**Present** Commissioner, Rodney Younker - Ontelaunee Township, Commissioner, Joseph Rudderow III - Maidencreek Township, Commissioner Glen Moyer - Leesport Borough, Alternate Charles Berger – Leesport Borough, Chief Scott Eaken, and Ruth Manmiller-Secretary, Whitney Rahman - Solicitor.

**Guests** Ronald Mohl, Christina Wood, Cory Deily, Michael Cardell, Joshua Steingraber, Michele Schmehl-Cardell, Andrea Murray

Joseph Rudderow opened the April 8, 2013 Northern Berks Regional Police Commission Meeting at 7:02 PM in the Ontelaunee Township Meeting Room.

**PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

**FOR THE RECORD**

This meeting is being audio and video recorded by the NBRPD Association. The Solicitor questioned the reasoning behind this action. Signs posted on camera stand.

**MINUTES – March 11, 2013 Commission Meeting**

Rodney Younker made a motion, seconded by Glen Moyer, to approve the March 11, 2013

Northern Berks Regional Police Commission Meeting Minutes. All Commissioners voted, “Aye.” Motion carried.

### TREASURER’S REPORT

Ruth Manmiller presented the March 2013Treasurer’s Report that included the fund balances, the year to date budget report, and documentation of all transactions. Glen Moyer made a motion, seconded by Rodney Younker, to approve the March 2013 Treasurer’s Report. All Commissioners voted, “Aye.” Motion carried.

**CHIEF’S REPORT**

The Chief read the monthly report and commented on the following arrests;

3/14/2013 DUI .129 Rt61 north, Leesport Borough & Ontelaunee Twp.

3/14/2013 Simple Assault, DC & Harassment, American House (Patron & Bartender) Leesport Borough

3/16/2013 H&R Crash, Park Road, Maidencreek Twp. Driver apprehended w/no insurance, suspended license

3/28/2013 DUI .184, Rt 73, Ontelaunee Twp.

4/02/2013 Credit Card Fraud, Maidencreek Twp.

4/02/2013 Employee Theft – Turkey Hill, Maidencreek Twp.

Additional Info:

1. One officer has returned from sick leave
2. Citizens Police Academy successfully completed – costs available by next meeting
3. Sgt. Reichlein retired March 31, 2013
4. After careful review and adjustments by the Solicitor the Omega Agreement was signed.
5. The new police car has been ordered.
6. Maidencreek Township has expressed interest in acquiring a retired police vehicle
7. Individuals interested in crime in their neighborhood should check crimemapping.com
8. Advised everyone to lock your vehicles
9. A traffic study will be conducted on West Walnut Tree Drive due to speeding complaints

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Actuarial Report**

The Actuarial Report has arrived and copy of the cover letter was provided to each Commissioner.

**BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

Michael Cardell - Maidencreek Township resident and police officer, asked the Commissioners if they will replace Sgt. Reichlein. He expressed concern for the safety of the residents as well as the officers and urged the Commissioners to crunch the numbers to hire a replacement officer. The area is growing and more crime is coming to the area and it will only get worse. Please do not take this decision lightly I’m concerned for my family, neighbors and friends.

Cory Diely – Ontelaunee Township resident and Redner’s Security expressed the same sentiments as Michael Cardell, but wanted to add; due to the various locations of Redner’s stores he deals with several different police departments – none compare with NBRPD. On numerous occasions NBRPD has been called for shop lifting, counterfeit money, theft and robberies at our convenience store grocery store on Rt61. All calls were professionally investigated and solved in a timely manner. This is one of the reasons he chose to move his family to Ontelaunee Township. He urged the Commissioners to find room in their budgets to replace the retired officer. Keep the department at staff level or even increase to provide the level of service necessary for the area. The stress on the existing officers could lead to unexpected health issues.

Joshua Steingraber – Ontelaunee Township resident and police officer, stressed that this is not the time to cut or not replace an officer. He is upset that with two officers are out on sick leave and Sgt. Reichlein retiring that the Commission is not concerned about the staffing level. Every officer is a valuable asset to this department and the added stress of covering for another officer takes its toll. Even as a police officer he has concerns for his neighborhood. It is no secret that a home in his neighborhood has been raided by the DEA and County Vice. He understands that taxes may increase and will accept if it is for police service and his safety.

Ronald Mohl, NBRPD Association President pointed out that as a result of the police department being down three officers there was a loss of 202 hours of service for March.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**PFM Fee Structure**

Following the March Commission meeting each Commissioner and the Solicitor received requested information pertaining to the structure for the management of the NBRPD Pension Fund. Glen Moyer made a motion, seconded by Rodney Younker authorizing the Chairman to sign the fee structure change agreement as presented. All Commissioners voted, “Aye.” Motion carried.

**Replacement Officer**

Joseph Rudderow stated that Maidencreek Township has concerns for the current staffing level and the department being able to provide 24 hour service. At the March Commission meeting, he asked each Commissioner to discuss this issue with their respect boards, so they could proceed with authorizing the Chief to proceed with the hiring process.

Joseph Rudderow made a motion authorizing the Chief to proceed with the hiring process to replace an officer. The motion died for a lack of a second. Upon waiting for discussion on the matter, Glen Moyer requested an executive session to further discuss authorizing the Chief to proceed with the hiring process.

Ronald Mohl questioned, “How can hiring an officer can be a personnel issue? That’s public.”

No particular officer is being discussed.

Glen Moyer stated that he wanted to utilize the recent study conducted by Leesport Borough as a basis for the Borough’s decision.

Ronald Mohl asked if he was introducing the study in a public meeting. Are any employees of the NBRPD were mentioned in the report? Since you mentioned the report in a public meeting, it will now be available under the “Right-To- Know Act.”

Glen Moyer stated that no employees are mention, just positions and entire department.

No executive session took place.

Once again, Joseph Rudderow made a motion to authorize the Chief to proceed with the hiring process (he asked twice) and again it died for a lack of a second.

Audrey Murray – Ontelaunee Township, is concerned about activities at a home located behind hers and for any officer that may have to respond there. It is not a safe situation for the officers. On several occasions this home has been raided by different law enforcement agencies. She also added that with the increased housing and real estate taxes generated from the sale of these houses, she can’t understand why Ontelaunee Township is lacking funds. Audrey did obtain financial information from Ontelaunee however; it was out dated.

Rodney Younker, Ontelaunee Township Commissioner and Township Supervisors stated that he could not answer her questions at this time and suggested she attend an Ontelaunee Township meeting.

Audrey Murray question why Ontelaunee Township is not in favor of hiring a replacement officer.

Rodney Younker stated that he is worried about the 2014 budget for both the township and the police in future years because several businesses have contested their taxes and as a result the township will not receive as much revenue as anticipated. The township must review tax revenue received this year to estimate for future years. We are just hanging on; taking on other projects like Park & Recreation that involves installing water, sewer and electric. The police are 50% or more of our budget and that is why we have to look at everything.

Audrey Murray plans to exercise her “Right-To-Know” to get current Ontelaunee Township financials and plans to attend meetings.

Joshua Steingraber questioned why the surplus funds in the Vist Money Market can’t be used to fund a replacement officer. A new officer would be making far less than a veteran officer, there would be enough funds to carry the officer through this year and possibly next year or until the officer would max out at full rate.

Glen Moyer stated that he had made a motion at the beginning of 2013 to return the surplus funds to the municipalities and it died for a lack of a second.

The Chief explained there was a $160,000.00 surplus at the end of 2012, $60,000.00 was utilized to balance the 2013 budget, and remaining $100,000.00 is currently being saved in the Vist Money Market account. The Chief did confirm that Glen Moyer had made a motion in the beginning of 2013 to return the funds per each municipality’s percentage however; it was decided to wait until June to review the existing budget and to review reports the Chief had prepared.

Joseph Rudderow added that in the beginning of the year the Commission had not received the final costs for the arbitration and wanted to wait to make sure all costs could be paid. He then suggested that the Commissioners revisit the surplus funds in consideration of hiring a replacement officer. He is concerned about the officer’s unsafe working conditions due to a reduced force. Why wait for June?

Glen Moyer stated that he understands the dilemma however; he must do what the Council instructs him to do.

Cory Deily asked Glen Moyer, when would he make decisions for the citizens rather than what Council suggests. Ontelaunee Township as well, Rodney when are you going to consider the safety of your residents and the safety of the officers? When officers have to compensate for lost officers they become fatigued and productivity drops. He suggested looking at the Borough’s road crew and their use of their cell phones.

Rodney Younker stated he cannot make a decision for Ontelaunee Township tonight.

Ontelaunee Township did not grow as expected. The Township would be pushing the budget to its limit.

Cory Deily asked if an additional officer would increase the funds the municipalities would receive from additional citations being issued and what the overtime cost as a result of officers coving other shifts.

Glen Moyer promised to revisit the subject and continue discussing with the Council. He added that by paying an officer overtime is cheaper than paying another officer wages and benefits. He also asked for more information from the Association and/or the Chief for the percentage of overtime for the department in order to make an informed decision. Personally; where he works, he knows that overtime usage this is above 8% the employee becomes unproductive and working conditions become unsafe. He understands that police officers are under a great deal of stress putting their lives on the line, so the percentage would be lower than the 8%. He still would like to know the percentage. He also stressed that Charles Berger and himself were chosen by the Council to represent the Borough in the police merger and so we must following their suggestions, and they cannot act independently. Leesport Borough is strapped for funds. I’m just looking for the facts. We are the smallest municipality in this merger, we are land locked and it is no secret that the Borough has considered pulling out in the past. He is not closed minded to another officer; he just wants all the facts. He is pro-labor and if facts dictate the necessity for another officer, I will make the motion.

Ronald Mohl questioned Glen Moyer where Leesport Borough is spending its money. When Leesport merged with Maidencreek/Ontelaunee in 1998, Leesport had one road crew employee and now you have two, you had one secretary, now you have a manager and one additional secretary.

Glen Moyer stated that the additional road crew employee is a safety issue and the authority pays half of the additional secretary’s wages.

Ronald Mohl provided overtime figures 2012 v 2013, there is a considerable savings for the department since switching to 12 hour shifts.

Rodney Younker stated last year Ontelaunee Township was in favor of a replacement officer however; since then the numbers have changed and we have to really look at this.

Joseph Rudderow made one more plea to resume the hiring process and with no response from the other Commissioners; he urged the meeting to move on. He did urge everyone to attend the township and/or council meetings to express their concerns as well.

Audrey Murray asked if there were other avenues to obtain funding for additional officer by seeking a grant. If need be, this search could be outsourced to locate funding.

Joseph Rudderow commented that all Commissioners are not taking this decision lightly. We don’t want to raise taxes unnecessarily, after all that is money out of your pocket.

Ronald Mohl informed the Commissioners just how much their residents pay for police covered based on a home that is valued at $100,000.00; Maidencreek $3.80 per month, Ontelaunee $13.05 per month and Leesport $14.49 per month.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Round About**

Joseph Rudderow reported on the public meeting sponsored by Penn Dot for the proposed installation of a roundabout at Rt 222/Genesis Drive/Tamarack Blvd. intersection. He said the meeting was very well attended however; it did not allow enough time for questions. Maidencreek Township Supervisors have stressed their displeasure in the proposed project and hoped that the public who travel the Rt222 corridor and/or residents of Maidencreek Township would contact their representatives to voice their displeasure as well.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** **(8:34 PM-9:52 PM) – Personnel, Litigation**

No Action

**ADJOURN**

Rodney Younker made a motion, and seconded by Glen Moyer to adjourn the meeting at 9:52 PM.

Prepared and Submitted By,

Ruth M Manmiller

Northern Berks Regional Police

CC: Maidencreek Township Board of Supervisors

Ontelaunee Township Board of Supervisors

Leesport Borough Council

Diane Hollenbach, Maidencreek Township

Nicole Schwenk, Ontelaunee Township

Sandra Weiser, Leesport Borough

S. Whitney Rahman

NBRPD Association

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** **(8:34 PM-9:52 PM) - Personnel & Litigation**

No Action

**ADJOURN**

Rodney Younker made a motion, and seconded by Charles Berger to adjourn the meeting at 9:52 PM.

Prepared and Submitted By,

Ruth M Manmiller

Northern Berks Regional Police

CC: Maidencreek Township Board of Supervisors

Ontelaunee Township Board of Supervisors

Leesport Borough Council

Diane Hollenbach, Maidencreek Township

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NBRPD Association