

A special meeting of the Wheatfield Township Board of Supervisors was held in the township building on Thursday, May 24, 2012 at 8:00 p.m. The meeting was advertised as required by law. Jim Fuller called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Township's Health Insurance Renewal.

Those present were Jim Fuller, Barry Schrope, Annette Mullen, Vicki Jenkins, Brenton Horting, Joyce Swain, Dianne Dahlin, Darlene Johnson, Kent Johnson, Bob Rhoades, Elaine Dougan, Joe Dougan, Mike Hoak, Dexter Potter, Dave Jenkins and Jim Reisinger.

Dianne Dahlin stated she would like to bring up again that employees of Holy Spirit Hospital has their employees contribute a certain percentage, where the EMT's are making \$13.00/hr. after 12 years and paying \$4,943 for their insurance yearly and they have a deductible of \$2500. Dianne stated she also read an article in the paper regarding Palmyra School District teachers received a 1.47% raise over the next 3 years, but with that had an increase of 7.5% in their contribution to their health care and their spouses will have to pay an additional \$300 to be on their insurance. Dianne states the employees should have to put something towards insurance and she knows the employees are asking for the more expensive insurance which she finds unconscionable. Dianne states with Jim being an employee he should not be allowed to vote.

Elaine Dougan states she is a state employee and all state employees pay 3% of their gross salary for their health insurance and she does not think there should be a free ride at this time. Elaine states she also agrees with Dianne in that someone should not be a paid employee and a supervisor and be able to vote on their own benefits.

Joe Dougan states he thinks everyone needs health insurance and he is not here to take anything away from anybody. Joe stated he has done an in depth study on the federal government and has downloaded the whole United States. The study breaks down what they pay, he had no idea that federal employees pay as much as they do for health insurance. Joe states he also went to the county and for a single employee they pay 8%, married employees with family pay 10% of their gross wages. Joe states he knows in the past the township has paid a lot more for health insurance, but mismanagement in previous years has nothing to do with the economic times today. Joe also requested Jim Fuller not vote on something that has to do with him and he has spoken to at least 150 residents in the last few days and he is the one who put the ad on the cable to get people here tonight and obviously they are not looking at the cable, but the consensus with what everybody said is if Jim votes on this they will make sure he is not re-elected again.

Mike Hoak states he also agrees that Jim Fuller should not be able to vote for his own pay raise or anything else. Mike states he has to pay for his own insurance; he can't afford to pay for the township employees. Mike states he does not think the employees should have to pay exorbitant co-pay's and deductibles, but the township should get in line.

Dave Jenkins states the township has 3 employees that donate time in the township, employees who come in on Saturdays for recycling and spring cleanup, employees who are very involved in the community. Dave states you have 3 employees who live in the township and you have 3 employees that give back to the township and are tax payers just like everyone else. Dave states he does not know where everyone is getting their figures but most municipal employees he works with still have great benefits, such as Duncannon and some are down the road which he won't compare with Wheatfield Township. Dave states every meeting Vicki goes to she takes comp time and not over time, the employees don't charge overtime. Dave states the employees give back to the township as much as they can and are very good people and are not here to rip the township off. Dave states he feels the people here tonight are ganging up and not giving the respect to the employees which live in the township and are taxpayers as well and give back as much as those here say they take. Dave states the supervisors just gave \$1000 to an Eagle Scout project, which is fine, you want to help everyone else but you don't want to help your own employees.

Jim Reisinger states he (Dave) wants to know where they get their numbers from. Jim states the last few days he has been on the internet and you can go county to county and take the tri county area for municipal government with what they get and don't get and in the last 3 years in wages and benefits the average loss is 22%. Jim states as far as donating time he doesn't think there is anybody here who does not donate time, what is the guy that pays your wages what are his benefits. Jim states he does appreciate what the employees do with recycling and spring cleanup, but on an average for the insurance for municipalities, the co-pay and deductible are standard policy, but the employee's dependents they pay between 50% and 80% toward family coverage.

Brenton Horting of Hartman Employee Benefits fielded questions from those in attendance and went over the insurance coverage the employees currently have with Health America (renewal rate of 7.29% increase) and the coverage the employees would have with Geisinger (-13.72% decrease) if a switch is made tonight. Brenton stated each year the township shops several companies for insurance rates. Brenton stated when insurance premiums were increasing the township looked into higher deductible plans and by switching to the higher deductible plan were able to have guaranteed savings in the annual premium and took the risk on paying out on deductibles, which is covered by the township currently through an HRA plan.

Barry Schrope stated at last month's meeting when the supervisors said about checking into Geisinger, nothing was ever said that the employees wanted the higher plan. Barry stated he also wanted to give the employees a choice, if they wanted to pay the increase to stay with Health America or if they would choose to go to Geisinger.

Vicki Jenkins stated the \$2500 deductible was not created to hurt the township in anyway; it was done to help the township by saving on the annual premium, a guaranteed savings. Vicki stated when she first started there was a \$250 deductible, then it switched to a \$1,000 deductible, a guaranteed \$8,000 dollars and the most that was going to be paid out on HRA was \$6,000, already \$2,000 ahead if everyone maxed out on their deductible. Vicki stated when the \$1,000 deductible annual premium increased; the township looked into increasing the deductible to \$2,500 and having a guaranteed savings again on the annual premium. Vicki stated she has called every township in the county and these benefits are out there and not just Wheatfield Township. Vicki stated the benefits at Wheatfield Township have always been afforded to their employees and where we have come from to where we are today is much better, more fair and equal. Vicki stated if the township is not in any financial distress and is in better shape financially, why does it have to change, just because? Vicki states she chose her job and each person has a choice to work where they want and find better benefits or try to better themselves.

Jim Fuller stated the township has come from \$800,000 to \$2,000,000 and he believes the employees are willing to take the Geisinger plan and save the township \$3,200, but there seems to be an element somewhere that wants to hurt no matter what we try to do or how we try to manage money.

Annette Mullen stated when you go back in history, the township has always had employees who are supervisors and are voting for their own plan. Annette stated what we have gotten and where we are at is because there has not been total objectivity to it. Annette states her Uncle Buzz was a supervisor and Paul Fisher was a supervisor, who was voting for their own selves, her Uncle Buzz voted himself a very good pension plan before he got out. Annette stated when Jim says the township has gone from \$800,000 to \$2,000,000 that is great but you just can't go by the amount, the township has bought no equipment in the last 10 or 12 years except for the truck, the township has 3 road projects, we want to put a building up and we have aging equipment that is very expensive. Annette states when you say the amount you also have to look and see what the depreciation is and what is going on here. Annette states you can't have a Cadillac when the taxpayers who are paying you are paying for it, and she is not looking for the employees to pay a lot, but when she saw the increase her thing was if the employees want Health America then she doesn't mind paying 100% for the employee but the spouse and family should start contributing a certain percentage. Annette states at this point if the employees take the Geisinger plan things remain the same and then can be re-evaluated during the budget process.

Annette Mullen made a motion to switch to Geisinger Health Insurance and change the renewal date from May to February, Barry Schrope second the motion, Jim Fuller abstained.

Joyce Swain stated it is wrong but you did it, employees should be contributing towards the premium.

Barry Schrope stated at the last township meeting several did not want the township to pass the prevailing wage resolution and possibly take away wages from residents in the township, but overall more residents would have benefited because it would have reduced the paving bids, but he can't be taking money away from taxpayers either, so if you're asking him to not act on the prevailing wage and then ask him to take money away from the 3 employees that's not right either.

There being no further business Annette Mullen made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Barry Schrope second the motion, with all in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Vicki L. Jenkins  
Twp. Secretary