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From The Morning Call

Forks Twp. sets elected tax collector pay at \$15,000

She had said her rate was too low. New salary starts in 2006.

By Joe Nixon
Of The Morning Call

February 4, 2005

Forks Township will pay its elected tax collector a flat rate of \$15,000 for collecting township property taxes starting in 2006, township supervisors agreed Thursday.

The existing pay system for the tax collector provided \$5,000 for processing the first 2,500 bills, and 75 cents per bill after that.

Tax Collector June Vail had previously asked the supervisors to increase her salary. She said her pay was not in line with other second-class township tax collectors in the area.

Vail has said she made \$7,000 last year collecting Forks Township real estate taxes. The pay did not compensate her for all her work, she said.

She also is paid separately for collecting Easton Area School District property taxes from Forks residents. The school district provides a flat fee for the first 2,500 bills and a set per-bill rate beyond that level.

Vail and the township reached a court settlement last year that set her current pay, but she and township solicitor Karl Kline differ on whether the supervisors can adjust the salary again this year, during her term. Kline previously said that, under state law, the salary may be changed starting only with the new term in 2006.

Vail said Thursday she was satisfied with the new township pay for 2006, but she noted she would continue to look for more pay this year.

In other business, supervisors gave preliminary approval of plans for the \$80 million expansion of Shawnee Middle School on Echo Trail near Arndt Road. The township Planning Commission recommended preliminary approval last month.

Easton Area School District plans to construct a 362,500-square-foot addition to be able to add fifth and sixth grades to the school, which currently houses seventh and eighth grades. The addition will include a 1,750-seat auditorium and a 3,000-seat gym.

The district hopes to have the project completed by September 2008.

Supervisors also gave final approval to Towne Center at Sullivan Trail II, a mixed residential-commercial development on 20 acres near W. Meco Road and Sullivan Trail. The proposed development, east of the Met-Ed complex, will feature four commercial properties off Meco Road and 76 town homes to the south.

However, supervisors voted that development of homes on the site by Nic Zawarski and Sons of Bethlehem be tied to development of the commercial lots.

Using ratios in township zoning regulations for the town center district, the township figured Zawarski could build no more than the first 16 homes until the smallest of the four commercial lots was developed.

Zawarski is a co-developer of an adjacent project, Townes at Sullivan Trail. That project plans 84 town homes to the rear of several commercial properties along Sullivan Trail and its construction will mean a traffic signal at Sullivan Trail and Zucksville Road.

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