

TOBYHANNA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
BUDGET MEETING  
September 22, 2025

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The September Budget Meeting of the Tobyhanna Township Board of Supervisors ("Board") was held on September 22, 2025, at the Tobyhanna Township Government Center Building located at 105 Government Center Way, Pocono Pines, PA 18350.

Present are Supervisors John Kerrick, Joseph Colyer, Rachel Schickling and Edward Tutrone. Also present are Manager Robert Bartal, and Assistant Manager Crystal Butler. Supervisor Ted Wolski appeared virtually. Solicitor Harry Coleman, Esquire, was not present.

1. John Kerrick calls the meeting to order at 6:00PM; a quorum is present.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited.
3. Announcements: There were no announcements.
4. 2026 Budget Session Business:

1. Budget Process: Robert Bartal introduces Crystal Butler, Assistant Manager, Laura Marasco, Fiscal Specialist and James Rafferty, Roadmaster who are here to start the presentation. Mr. Bartal states that they are going to go over the general fund portion and will also be reviewing the Emergency Service Fund, Fire Fund as well as the Library Fund. Mr. Bartal states that they have presenters to assist with each organization. He states that AJ Schrader of PMREMS could not make it as he had an emergency but did advise that they are not looking for anything more than last year. Mr. Bartal states that much of the focus is going to be Fire Fund and Emergency Services Fund.

Robert Bartal states that the budget process will have three planned budget sessions. Mr. Bartal states that they have tonight's session, Monday, October 6, 2025, at 9:30AM and the final budget session will be held on Tuesday, October 28, 2025, at 6:00PM. Mr. Bartal states that they anticipate having a final draft of the budget through the three budget sessions and the goal is to hand the budget at the Board of Supervisors meeting on November 17, 2025, with approval of authorization for advertisement at that time. Mr. Bartal states that the final budget can be placed on the Board of Supervisors Regular Business Meeting on December 15, 2025.

2. Funds Review:

- General Fund: Crystal Butler presents a slide show regarding the current millage rates. Ms. Butler states that she has not received any indication that the County has finalized nor what their millage rate is going to be. Ms. Butler states that the school district did pass their millage rate and it increased by one millage point to 23.25. Ms. Butler states that the current draft of the budget is built off the same millage rates that they had last year.

Robert Bartal states that the general fund shows an anticipated collection rate of \$7,078,093.00 which is approximately \$290,000 below the 2025 revenue collection. Mr. Bartal states the drop in revenue is mainly due to the decline in real estate transfers as well as a decline in the delinquent tax collection that we have been receiving, and these items are

out of our control. He states that there has not been a lot of turnover of employees and they have been able to attract and retain employees. Mr. Bartal states that he has built into the budget up to a 5% raise based on merit. Mr. Bartal states that in 2024 they were able to add to the balance, and they anticipate doing the same in 2025.

Mr. Bartal states that the one thing that they have budgeted for under DPW is to replace the 2004 Mack Truck, which is the only old vehicle left in the fleet. Mr. Bartal states that it is going to be tough to get through another inspection cycle. James Rafferty gives a presentation regarding the truck that he would like to purchase. A discussion was held.

- Fire Fund
- Emergency Services Fund Including Volunteer Fire Relief Allocation.

3. Presentations and Board discussions regarding funding:

- PMRPD – Budget Update: Robert Bartal states that he spoke with Chief Wagner who advised that they are currently approximately 300 hours over their 2025 allotment. Mr. Bartal states that Chief Wagner does not feel that this is a problem and anticipates that they will fall in line with the projected hours of service for the year. Mr. Bartal states that Chief Wagner advised that their 2026 draft budget is not complete and preliminary estimates show a 5% increase.

- PMREMS: This was previously discussed.

- Clymer Library: Phil Whitehurst, Treasurer of Clymer Library is here to present. Mr. Whitehurst thanks the Board for the millage rate increase as that has helped them to be self-sufficient. Mr. Whitehurst states that they have no major requests. Mr. Whitehurst states that in the past the Board has given the library a \$2,000.00 maintenance payment and asks the Board to continue to provide the maintenance payment.

Robert Bartal states that after the fire companies make their presentations, there is one thing that they need to do with the fire companies regarding \$141,000 of fire fund money that Laura Marasco is sitting on and needs to be distributed. Mr. Bartal states that they do not have a clear picture of how the Boards would like this money distributed. Mr. Bartal states that this money is from the 2025 budget which Ms. Marasco has been holding since April. Laura Marasco states that this was paused in March. Mr. Bartal states that this will be a decision that they have to make. Edward Tutrone asks if that is the tax fund collection money from the referendum. Robert Bartal states that is correct. Mr. Tutrone states that that has its own fund number and if they don't decide tonight then it stays in its own bank account. Ms. Marasco states that it physically stays in its own bank account. A discussion was held.

- PSVFC: Tyler Rispoli, Fire Chief of Pocono Summit Volunteer Fire Company is here to present. Mr. Rispoli states that they are looking for their budget to stay the same. He states that they are looking to add to their truck maintenance to have someone clean the trucks twice a year. Mr. Rispoli states that they have ordered a UTV and a new pumper tanker that will be coming next year. Mr. Rispoli states that they are looking pretty good. Robert Bartal asks for the cost of the pumper tanker. Mr. Rispoli states it cost 1.2 million. Mr. Bartal asks if they are going to be looking at withdrawing money from their account. Michelle Gonzalez states not right now.

Edward Tutrone states that they need to do something about the air pack because they are going to need to get new air packs next year. Robert Bartal states that they have not heard anything about that grant. A discussion was held.

Robert Bartal states that one of the problems that the staff has is that they don't have any fire expertise, and we don't really know what is needed. Mr. Bartal states that we need a liaison to help with fire issues. Edward Tutrone states that he would be more than happy to take that on as a board member. A discussion was held.

John Kerrick asks about the radios and states there was talk about that a few years ago and is that something that has to come soon. Edward Tutrone states that they do need to upgrade the radios and they need to look for a grant to see if there is something out there. Joseph Colyer asks what they do first, the truck or the radios. A discussion was held.

- TTBF: Tia Fritz from Tobyhanna Township Bureau is here to present. Ms. Fritz states that their budget request is similar to what they requested last year with agreements for truck maintenance, pump testing and hose testing. She states that they are items at the Emergency Services Building that need repair such as the door next to the bay doors as there is an issue with ice. Jame Rafferty state that they have hopefully fixed that problem. She states that there is a lot of rust along the bay doors and they are starting to deteriorate. Ms. Fritz asks if they can form a committee with the two fire companies, EMS and the Township to look at a strategic plan for the necessary repairs of the building. Ms. Fritz states that that in the last two years money has been allocated for the Bucks gold package. A discussion was held.

Ms. Fritz states that their long-range plan is to form a truck committee between the two fire companies and the Township to look into fleet replacement and to allocate funds.

Joseph Colyer stated that there was a lot of maintenance on the trucks and would like to discuss this. Robert Bartal states that they are budgeting \$100,000 for truck maintenance and that he would like to see a better system such as an allocation for each department based upon the number of vehicles. A discussion was held. Robert Bartal asks if they would like to see the fire companies submit their budget items that they anticipate needing for maintenance of their vehicles and the equipment they own for budget session #2. A discussion was held.

John Kerrick states that Jame Rafferty can put together a list of repairs to be done at the Emergency Services Building. Crystal Butler states that there is a statewide LSA Grant for \$1,000,000.00. Ms. Butler states that she has discussed with Robert Bartal and James Rafferty about potentially doing major jobs that need to be done on the Emergency Services Building and putting in a grant for that. A discussion was held.

- TTVFC: Jeff Rickert, Vice President of Tobyhanna Township Volunteer Fire Company is here to present. Mr. Rickert states that he has prepared a summary for the Board which indicates what their functions are, their fund raising, their services and what is on their radar along with a summary of their budget. Mr. Rickert states that the variable for general could be \$191,000 to \$272,000 in the budget. He states that they do a fund drive letter and their website has a QR code that they also received donations from. Mr. Rickert states that they have received an overwhelming response and their proposal is between \$57,000 and \$65,000. Mr. Rickert states that the vehicles that they own require maintenance.

Mr. Rickert states that since they have been back in service, they have done 117 calls, 570 personnel, average fire is approximately 5 people and average time on scene is approximately 33 minutes. Mr. Bartal asks if these calls can be billed to an insurance company. Mr. Tutrone states that they don't as it is the service that they provide, and they could only bill if they transport.

Mr. Rickert states that their immediate need is a copier as their current copier is 11 years old and the parts and supplies are limited. He states that they have received three quotes, but they have not had a meeting to decide what to do and whether they are going to lease or purchase. He states that it would be approximately \$4,800.00. Mr. Rickert states that they did a grant for radios and they have rescue tools on their radar. Mr. Rickert states that the FRA proposal budget is over \$76,000 and if they do the full general-purpose budget it would be \$272,000. A discussion was held.

Robert Bartal gives a recap for the next budget meeting. Mr. Bartal states that Mr. Tutrone is going to take the lead on looking at equipment that is going to be included in the budget. Mr. Bartal states that each fire company is going to give us an estimate of the money they need to maintain their equipment and trucks. Mr. Bartal states that the Township will look into what they need to do if they decide to do away with the non-binding referendum should the Board chose to do that, how that would look and the tax bill and how we can distribute those monies. Mr. Bartal suggests that they hold off on the distribution of the non-binding referendum money to the individual companies, it is going to stay in the Township fund. He states that we need to make a decision on that. A discussion was held.

Robert Bartal states that they do need to know what to do with the \$100,797.00 that is volunteer fire relief association money that was received in account on September 17, 2025, and are mandated to distribute within sixty days. Mr. Bartal states that it will need to be distributed by mid-November to our volunteer fire companies.

- **Short-Term Rental Update:** Crystal Butler states that after having several years of going through and having a rhythm with the Short-Term Rental Department, they have gained great compliance over the years. Ms. Butler states that they would potentially like to make a change to better help attribute revenues to expenses that don't necessarily get captured in the way they look at it in the general fund. Ms. Butler states that in the general fund, the short-term rental permit fees are estimated to be \$400,000 next year and the basic expenditure is approximately \$200,000. Ms. Butler states that this does not speak to the expenditure on the Police, Fire, Ems and road maintenance which they cannot put a number on, and we would have to consider. Ms. Butler presents a slide show regarding aligning the expenditures and revenues a little better in the 06 fund for some of the short-term rental revenue they receive that will come into the 01 fund but would allocate these essentially to 06 fund to help offset the costs that they feel burden our Fire and Ems services. Ms. Butler states that they are looking to see if the Board of Supervisors were amenable to taking \$125,000 of what is left of the \$200,000 that is not necessarily covered by our basic expenses and attributing those to the 06 fund. She states that they would still like to maintain a buffer of approximately \$75,000 to help account for the cost of our police that come out of the 01 fund. Ms. Butler states if the supervisors are amenable this does make the 06 fund solvent. A discussion was held.

4. ESB Fire Company Leases: Robert Bartal states that he has discussed with Attorney Coleman and Attorney Coleman recommends separate leases of each company for building use contingent upon a company being recognized by the Township and if they are no longer recognized that the lease would become null and void.

5. Emergency Vehicle Leases: Robert Bartal states that Attorney Coleman recommended joint leases for the vehicles and equipment again contingent of a fire company being recognized by the Township. Mr. Bartal states that he had a conversation with Edward Tutrone and Mr. Tutrone had very good points as to why we wouldn't want joint leases for the vehicles. Mr. Tutrone states his feelings about this and that no fire company should be able to hold the Township hostage. A discussion was held. Mr. Bartal states that the lease agreements will be placed on the October Board of Supervisors meeting Agenda.

Robert Bartal states that in the upcoming meetings, they are going to look into a overview of the remaining ancillary funds along with adjustments to the general fund that will be made over the next few sessions.

5. Board of Supervisors Report/Comment: Edward Tutrone states that they have been going back and forth regarding the amendment to the Fire Ordinance. Mr. Tutrone would like to see this for discussion and possible advertisement for the October Meeting regarding Ordinance 561 that was amended in 2020 so that everyone is in compliance.

6. Public Comment: None.

7. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:29PM.

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Minutes recorded by Bethanne Eisler

  
Bethanne Eisler, Township Secretary