

East Lampeter Township Emergency Services Committee – Meeting Minutes

March 20, 2025

1. **Call to Order** – The ELT Emergency Services Committee meeting was called to order by Mike Thorton at 1900 hrs at the ELT Office and via Zoom. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

The following Committee Members were in attendance:

East Lampeter Township: Mike Thorton, Stephanie Johnson (Citizen)
Hand-in-Hand Fire Company: Paul Fisher
Lafayette Fire Company: Jason Beiler, Robert Patterson (Citizen)
Ronks Fire Company: Dave Gribble, Melanie McHenry (Citizen)*
Witmer Fire Company: Mike Creamer, Chad Englerth (Citizen)

The following Alternate / Non-Voting Committee Members were in attendance:

East Lampeter Township:
Hand-in-Hand Fire Company:
Lafayette Fire Company: Scott Hershey
Ronks Fire Company: Nate Church
Witmer Fire Company:

Additional Attendees:

Ralph Hutchison, ELT Manager
Tara Hitchens, ELT Assistant Manager
Rhiannon Eckinger-Seda, Administrative Assistant
Jeff Hatfield, EMC*
Bradley Bell, Lafayette Fire Company

*Joined via Zoom

2. **Approval of Minutes** – January 16, 2025 meeting

Dave Gribble made a motion to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by Paul Fisher.

3. **Old Business**

Sub Committee Reports

a. Fire Apparatus Replacement

- Hand-in-Hand – Engine 41-1 (2026) – Paul Fisher reported there are no updates
- Lafayette – Ladder Truck 63 (2027) – Jason Beiler reported the committee attended a pre build meeting earlier this year in Florida. Met with Lititz FC to discuss similar E-ONE build. Received updated pricing, received a \$1200 credit for equipment mounting. ~\$50K in commitments from capital campaign.
- Witmer – Mike Creamer inquired about the request for reimbursement for the Tanker 62 engine replacement. Feedback was shared by each company.
 - Lafayette – Tanker adds value to the community. Lafayette recommends the township put \$10K towards engine replacement cost. A separate suggestion was made for the ESC Finance subcommittee to re-evaluate proposal to have the township contribute to annual maintenance.

- Ronks – Company is responsible for all maintenance of apparatus
- Hand-in-Hand – Company is responsible for all maintenance of apparatus
- Mike Thornton shared that there is a possibility of alternative funding; grant or local contribution

b. Public Information

- Committee has reorganized; Bradley Bell is the new committee chair
- Bradley shared an update on the newsletter funding and production, still looking for an agency or volunteer to handle the production work
- Submitted RFP to Tara Hitchens
- Meeting mid April to discuss options moving forward
- Production cost is estimated to be about \$1000 per article
- Committee shared that there has been a lack of participation from Ronks. Committee is looking for participation and feedback from all four companies.
- Goal of the newsletter is to educate the community, communicate information about volunteer emergency services and recruit new members
- Minutes from subcommittee will begin to be distributed via email to ESC committee

c. Finance

- Committee has not been meeting

d. Human Resources – Nate Church and Bradley Bell reported the following:

- Committee met last Wednesday, three of the four fire companies were present
- Committee is starting fresh with a focus on recruitment and retention
- Reorganize and foster new ideas; picture of all four companies fire trucks for newsletter to recruit volunteers, night at the park to aid in retention
- Next meeting in May

Calendar Activities

- Ralph Hutchison requested the following from each fire company; volunteer firefighter of the year, 25 years of service, 2024 financial statements

4. New Business

Committee Poll

a. Township & Fire Companies

- ELT – Ralph Hutchison reported the following:
 - Driver and vehicle list updates for fuel card system
 - Submit spill control reports
 - Staff changes: AJ Wozluski, Assistant Zoning Officer Commercial; callout card info will be updated. Planning Director; offer made, Assistant Township Manager; Tara will moving to Manager role in May.
 - Development activity; contact township if attention is needed
 - PennDOT construction projects ongoing; Route 30 E of 896 will resume shortly
 - Stormwater culvert replacement project on Willow Rd. later this year. Road will be shut down for about 3 months; project has not gone out to bid yet.
 - Sheetz project; could begin this summer
- Witmer – Mike Creamer reported the following:
 - Child Protect – April 8
 - Ox Roast – April 26
 - Blood Drive – May 14
 - PR committee meeting to plan summer events
 - ELT fire chiefs met Feb. 26 to discuss operational topics
- Ronks – Nothing to report
- Lafayette – Jason Beiler reported the following:
 - Bylaw revisions to clarify absentee ballot process
 - Changing meeting to the first Tuesday @ 7:00 from Monday @ 7:30
 - Moved investments from Janney to Wells Fargo to stay with broker Carl Myer
 - Spring fund drive; capital campaign ongoing in private solicitation phase
 - CV Internship program in conjunction with Witmer; 4 students
 - Spring Chicken BBQ – April 12
 - Cadet Camp – August 1 & 2
- Hand-in-Hand – Paul Fisher reported the following:
 - February Pot Pie Dinner was successful
 - Planning for summer auction and fall marathon
 - Squad replacement committee being established

b. EMC – Jeff Hatfield reported the following:

- Attended CV safety meeting, will be meeting w/ Director of Security and Safety to review policies
- Requested to be copied on township communication going out to fire chiefs

c. Citizen Reps

- Robert Patterson opened a conversation regarding the future of emergency services in ELT
- General points that were discussed:
 - Police & EMS were Top 5 busiest in county in 2024
 - Top 3 busiest township in county
 - What is the future plan to handle the increase in population?
 - Call volume & man power is an issue
 - Operational burden; record keeping, insurance, aging buildings
 - How can the township and ESC prepare for the future?
 - Township is in beginning stages of a comprehensive plan process
 - Consultant will join an ESC meeting to discuss emergency services

5. **Public Comments**

- Scott Hershey clarified Lafayette's meeting is being changed to the second Monday of the month

6. **Additional Comments**

- Mike Thornton asked if there is protocol to share info among fire companies after an incident based on the recent plane crash in Manhiem Township
- Similar aircraft incidents are possible based on Smoketown airport being in ELT
- Recommendation was made to discuss major incidents and share info/compare notes

7. **Adjournment** – Paul Fisher made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Jason Beiler. Meeting adjourned @ 2000 hours.

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 15, 2025 @ 7 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chad Englerth, Secretary