to the point where everything was scrutinized down to the dollar, down to the invoice and nothing was approved that we couldn't afford.

Now, we're in the shape ten years later that we're in pretty good shape. We have a lot of watching to do in the upcoming years. But the people here definitely are capable of doing so. So it's a very, very, very proud meeting to have.

And again, it doesn't get a lot of press and that's okay. We're not -- the people sitting to my left are not in it for the press.
They are in it to do what's best for the Borough, continue to do so and watch every single dollar.

We scrutinize every single dollar that goes out of the borough taxpayer's pockets. So it's a proud day. Ten years in a row -- I think it might be 11, forgive me. But at least ten years in a row without a tax increase and hopefully come the future -- to look at in the near future. So I know these guys will stay on top of it. So I think that's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEMPSEY: Thank you, Mr. McHale. Anybody else on the question?

MR. HALLINAN: On the question, thank you, Mr. McHale, because you do put the budget together. And we count on you. And it's hard tedious, thankless and I really appreciate as I'm sure as the rest of Council the hard work you put into this budget year after year.

And sometimes I think people forget as you said we were broke. We were looking at Act 47 if I'm not mistaken what it is, Mr. McHale. And we had no way out. And then you
and Mr. Verrastro stepped up to the plate and
brought this -- put us on the track to
financial success with the Borough by doing
what you did. And I thank you very much from
the bottom of my heart for doing that work.
Thank you.

MR. DEMPSEY: Thank you, Mr.
Hallinan. Mr. Amico?

MR. AMICO: I'm just going to
reiterate what Hal said. Thanks for all the
hard work, Mike, and it's appreciated. Thank
you.

MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Hayes?

MR. HAYES: Are we still on the
question?

MR. DEMPSEY: Yes, sir.

MR. HAYES: I echo the sentiments.
You know, I've been quoted in the newspaper
saying Michael McHale is one of the smartest
guys I've ever encountered. I think it shows
by the hard work that he puts in, especially
with the budget.

MR. DEMPSEY: Thank you. And I just
reiterate again what everybody else -- I don't
know what else I could say after six years. I
say the same thing. You do an unbelievable job. The Borough wouldn't be in the spot it is now without you. So it doesn't go unnoticed at least by us. Anybody else on the question?

MR. MCHAILE: Real quickly, the budget that was presented and it's over on table is just a summary budget. The detailed budget will be with Mr. Ruggiero starting tomorrow if anybody would like to review it.

I think everybody was provided all the supporting documents as well. I don't know if they become public. Tommy, do they become public all the supporting docs?

ATTY. CUMMINGS: They need not. That's your work product.

MR. MCHAILE: But all the detail will be provided to anyone who dares to take a look at it, I guess. That's all, sorry.

MR. DEMPSEY: Okay. Anyone else on the question? All those in favor?

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEMPSEY: Opposed?

(No response.)

MR. DEMPSEY: Ayes have it and so moved.
ATTY. CUMMINGS: Item Number five is public comment on nonagenda items.

MR. DEMPSEY: Anybody like to address Council tonight?

(No response.)

MR. DEMPSEY: Seeing none.

ATTY. CUMMINGS: Public officials.

MR. DEMPSEY: Michael, you got anything else?

MR. MCHALE: I got nothing further.

MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Hallinan.

MR. HALLINAN: This weekend, Sunday is Home For The Holidays, Dunmore Corners. I hope the Times gives them a nice little plug this week. That would be nice for them. And I hope the rain stays away.

And your Council people here and girls in the office will be serving hot chocolate and Dunkin munchkins compliments of Dunkin Donuts. And Gertrude Hawks also kicked in some candy I'm waiting on. So that's all I have. Thank you.

MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. McHale.

MR. MCHALE: I apologize, real quick. Many people may not have heard but a
local celebrity, I guess, John Bucci passed away unexpectedly today. So, you know, he had a hot and cold with a lot of people that know him. But I go along way back. I was thinking before I came over it was probably 35 years ago he was my coach at Camp St. Andrew. I couldn't think of the camp.

And he was a good guy back then. I still consider him a great guy and a great coach. So my thoughts and I know all of Council's thoughts go out to him tonight.

Sorry.

MR. DEMPSEY: Vince.

MR. AMICO: I just wanted to

publically thank the members of Dunmore High School, our senior art class and Miss Hogan, Mrs. Jimmy and Jenny Ondek for painting the storefront windows at the corners. It kind of brings the holiday season to -- or at least the beginning for me. It makes the corners look very nice. And every year they do a fantastic job.

And if I'm not mistaken, this year 20, I think 20 storefronts got -- were painted which is more than we've had in the past so --
23. It's funny. Every year more and more businesses look to be painted. They're expanding. So thank you. That's all I have. Thanks, Mike.

MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Hayes.

MR. HAYES: For the first time in two terms nothing, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEMPSEY: All right. I just want to make an announcement because Mike won't do it. He should do it, but I'll do it. Last year we won a SAGE Award for Hometown Heros, the banners that we put up. This year we were nominated for Pride and Progress Exterior Renovations.

We were nominated for Schautz Memorial Stadium. Michael had a huge hand in that, you know, meeting with Mr. Walter Schautz and doing the construction and putting everything together. And we ended up winning another SAGE Award for Schautz Stadium. So that's two in two years.

I don't know, maybe -- I don't know what we'll do next year. Maybe a year off. I don't know. It's a huge honor. So thank you for your work on that and everybody else
involved. With that being said, Mayor Burke, do you anything?

MAYOR BURKE: I hope to see everybody out at Home For The Holidays and thanks for everybody involved in it. And hope everybody has a Happy Thanksgiving. Thanks.

MR. DEMPSEY: Vito?

MR. RUGGIERO: Nothing.

MR. DEMPSEY: Attorney Cummings?

ATTY. CUMMINGS: I was lucky enough to be invited to the SAGE Awards. And I would just like to reiterate, you know, all of Dunmore Council was supportive as well was Walter Schautz's family and private contributors who put up hundreds of thousands of dollars.

But as a Dunmorean since birth, I would like to thank Michael McHale. He was there every morning and every night for the entire project and has stayed on it. And I would like to give him accolades for his dedication to the Borough and thus that award.

MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Kearney.

MR. KEARNEY: Nothing.

MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Judge.
MR. JUDGE: Nothing.

MR. DEMPSEY: Chief.

CHIEF MARCHESE: No.

MR. DEMPSEY: We'll look for a

motion to adjourn.

MR. HAYES: I'll make that motion.

MR. DEMPSEY: Second?

MR. HALLINAN: Second.

MR. AMICO: Second.

MR. DEMPSEY: All those in favor?

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEMPSEY: Opposed?

(No response.)

MR. DEMPSEY: Ayes have it and so

moved.
CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me of the above-cause and that this copy is a correct transcript of the same to the best of my ability.

______________________________
Maria McCool, RPR
Official Court Reporter

The foregoing record of the proceedings upon the proceedings of the above-cause is hereby approved and directed to be filed.

Date HONORABLE [!JUDGE]

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