



# Bucks County Association of Township Officials

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## BUCKS COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS

### MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Bucks County Association of Township Officials was held via Zoom on Wednesday, May 12, 2021 at 12:02 p.m.

**MEMBERS:**

- \*Joseph DiGirolamo, Bensalem Township
- Maggie Rash, Buckingham Township
- Barbara Lyons, Doylestown Township
- Ken Lichtenstein, Plumstead Township
- David Nyman, East Rockhill Township
- \*Kathy Babb, Haycock Township
- Ruth Schemm, Warrington Township
- William Jones, New Britain Township
- Dick Weaver, Newtown Township
- \*Diana Nolan, Upper Makefield Township (departed 12:40)
- \*Judith Algeo, Warwick Township
- Chester Pogonowski, Wrightstown Township
- Terry Clemons, Clemons Richter & Reiss, P.C.
- \*Vince Deon, Northampton Township
- Fred Gaines, Warrington Township
- Jim Miller, West Rockhill Township
- Stacey Mulholland, Executive Director

\*NOT PRESENT

1. **Call to Order:** President Maggie Rash called the Executive Board Zoom meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

## **2. Approval of the Minutes –April 14, 2021.**

**MOTION:** A motion by Mr. Nyman and seconded by Mr. Gaines to approve the minutes of April 14, 2021. Motion carried unanimously. It is noted for the record Ms. Lyons and Mr. Jones abstained.

## **3. Treasurer’s Report – March 2021:**

Mr. Weaver presented the financial statements for April 2021 and noted the organization’s good financial standing. Mr. Weaver also commended the excellent work of Julie Davis and the DunlapSLK team.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Mr. Jones to accept the April financials. Ms. Shemm seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

## **4. President’s Report**

**A. Guest Speaker-** Fred Harran, Bensalem Public Safety Director, joined the Zoom meeting to discuss the township’s new Co-Responder program developed in partnership with the County of Bucks. This initiative teams police with county social workers. The program will aim to divert people in need of social services away from the criminal justice system and reduce the amount of time police spend on social service-related calls. Director Harran sees the co-responder model as the future for policing. Bensalem was granted funding to hire 2 social worker, co-responders. They work daily from 2PM-10PM- the peak time for such calls. They have police radios. They arrive on calls once the police have secured the scene. There have been 99 calls so far since the program started in December. They can assist in deescalating the scene, connecting the resident with critical services, and follow up with services. Director Harran says the program is successful and cited an example of one particular resident having a 500% drop in calls to the police.

Director Harran also informed the Committee about two other programs critical to policing today: Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) and Bucks Police Assisting In Recovery (BPAIR.) The goal is to have one officer trained in Crisis Intervention on every shift with

this specialized training. BPAIR had its roots in Bensalem when Fred learned about a program in Gloucester, MA called the Angel Initiative. BPAIR is essentially a diversion program created to get individuals struggling with addiction into treatment instead of jail. Currently nineteen Bucks County police departments have adopted the program.

**5. Executive Director's Report** - Ms. Mulholland informed the board that Middletown Township, which had been approved for an intern last year but due to covid was unable to bring on an intern, has resumed the program and identified a candidate. Upon reviewing the candidate's resume and qualifications the committee approved a \$2500 expenditure with a Mr. Gains motion, seconded by Mr. Miller.

**6. Solicitor's Report**- Solicitor Clemons brought two Pennsylvania Senate Bills to the board's attention. They are SB 275 and SB28. In brief SB275 "Energy Choice," prevents municipalities from adopting policies requiring utilities to source energy from green industries or restrict the amount of fossil fuels that can fuel electric generation. SB28, "Transparency in Permitting" is setting up requirements for state agencies, not local governments.

#### **7. Legislative Update-**

**A. Sterling Act update-** It appears Reps. Perry Warren and John Galloway have not signed on to HB949, the Sterling Act bill. Mr. Pogonoswki had reached out to the Newtown Board of Supervisors suggesting they contact Rep. Warren.

**8. Other Business-** Following discussion on record keeping with regard to committees and committee membership, the board agreed to adopt the ad hoc committees as part of the Annual Convention business.

**9. Adjournment-** With no further business, a Lyons/Lichtenstein motion carried to adjourn the Zoom meeting at 1:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacey Mulholland

Executive Director