

Dallas Twp. changes Torr's job status

Economy was the reason given by Dallas Township supervisors at last week's meeting for the change in the status of Patrolman Jeremy Torr.

The supervisors announced that Torr had been relieved of his duties as a full time patrolman to part time patrolman three days a week. The remaining two days, he will be employed as a township communications clerk.

Torr was a CETA employee, whose 18-month term under the CETA program expired in mid-July. Following the expiration date, Torr was hired by the township at an hourly rate but he will not be performing the same duty as he did under CETA. Therefore, Torr will receive a lower salary since the clerk position does not pay as well as his patrolman position.

Since he will not be a full time patrolman, Torr will not be eligible for the township's police pension fund but his Blue Cross-Blue Shield coverage will be provided.

Phil Walter, chairman of the supervisors stated that the change in Torr's status would save the township \$4,000 to \$5,000 annually.

Tom Lewis, another township CETA policeman, was suspended in July pending a hearing. In answer to questions regarding the suspension, the supervisors stated that a private hearing for Lewis was held and the board's previous decision upheld. The supervisors and Solicitor Frank Townend refused further comment on the Lewis dismissal.

According to a letter received from Ecumenical Enterprises, Inc., the Appalachian Regional Commission through the Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs has approved a grant of \$70,000 to help finance the installation of an offsite well and water development to serve the housing complex for the elderly proposed by Ecumenical Enterprises.

The corporation plans to break ground for the complex "The

Meadows" in late September.

Smith, Miller and Associates are the architects for the complex, the first of its kind in the Back Mountain.

Alex Matukitis, former supervisor of Franklin Township, attended the meeting and reminded the supervisors that there has been a tremendous increase in the gypsy moth population in the Back Mountain. Matukitis said the large number of moth egg clusters on the trees means even worse infestation next year.

The supervisors agreed to contact the Luzerne County Extension Office to determine the possibility of a spraying program to rid the local area of the gypsy moth.

Two residents of Overbrook Avenue at the meeting requested that the supervisors take positive action in plowing and cinderizing the intersection of Overbrook and Pioneer Avenues.

C. Laidler noted that the road is heavily traveled with persons going

to Penn State's Wilkes-Barre Campus and Chase Correctional Institution, and also by school buses.

The supervisors stated that it is a state road and the township cannot take over the road because there are many state roads within the township which also would have to be taken over by the township. The supervisors said the increased road maintenance would mean additional financial burden on township taxpayers.

R. Hutchko asked if the board would contact PennDOT and ask if something could be done by PennDOT to eliminate the accidents and near accidents which occur during snow and ice storms. The supervisors agreed to do so.

Laidler and Hutchko indicated they also will try to get some positive action through communication with PennDOT.



NEW LOOK--Dallas Borough's Main Street is undergoing beautification as workers tear up old sidewalks in preparation for giving the center of Dallas a new look. [Photo by Mark Moran]

NEWS ANALYSIS

by David M. Cleary

Harrisburg Bureau

HARRISBURG--Gov. Thornburgh's cabinet officers, already complaining that they must curtail certain services for lack of funds, have been told the squeeze will be even tighter next year.

In a 10-page memo issued by the Governor's Secretary for Budget and Administration, Robert C. Wilburn, all agencies under the Governor's control have been instructed to submit budgets for the 1981-82 fiscal year calling for no more than 97 percent of this year's spending.

That doesn't mean taxes will go down, however, because the agencies will draw up their budgets on the assumption that payroll costs will be unchanged. State workers are expected to get cost of living wage increases which will more than compensate for the 3 percent cuts.

Gov. Thornburgh said he will look with favor on spending above the 97 percent level in certain situations, including:

Activities which will increase state revenue through better auditing and enforcement;

Maintenance and housekeeping activities needed to properly protect state investment in equipment and buildings; and

Squeeze will be tightened

Enforcement of the strict new laws governing disposal of hazardous waste.

The tight policy on state expenditures is necessary, Wilburn wrote, because funds available from the federal government are expected to decline because the effects of current economic conditions are likely to continue.

At the same time, the Thornburgh administration wants to develop better transportation and energy production systems, and make it easier for businessmen to create new jobs.

On that score, the Department of Transportation is designated to coordinate budget proposals dealing with energy and transportation, including that of the Governor's Energy Council. All state agencies are called upon to stimulate business incentives by reducing the cost to businessmen of complying with state laws.

If a budget based on the guidelines is finally adopted, it will be the first in more than a decade to affect across-the-board spending reductions. That was last done by the Shafer administration in 1988-89.

Home Heating Assistance

Although the Department of Public Welfare doesn't yet know

just how much money it will receive from the federal government to help pool people pay their heating bills this winter, it has drawn up its plans for putting the program into effect in November.

A household is eligible for help in meeting heating costs if it has at least one member in a "needy" category, as evidenced by eligibility for aid to dependent children, food stamps, supplementary security income or certain veteran's benefits, or has household income lower than levels established by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Those levels are higher in counties containing major cities, because costs of living tend to be greater there than in rural areas. Any person living alone who has an income of \$4,470 or less is eligible, and a family of four with income of \$12,420 is eligible in a rural county, with \$12,880 the limit for a similar family near a city.

Although the plan may be modified slightly in response to public comment, the Welfare Department suggests that eligible families apply soon to be sure of getting the November allowance. Applications can be made now at county public assistance offices.

Amounts allowable to individual households will depend on type of

heat used, difficulties in heating a given dwelling, and probably winter temperatures in the county, as well as income and family size. Payments will be continued until the available money runs out, according to a Welfare Department spokesman.

Air Travel Ticketing Costs

Under federal regulations, a travel agency that issues airline tickets can collect a commission from the airlines, but an agency of state government cannot.

Secretary of General Services Walter Baran announced last week that taxpayers have saved money at the rate of at least \$180,000 since a ticketing office in his department was abolished in July 1979. Its four employees were furloughed, and state employees now get tickets from a commercial agency.

Baran said a new contract has just been negotiated, under which the agency will furnish monthly summaries listing travel by employees of each state agency, which had been done until now by his department at state expense.

The monthly summaries were worth their cost because they helped agency heads curtail official travel, Baran said. Even that cost to taxpayers has now been eliminated.

Send questions to "PAL"

PENNSYLVANIA ACTION LINE looks forward to receiving your questions about Pennsylvania Government. Preference is given to matters of greatest statewide application, and questions may be sent by mail to: "PAL," 2717 N. Front St., Harrisburg, PA 17110. "PAL" cannot accept phone inquiries or acknowledge individual letters.

QUESTION: Can you explain Pennsylvania's per capita tax? I notice that residents who don't register to vote are not required to pay it. Is it similar to a poll tax?

--M.N., Lackawaxen

ANSWER: The Commonwealth has no statewide tax levied at a rate of so much per person (or "by heads," in a literal translation from Latin) but many local governments do.

State law places many limitations on taxation by counties, cities, townships, boroughs and school districts. The law in this area is so complex that local taxes have often been challenged in the courts, resulting in a maze of decisions that even lawyers find hard to interpret.

A per capita tax has nothing to do with voting, although voting registration records are among those sources of data used by taxing authorities to compile lists of people to whom bills are sent.

Strictly speaking, a resident of

the area under the taxing authority's jurisdiction is liable for the tax, whether or not the tax collector sends a bill. The number of people who voluntarily pay taxes for which they are not billed is another matter.

QUESTION: I think my water meter is inaccurate, resulting in overcharges for water. The company says I must pay a fee to have them check it. Is that legal?

--A.J.C., Drexel Hill

ANSWER: Yes, and the fee is kept by the company; if the meter turns out to be accurate within allowable errors.

A variation of up to 6 gallons per minute is allowed for a meter measuring flow through a pipe five-eighths of an inch in diameter and the allowance is 10 gallons a minute for three-quarter inch pipes.

However, if the error is greater, the company must refund the fee to you. Further, the maximum fee for meters on pipes of one inch or less, and that includes just about all households, is \$5.00. If you feel the overcharges are great, you should be willing to risk that \$5.00 gamble.

It would be wise, however, to first check for water leaks or wasted flow on your side of the meter, which are your responsibility.

QUESTION: I have a small income from investments, as well as a job,

and am required to make quarterly payments on state income tax because of it. The amount is so small it's a nuisance. Would I be penalized if I let the Sept. 15 payment go by, and settled up at the end of the year?

--T.R.B., Duncannon

ANSWER: Probably not, if the amount is small, because the Revenue Department doesn't want its employees to spend their time dealing with trivialities. However, much of the tax processing is done by computer these days, and you may find yourself arguing with a machine that cares much more about small amounts than a person would.

Since the amount is so small, the best way to handle the issue is to pay the whole tax on your investment income at the beginning of the year. It can be sent off with your annual return, due April 15, while the matter is on your mind anyway. Then you have no need to concern yourself with it until a year later.

If actual investment income turns out to be a little higher than expected, as will be the case when a company increases its dividend during the year, that adjustment can be made in your final return without penalty. Nobody can expect you to estimate accurately to the penny.

QUESTION: I'm in the auto parts

business with two partners, and we're finding it hard to get parts for old cars. So we're thinking of setting up an auto junkyard as a subsidiary to our main business. Are there any state laws we should know about before we make a final decision?

--R.J., Chester County

ANSWER: There are quite a few. No auto junkyard may be operated unless licensed by the Department of Transportation, for example, and requirements for getting a license are spelled out in Chapter 9 of Title 67, Pennsylvania Code.

Department of Environmental Resources also has rules for the operations of junkyards, and there are requirements pertaining to taxation, unemployment compensation for employees and so on.

A query to the Small Business Action Center in the Department of Commerce would be advisable. That office has the job of helping the formation of new businesses, and expansion of existing ones. It provides complete packages of state requirements pertaining to whatever business is under consideration, and can be reached by calling (717) 783-5700.

Then you'll also have to deal with local requirements, particularly with respect to zoning. Not every neighborhood welcomes a junkyard.

30,000 attend county fair

Excitement and anticipation mounted as the days grew closer to the opening of the gate to the Luzerne County Fair.

Tuesday arrived as did the world-renowned Carla Wallenda. Introductions were made and the grueling task of erecting the 110-foot tower and slide of life, Carla's feature performances began.

Commercial exhibitors pulled in with their wares, totally unaware of what was about to become a very rewarding and frantic weekend.

Hobby arts and crafts committee was astonished by the number of people entering their crafts in competition for monetary and ribbon prizes. The 30'x160' tent was completely filled. Over \$2900 was awarded in prizes.

As the time neared there was still work to be done, the fencing had to be up in time, defective speakers had to be changed, lines marked for parking, power hooked up in the parking area, chairs to be obtained, time was growing short. But the gate opened at 5 p.m. on Wednesday and the Fair weekend began.

Thursday evening was opened by an official ceremony program. The Honorable Frank J. O'Connell was the guest speaker as well as Gen. Frank Townend, Ron Stern administrator of Nesbitt Memorial Hospital and Congressional candidate James Nelligan, who presented the Fair with an American flag which flew over the Capitol on Sept. 2.

The invocation and blessing of the Fair was performed by Rev. Andrew Pillarella, the national anthem was played by Bobby Baird and His Dixieland Jazz Band, as the United States Marine Color Guard presented the Colors. Rotarian President Paul Preibe, Sr. introduced the guest speakers and the ceremony closed with the raising of the American Flag and the Dallas Area Fall Fair Flag designed by Miss Judi Blase and painted by Jeff

Gregory. The people came, thousand upon thousands came to the Fair.

The sweet corn booth was completely sold out by Friday night and had to run for more; over 1000 pounds of sausage was consumed, dozens and dozens of donuts delighted the crowds, as did the potato pancakes, pizza, hamburgers and French fries.

Children and adults all enjoyed the thrill of the amusement rides, sideshows, the giant slide and the continual entertainment throughout the weekend.

The Grand National Champion Lake-Lehman Band under the direction of John Miliuskas drew hundreds of fans on Friday night. Performances by Frankie and the Corvettes, the Poets, Ed Williams, The Roots of Blue Grass, the Young Entertainers, Bobby Baird's Dixieland Jazz Band and the final grand finale of fire works by Tony Semenza of Wyoming delighted the crowds.

Fair promotion credits go to 1980 Fall Chairman Don Rood, Entertainment Bob Kelley; parking, Kingston Twp. Lions and the Dallas Kiwanis; corn booth, Dallas Rotary; potato pancake booth, Dallas Lions; taco and sausage stand, Bk. Mt. Jaycees; main food booth, Dallas Rotary; and the homemade donut stand, Dallas Rotary, all under the direction of Jon Pomrinke, Back Mountain Jaycees; commercial exhibitors, Buck Albert and Rob Bayer; hobby, arts and craft under the direction of Stephanie Reisch and Barbara Regan and the Back Mountain Jayceettes and the Dallas Area Federated Woman's Club and the Dallas Jr. Woman's Club; games under the direction of Bk. Mt. Kowanis; finance chairman Glenda Pomrinke; publicity chairman Carolyn Bulford, 4-H exhibits, Ralph Beard; gate, The Lake Silkworth Lions.

Nesbitt expansion program proceeds

Nesbitt Memorial Hospital's \$8.7 million expansion and renovation program is proceeding on schedule reported Ron Stern, hospital administrator. Construction of the hospital's major building program began in July with the closing of Welter Lane between Poplar Street and Sharpe Street. This area is now in the process of being excavated to allow for relocation of telephone lines and the pouring of concrete. Demolition work has been completed on the north rear side of the hospital in preparation for the excavation and erection of steel.

The Board of Directors has issued an official artist rendering depicting the hospital as it will appear upon completion of the construction

program in early 1983. The rendering clearly illustrates the hospital's new exterior with the location of two new floors of patient rooms on the Wyoming Avenue side of the hospital. Other highlights of the building program include an expanded emergency room, the addition of a radiographic fluoroscopic X-Ray room, new operating rooms, enlarged laboratory department, a new pulmonary medicine department, a new 10-bed intensive care and coronary care unit, an enlarged physical therapy department, a redesigned pediatric unit with provision for large play areas and observation rooms, two new high speed elevators, a new hospitality shop and additional parking.



HOSPITAL--Artist's painting of Nesbitt Memorial Hospital which will complete its building program in 1983.

Classified Ad deadline is Friday, 5 p.m.

Dallas Post news deadline is Tuesday, 9 a.m.

Display Ad deadline is Monday, 5 p.m.