

LAKE-LEHMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board votes against restricting tax increases

By REBECCA BRIA
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The Lake-Lehman School Board voted down a resolution on Jan. 18 that would restrict tax increases to 3.7 percent or below.

Pennsylvania Act I, known as the "Taxpayer Relief Act," requires school districts to limit tax increases to the levels set by an inflation index unless they obtain an exception or it is approved by voter referendum.

The state set the district's index rate at 3.7 percent for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

According to Thomas Melone

of Albert Melone and Company, which serves as the district's business manager, the current millage rate is 7.8011 in Luzerne County and 55.6534 in Wyoming County. A mill is a \$1 tax for every \$1,000 in assessed property.

But the resolution to adhere to the index rate failed with seven board members voting no, including Mark Kornoski.

"It's not saying we're going over the index, but if we have to a little bit our hands won't be tied," Kornoski said.

Board president Moderno Rossi and board member Peter Farrell voted yes for the measure.

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"It's not saying we're going over the index, but if we have to a little bit our hands won't be tied."

Mark Kornoski
L-L School Board member

"The reason I voted (yes) for the resolution is we have to be fiscally responsible for the taxpayers."

Peter Farrell
L-L School Board member

the resolution is we have to be fiscally responsible for the taxpayers," Farrell said.

Because the board did not approve the resolution, it is required by law to prepare a 2010-

2011 preliminary budget for public inspection by Jan. 28. Board members will then have to vote on the budget by Feb. 17.

The board plans to apply for exceptions by the Pennsylvania De-

partment of Education up to an amount that has not yet been determined. If the board exceeds the tax rate by the unspecified amount, the matter will become a voter referendum question in the primary election in May.

Ross Elementary expansion

The board narrowly approved by 5-4 payment disbursements for the Ross Elementary School expansion project for Dec. 21, 2009 in the amount of \$305,567.85.

The project's substantial completion date for the project is now Feb. 5 which is about three weeks behind the last completion date

the board was given for the project.

The board also accepted a quote for a 6-foot chain link fence to be installed around the new playground at the school in the amount of \$7,500 from Rutkoski Fencing of West Wyoming.

Reading program

The board approved the purchase of the Scott Forseman/Pearson "Reading Street" kindergarten reading program in the amount of \$23,640.78 to be funded through the Demonstration Grant.

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Misericordia University students pack diaper bags as part of a campus ministry program. From left, are Tyann McDaniel, Nicolette Hensel, Ashleigh Ramsey and Rachel Ruane.

MU students fill diaper bags as part of National Service Day

Misericordia University Campus Ministry students and staff partnered with the Kids Care Club of Jewish Family Service of Greater Wilkes-Barre to fill and distribute 30 diaper bags to mothers in need as part of the National Day of Service to commemorate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Misericordia campus collected items for the bags, including diapers, baby wipes, baby bath wash and shampoo, diaper cream, onesies, bibs, toys and pacifiers.

The items were then placed in diaper bags purchased through a grant from the National Kids Care Club. The filled bags will be

distributed through the Rose of Sharon program of Catholic Social Services to young mothers in need.

Jewish Family Service is a non-profit social service agency that addresses a wide range of personal and family problems. The Kids Care Club of JFS encourages kindergarten and early grade levels to actively participate in service learning in hopes they will always be civic minded. The Corporation for National and Community Service asked Americans to make the King Holiday a national day of service to encourage service as a way of life for all people.



Brian Glowatski packs a diaper bag at Misericordia University as part of a campus ministry program.

DALLAS BOROUGH

False alarms may soon result in fine

By REBECCA BRIA
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Repeated false fire and security alarms may soon result in a fine in the borough.

Council voted on Jan. 20 to authorize the borough manager and solicitor to draft an alarm systems ordinance requiring, but not limited to, the registration of an alarm system, payment of a license fee and a penalty for multiple false alarms within an established time period.

Borough manager Tracey Carr said the suggestion for the ordinance came from Dallas Fire and Ambulance Fire Chief Harry Vivian because false alarms bring on additional expenses to the fire company.

Council president Lee Eckert said there have been a few cases of frequent offenders in the borough.

Bid awarded

A bid for a drainage improvement project on Spring Street was awarded to the qualified low bidder, Popple Construction Inc. of Laffin, for a total contract amount of \$96,562.

Popple Construction submitted a base bid of \$120,621 and an alternate bid of \$112,151 for the project. However, the project is being funded through a \$100,000 Luzerne County Office of Community Development Grant.

Because the bid exceeded the grant amount, the borough decided to remove the paving and milling work as well as an inlet and a cross pipe from the contract to reduce the cost. The borough's road department will do the paving and milling.

Projects out for bid

Council also authorized the solicitation of bids for two other projects.

The first project is a storm water infrastructure project

on Elizabeth Street between the intersections of Charles Street and Michael Drive.

The second project calls for a roof replacement and repairs on the municipal building.

Both projects are approved Federal Emergency Management Agency and Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency alternate projects.

Emergency operations plan

Council approved a resolution that adopts an updated borough emergency operations plan.

According to Carr, the plan names an emergency coordinator as required and outlines emergency procedures. Vivian serves as the borough's emergency coordinator.

Police officer resigns

The resignation of Ronald Fiebus, a part-time police officer, was authorized, effective Dec. 25, 2009. The borough manager was also authorized to seek applications for the position.

Recreation director

Council authorized the borough manager to seek applications for a recreation director for the 2010 borough summer recreation program.

Vacancy chair

Patricia Peiffer, a former council member, was appointed as the borough's vacancy chair.

According to solicitor Jeffrey Malak, the vacancy chair is utilized as a tie breaker in the event of a council vacancy. Council members must vote to appoint someone to fill the vacancy and if there is a tie, the vacancy chair votes to break the tie.

Truck purchase

Approval was granted for the purchase of a 1997 Ford F-250 4X4 pickup truck for the road department from Mountaineer Motors not to exceed \$3,700 plus title and tag fees.

Council also authorized a trade-in of a 1986 GMC support vehicle for no less than \$200.

DALLAS TOWNSHIP

Supervisors accept application for medical clinic; hearing will be set

By REBECCA BRIA
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A medical clinic became one step closer to becoming a reality during the Jan. 19 board of supervisors meeting.

The supervisors proceeded with accepting an application for a conditional use from the Dallas Geisinger Medical Clinic slated to be built on four acres of land at the former Sacred Heart Park on Dorchester Drive.

The clinic received a special exception from the zoning hearing board on Dec. 7 for an undefined use not specified in the zoning district.

Because the clinic will require so much land and is not a residence, it is deemed a conditional use and must be approved by the supervisors.

The supervisors accepted the application and will schedule a public hearing on the matter as required after 30 days. The hearing will be at the supervisors' first meeting in March.

Thomas Reilly, an engineer from Reilly Associates who is representing the clinic, said a traffic study of the area of the clinic was completed. Reilly said permits for a traffic signal at Route 309 and Dorchester Drive were submitted to the Pennsylvania De-

partment of Transportation. Reilly added that the hope is to break ground on the clinic by the end of March.

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Guide rail installation

Guide rails will soon be installed on one side of Yalick Road

and Hill Street.

The supervisors approved a bid for the guide rail installation in the amount of \$8,530 from William Orr & Sons Inc. of Jonestown. The township received quotes for the project by telephone and was not required to

put it up for public bid because it is under \$10,000.

Supervisor Glenn Howell said the guide rails will be installed on the side of the roads where the incline is steeper. Howell said the lack of guide rail on the roads was a safety issue.

Partnership contribution

The supervisors approved a flat municipal member contribution of \$300 toward the start-up funds of the Back Mountain Community Partnership. The township is a member of the partnership.

Killed-in-service benefits

The supervisors decided, under counsel from the township pension specialist Thomas J. Anderson & Associates, not to rush to amend any ordinances or resolutions previously passed relating to payment for killed-in-service benefits if an officer is killed in the line of duty.

The township's Act 600 police pension plan will be affected as a result of Act 51 being signed into law last fall. Under Act 51, direct payment for a killed-in-service benefit will be made by the state, not municipalities.

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