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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

C O U N C I L M E M B E R S :

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

1 (Pledge of Allegiance.)

2

3 ATTY. CUMMINGS: Mr. Amico.

4 MR. AMICO: Here.

5 ATTY. CUMMINGS: Mr. Dempsey.

6 MR. DEMPSEY: Here.

7 ATTY. CUMMINGS: Mr. Ehnott. Mr.

8 Hallinan.

9 MR. HALLINAN: Here.

10 ATTY. CUMMINGS: Mr. Hayes.

11 MR. HAYES: Here.

12 ATTY. CUMMINGS: Mr. McHale.

13 MR. MCHALE: Here.

14 ATTY. CUMMINGS: Mrs. Scrimalli.

15 Mr. Burke.

16 MAYOR BURKE: Present.

17 ATTY. CUMMINGS: Item Number three,

18 Dunmore School District presentation.

19 MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Marichak.

20 MR. MARICHAK: I'd like to thank the

21 Borough, Borough Council, Mayor for receiving

22 us tonight. We've been at work for a little

23 bit of time. I want to -- if you'll indulge

24 me, give me a couple seconds to explain why

25 we're here and the steps that took place.

1 If everybody remembers back to the
2 tragedy that took place in Florida it was a
3 snowball effect of other school problems of
4 shootings and tragedies and so on. And at the
5 time everybody was trying to double down and
6 make sure that we were as safe and did
7 everything within our power to ensure the
8 safety of our students, our staff, our
9 neighbors, everybody involved in the school
10 community.

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

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

25 And the reason for it again, is to

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

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

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

23 There was 40 million dollars
24 available. The schools throughout the state
25 put in requests for 400 million dollars. PCCD

1 turned around and said are you sure you really
2 want that? Please rebid it and do the
3 paperwork again. And we didn't think we had a
4 snowball's chance in you know what to get any
5 money.

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

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

21 We know that it doesn't cover the
22 entire expense because if you look at the
23 different salaries and benefit packages, but
24 it's the best we can do right now. And we
25 wanted to get this to you as soon as possible

1 and say from the bottom of our collective
2 hearts thank you very much for your efforts. I
3 don't know if anybody from the Board would like
4 to add anything or Antoinette.

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

12 MR. DEMPSEY: I think everybody
13 should come up.

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

16 MR. DEMPSEY: Just quickly on top of
17 that, Mr. Marichak, thank you and Antoinette
18 and the school board members who are here. We
19 appreciate that. Also, I want to thank Chief
20 Marchese who is here and the police officers,
21 especially the SRO officers, Springer and Bill
22 Bonavoglia. Without the cooperation of the
23 Police Union as well who didn't balk, you know,
24 there was some shift changes and things like
25 that.

1 So I want to thank the Police Union
2 as well because without them -- without their
3 cooperation, this wouldn't have been possible
4 either. So thank you very much. If anybody
5 else wants to say something -- Michael, do you
6 want to start if you want to say anything?

7 MR. HAYES: Me?

8 MR. DEMPSEY: Yeah.

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

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

25 MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Amico.

1 MR. AMICO: Just thank you for
2 coming out tonight and thanks for doing the
3 hard work with the grant writing. I know it's
4 not easy and it's very tedious sometimes. It's
5 a challenge. So thank you very much for the
6 work.

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

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

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

1 This was unquestioned the right thing to do.

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

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

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

20 MR. DEMPSEY: Mayor Burke.

21 MAYOR BURKE: Yes, thank you, John,
22 Antoinette, and school board members. Much
23 appreciated. We all worked together. And I'm
24 glad, Antoinette and John, you were persistent
25 because I know it's tougher and tougher to get

1 these grants. And we can definitely use it.
2 Like Mike said too working together for the two
3 officers and it's great to work together with
4 you guys. Thank you for all of your hard work.

5 MR. DEMPSEY: Attorney Cummings?

6 ATTY. CUMMINGS: I'm good. Thank
7 you.

8 MR. DEMPSEY: Vito?

9 MR. RUGGIERO: No.

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

14 MR. MCHALE: So moved.

15 MR. DEMPSEY: I have a motion.

16 MR. HALLINAN: I'll second it.

17 MR. DEMPSEY: On the question?

18 MR. MCHALE: This is the
19 presentation of the first reading of the
20 budget. I guess the next one is December 9th.
21 Don't hold me on the date but our first
22 reading. It was distributed to Council early
23 this week with some changes in it. And this is
24 a meeting that -- it's very proud.

25 Again, we don't get a lot of press

1 from it. But this is the 10th or 12th, correct
2 me if I'm wrong. I think it might be 11 but at
3 least the tenth meeting in a row that we're
4 presenting a balanced budget with no tax
5 increases.

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

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

22 So it's got -- we put in a lot of
23 stop gaps to control the spending. And quite
24 honestly we've made a lot of enemies out of our
25 union members for stopping. We're not perfect.

1 There's mistakes. There's definitely areas
2 that we can improve. But we use the budget as
3 a tool on an everyday basis that has never been
4 done in the past.

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

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

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

23 And again, it doesn't get a lot of
24 press and that's okay. We're not -- the people
25 sitting to my left are not in it for the press.

1 They are in it to do what's best for the
2 Borough, continue to do so and watch every
3 single dollar.

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

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

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

22 And sometimes I think people forget
23 as you said we were broke. We were looking at
24 Act 47 if I'm not mistaken what it is, Mr.
25 McHale. And we had no way out. And then you

1 and Mr. Verrastro stepped up to the plate and
2 brought this -- put us on the track to
3 financial success with the Borough by doing
4 what you did. And I thank you very much from
5 the bottom of my heart for doing that work.
6 Thank you.

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

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

13 MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Hayes?

14 MR. HAYES: Are we still on the
15 question?

16 MR. DEMPSEY: Yes, sir.

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

23 MR. DEMPSEY: Thank you. And I just
24 reiterate again what everybody else -- I don't
25 know what else I could say after six years. I

1 say the same thing. You do an unbelievable
2 job. The Borough wouldn't be in the spot it is
3 now without you. So it doesn't go unnoticed at
4 least by us. Anybody else on the question?

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

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

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

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

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

21 ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

22 MR. DEMPSEY: Opposed?

23 (No response.)

24 MR. DEMPSEY: Ayes have it and so
25 moved.

1 ATTY. CUMMINGS: Item Number five is
2 public comment on nonagenda items.

3 MR. DEMPSEY: Anybody like to
4 address Council tonight?

5 (No response.)

6 MR. DEMPSEY: Seeing none.

7 ATTY. CUMMINGS: Public officials.

8 MR. DEMPSEY: Michael, you got
9 anything else?

10 MR. MCHALE: I got nothing further.

11 MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Hallinan.

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

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

23 MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. McHale.

24 MR. MCHALE: I apologize, real
25 quick. Many people may not have heard but a

1 local celebrity, I guess, John Bucci passed
2 away unexpectedly today. So, you know, he had
3 a hot and cold with a lot of people that know
4 him. But I go along way back. I was thinking
5 before I came over it was probably 35 years ago
6 he was my coach at Camp St. Andrew. I couldn't
7 think of the camp.

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

13 MR. DEMPSEY: Vince.

14 MR. AMICO: I just wanted to
15 publically thank the members of Dunmore High
16 School, our senior art class and Miss Hogan,
17 Mrs. Jimmy and Jenny Ondek for painting the
18 storefront windows at the corners. It kind of
19 brings the holiday season to -- or at least the
20 beginning for me. It makes the corners look
21 very nice. And every year they do a fantastic
22 job.

23 And if I'm not mistaken, this year
24 20, I think 20 storefronts got -- were painted
25 which is more than we've had in the past so --

1 23. It's funny. Every year more and more
2 businesses look to be painted. They're
3 expanding. So thank you. That's all I have.
4 Thanks, Mike.

5 MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Hayes.

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

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

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

22 I don't know, maybe -- I don't know
23 what we'll do next year. Maybe a year off. I
24 don't know. It's a huge honor. So thank you
25 for your work on that and everybody else

1 involved. With that being said, Mayor Burke,
2 do you anything?

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

7 MR. DEMPSEY: Vito?

8 MR. RUGGIERO: Nothing.

9 MR. DEMPSEY: Attorney Cummings?

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

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

23 MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Kearney.

24 MR. KEARNEY: Nothing.

25 MR. DEMPSEY: Mr. Judge.

1 MR. JUDGE: Nothing.

2 MR. DEMPSEY: Chief.

3 CHIEF MARCHESE: No.

4 MR. DEMPSEY: We'll look for a
5 motion to adjourn.

6 MR. HAYES: I'll make that motion.

7 MR. DEMPSEY: Second?

8 MR. HALLINAN: Second.

9 MR. AMICO: Second.

10 MR. DEMPSEY: All those in favor?

11 ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

12 MR. DEMPSEY: Opposed?

13 (No response.)

14 MR. DEMPSEY: Ayes have it and so
15 moved.

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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]

(The foregoing certificate of this transcript does not apply to any reproduction of the same by any means unless under the direct control and/or supervision of the certifying reporter.)