

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of **MIFFLIN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES** Meeting

Held

February 1,

2021

Chair Lynn Stewart called the Mifflin Township Board of Trustees to order via an advertised conference call at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, February 1, 2021 with Vice Chair Kevin Cavener, Trustee Richard Angelou, Chief Fred Kauser, Public Information Officer Melissa Rapp, IT Director Craig Main, Township Administrator Nancy White, and Fiscal Officer Rick Duff attending in-person. Police Chief Tammy Phillips, Service Director Roger Boggs, HR Director Becky Kadel, Public Information Officer Melissa Rapp, Assistant to the Fiscal Officer Rebecca Rousseau, Administrative Assistant Melanie Barnette and Jon Hastings of Assured Partners attended remotely online.

TRUSTEES COMMENTS:

Chair Stewart said that on January 13th the trustees, Administrator White and Fiscal Officer Duff met with Chief Kauser to conduct the Fire budget review. She said it was very enlightening and helpful for all. Chair Stewart said although it was attempted in the past, she would like future Monday meetings to become workshop meetings in which the department heads discuss the status of his/her department, plans, request assistance, and inform the trustees, Administrator, Fiscal Officer, and department heads as to what is happening within each department. Chair Stewart said that at the following third Tuesday of the month meeting, the trustees will be well-informed and can move quicker with the approvals on the agenda. Mr. Angelou added that motions can still be made at the Monday meetings, if necessary, but that will not be the focus of the meetings. Chair Stewart agreed and said the meetings will occur in this format until further notice.

MINUTES & WARRANTS:

At the request of Chief Kauser, Chair Stewart said the Fire Budget Workshop Special Meeting Minutes of January 13, 2021 were tabled until the next Trustees Meeting so minor clarifications could be made.

Res. 38-21 Approve January 19, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Angelou moved to approve the January 19, 2021 Meeting Minutes. Mr. Cavener seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Res. 39-21 Approve March 2021 Warrants

Mr. Cavener moved to approve the March 2021 Warrants. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Administrator White said she received a letter from OTARMA regarding the enhanced coverages on property. She said she will be presenting the insurance renewal at the next meeting.

FISCAL OFFICER'S REPORT:

Fiscal Officer Duff said the 5-year 2.0 mill police levy is expiring this year. He said the trustees need to decide today whether to do a renewal levy which would generate approximately \$50,000 annually for the next five years or a permanent replacement levy which would generate approximately \$75,000 per year. The cost of an average \$50,000 home

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value would be \$8.53 per year or less than \$1 per month. Chief Phillips requested a permanent replacement levy. She said although the renewal levy has passed the last 20 to 25 years, if it does not pass this time, it would have a significant negative impact to the police budget. Fiscal Officer Duff requested the levy be made permanent. He said locking it in could reduce confusion to the residents as it would eliminate having to vote for a renewal repeatedly. Administrator White provided a history of the township levies. Administrator White recommended filing for a permanent levy so the police chief could plan for the department's expenses and provide stability. Mr. Cavener said as much as he hates to raise taxes, he recommends a permanent replacement levy as it is the best solution for the police department. Mr. Angelou echoed Mr. Cavener's comments.

Res. 40-21 Approve filing for the permanent replacement 2.0 mill police levy which would generate approximately \$75,000 per year.

Mr. Cavener moved to approve filing for the permanent replacement 2.0 mill police levy which would generate approximately \$75,000 per year at a cost of less than one dollar per month. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Administrator White said that at the next meeting she will have the insurance renewal, which will include updates such as the new police vehicles, Operations Center building, and the property at 384 W. Johnstown Road. She said because of these additions, there will be a substantial increase in the premium.

Administrator White said Chair Stewart requested that she prepare questions in the event the meeting hall be used for vaccinations. Chief Kauser said he has not seen the questions yet, but said he imagined the questions were like ones the Fire Division have asked also. Chief Kauser said they are training at the Morse Road vaccination site. He said over time the protocols continue to change. He would like to submit the questions to the FCPH and review the answers with the trustees as soon as possible. Mr. Angelou said his initial concern is about staffing the vaccination center. Chief Kauser said although there are multiple levels of vaccinations center, he envisions servicing the higher tier group (higher risk populations of advanced age/vulnerability) which is much smaller.

Administrator White said she attended a MORPC session about requiring employees to receive the vaccinations. Chief Kauser said about 50% of his staff have opted out, but they are coming around to the idea of being vaccinated. He said he will provide an update on this next week. Mr. Boggs said he is not aware of any issues with his employees. Chief Phillips said 50% of her eight staff members were reluctant to receive the vaccination, but staffing has recently changed. Chair Stewart requested the department heads check on this and report back at the next meeting. Chair Stewart also requested Ms. White share the MORPC handouts with the department heads.

Administrator White said the administrative staff is tentatively planning to move to the Operations Center the first week of March. This week copiers are being installed. She said we are in good shape regarding connectivity: phones, computers, etc. She said she will still

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need to meet with Chief Kauser to discuss security. In the interim, because we do not have everything in place, we may need to use short-term solutions until permanent solutions are ready, i.e., we may need to use a lobby phone to communicate with visitors prior to entry. She said she feels we are in good shape for the move. She said this may make a difference as it relates to vaccination center being in the meeting hall. Mr. Angelou said this move reminds him of a new ship going to sea. He said people need to be patient as the kinks are worked out.

Administrator White said communication will need to be made to the library personnel that more township staff will be occupying the second floor. She said our employees will need to be informed of expectations also. Mr. Cavener inquired as to who is the contact at the library for this. He said parking needs to be addressed also. Ms. White said there is a person that oversees the library building. She assumes it would be that person. Mr. Angelou said Mr. Boggs or Chief Kauser would know this person. Chief Kauser said Chief Wright is the liaison for the township during the construction phase. Mr. Boggs utilizes the facility maintenance system to address issues. Mr. Cavener asked when the Gahanna Police would be moving to the Operations Center. Chief Kauser responded that they would move during the month of May, along with the MECC Dispatchers.

Administrator White said we will store old files in the clean room (a locked room) in the basement at 155 Olde Ridenour Rd. She is hoping we can downsize our files so not everything needs moved. She said it will be incumbent on each person to pack up his/her own office/area with help from the Service department, but the Service department should not be responsible for moving the administrative staff. Chair Stewart said each department heads should think about the impact of the move and what is needed for the move. Chair Stewart said professional movers should be used. Chair Stewart requested Ms. White obtain the cost of using professional movers. Chair Stewart said planning and budgeting is required for this.

HUMAN RESOURCES:

Ms. Kadel said that open enrollment calls begin tomorrow. Ms. Kadel said that on January 22nd, she sent an email notifying everyone about the new format along with the telephone number and website address for employees to schedule his/her call in advance. Ms. Kadel said as of late last Friday, she was told the Benefits Advisor Pro will be ready for SES to enter all employee benefits elections and information directly into Paycor. She said Jon Hastings and Wendy Williams from Assured Partners, and Cyd from SES, have been working tirelessly to prepare for this.

Ms. Kadel said there were a few benefits-related items that may not have been given proper consideration and formally acted upon at a trustee meeting. She said Jon Hastings is attending the meeting remotely to answer any questions and fill in any gaps. Ms. Kadel spoke about the new voluntary worksite benefits options through The Standard. She explained that part-time employees who work between an average of 20 to 29 hours per week in the calendar year preceding the new plan year are technically eligible to enroll. She said these benefits would be 100% employee paid. Ms. Kadel said there are six employees eligible to enroll in

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the new plan year if the trustees agree to extend the option to them. Ms. Kadel explained that she did not provide the trustees with documentation on this but recalls it being discussed in previous meetings with Jon Hastings. She moved forward because she thought it was okay to do so. She now understands it was not clear that was the case. Administrator White provided history of when part-time employees could enroll in benefits through AFLAC. She said the township was responsible for paying the premium when billed. If the part-time employee did not work a lot or at all for a period and so was unable to cover the cost of their premium, the township still had to pay it. This created the need to retroactively collect the default premium. Initially, when a part-time employee is hired, (s)he may work his/her scheduled hours, but as time goes on (s)he may not work as many hours as initially planned. This causes issues with being able to collect his/her premium, and possibly result in the employee's coverage being canceled. Administrator White said it places a lot of work on the finance department. Although it may be a good program, she asked the trustees to consider the impact a decision to move forward will have on the finance department. Chair Stewart asked if the employee can be direct billed. Mr. Hastings said they cannot because it is a group policy. Lower premiums are offered based on several employees enrolling. Mr. Hastings added that the benefit is portable if an employee leaves the township. Ms. Kadel recommended the matter be handled by the employee either reimbursing or paying in advance to avoid losing his/her benefit. Mr. Hastings confirmed that the latter can be done. He said he has other clients that deduct two months at a time for this reason. Fiscal Officer Duff said he would like to see the six part-time employees have access to the AD&D insurance because it covers accidents that occur in the line of duty. Chair Stewart asked if there is any line of duty coverage for full-time employees. Mr. Hastings said The Standard offers a line-of-duty rider that can be added to the township-paid Basic Life and AD&D policy for minimal cost. He said it would double the benefit for First Responders who die or are injured in the line of duty. Mr. Hastings said it is a hard-to-find benefit unique to The Standard.

Ms. Kadel requested the trustees' approval to cancel the premium payroll deduction option for the AFLAC and Colonial Life policies. She explained that her request is not unusual and is in response to the new voluntary worksite benefits options being offered by The Standard in the new plan year. Ms. Kadel assured the trustees that no employee policies will be canceled; just the option to pay the premiums via payroll deduction. Employees who choose to port their policy with AFLAC and Colonial Life will simply need to contact the carrier directly to arrange a new premium payment method. Administrator White said although the employees pay for these benefits out-of-pocket, they are sponsored by the township. Fiscal Officer Duff said he asked Mr. Hastings to compare the premiums for the AFLAC and Colonial Life policies with the same type of policies offered by The Standard, and it was clear that The Standard's premiums were about half of AFLAC's and Colonial Life's. He said he does not anticipate employees will want to stay with AFLAC or Colonial Life due to this fact.

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Mr. Hastings said the cost of the AD&D insurance is as follows:

Individual Coverage (per month):

The Standard \$9.65, Colonial Life \$21.97, AFLAC \$21.71

Employee Spouse Coverage (per month):

The Standard \$15.33, Colonial Life \$34.78, AFLAC \$28.99

Employee Child Coverage (per month):

The Standard \$18.25, Colonial Life \$34.78, AFLAC \$41.21

Family Coverage (per month):

The Standard \$28.59, Colonial Life \$50.61, AFLAC \$52.52

Fiscal Officer Duff said that employees do not yet know about the intent to cancel the premium payroll deduction for the AFLAC and Colonial Life policies. Ms. Kadel said that during the open enrollment calls, the SES Benefits Counselors will offer to assist interested employees with deciding what they want to do by helping them do a cost/coverage comparison between their AFLAC and Colonial Life policies and what The Standard is offering.

Chair Stewart said these matters will be tabled until the next meeting to allow time to gather more information. She asked Ms. Kadel to provide additional information including the number of part-time First Responders so that a decision can be made at the next meeting. Ms. Kadel agreed to do so. She apologized for not being better prepared today.

Moving on, Ms. Kadel said that in the past, an employee and his/her spouse, if applicable, each signed an affidavit indicating tobacco use. Tobacco use is tied to premium. She said that with the new online benefits platform, spouses will not have access to Paycor to personally provide their response. Ms. Kadel explained that there are tobacco use check boxes, and the employee will be required to personally indicate tobacco use as well as on behalf of his/her spouse. This would be in lieu of the paper form. It will be based on the honor system, which is no different than previous years using the paper form. Ms. Kadel added that a disclaimer was also included to emphasize the importance of honesty as well as the potential consequences of dishonesty. After clarifying her request, the trustees agreed that the paper affidavit is no longer necessary.

Ms. Kadel said she researched Trustee Cavener's question from the last trustee meeting in which he asked if the township could withhold emergency sick leave pay from an employee who refused to get the COVID vaccine and then contracts COVID. Ms. Kadel said that provided the federally mandated emergency paid sick leave does not get extended by the Biden Administration, they could do that based on their decision to voluntarily extended the benefit to eligible employees through March 31st. Ms. Kadel said she spoke with the township's attorney, Marc Fishel, who said he is not aware that any of his clients are doing

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this. Ms. Kadel added that she reached out to her public sector HR peers and none responded that they were taking this approach either.

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER:

Ms. Rapp said the branding packet now has the logo with the three colors on it with 3 color variations. Ms. Rapp said the graphic artist used his preferred log variation, the one in the middle of the page, within a stationary packet of letterhead, business cards, envelopes, etc. Ms. Rapp said she would send the digital file out to all department heads for consideration. She said the copier may not be true to the color schemes. She asked that everyone look at the 4th page to see if you feel comfortable with one of the three color variations. She said if you are comfortable with the logo then she will develop a final print package with full sized letterhead, envelopes, and business cards for a final approval. She will also take the logo and appropriate it to digital materials. We did have a discussion at the last meeting about holding off on printing the materials until we make the move to the new building when we will include the new address on the materials. Chair Stewart said going with the block “M” is very popular. Chair Stewart said that she noticed a trademark symbol at the base of the block “M”, and she understood that to mean it was trademarked. Chair Stewart asked Ms. Rapp if the fees that the township has paid included obtaining the trademark of the block “M”. Ms. Rapp said she would inquire about the trademark and report back. There was discussion about the colors, placement, and symbolism of colors on the logo. Ms. Rapp agreed to send the digital file to the department heads. Chair Stewart said a decision will be made on the logo and color choices at the next meeting. Administrator White requested the block “M” be placed in a different location, in front of the words “Mifflin Township” on the stationary samples. Ms. Rapp agreed to have this change made on the stationary packet and available at the next meeting.

SERVICE:

Mr. Boggs requested a pay increase for Kristina Kuhn, Service Office Assistant, a part-time employee working 499 hours/year. He said her increase had been in the making for some time with the previous Service Director. Mr. Boggs said he would like to get this done. He requested a pay increase from \$15/hr. to \$18/hr., effective February 7, 2021. He said she is working on cemetery software. Mr. Duff said for the past three years Ms. Kuhn has been at her current rate. Mr. Boggs said the increase is in his budget.

Res. 41-21 Approve a pay increase for Kristina Kuhn, Service Office Assistant, from \$15/hr. to \$18/hr., effective February 7, 2021.

Mr. Angelou moved to approve a pay increase for Kristina Kuhn, Service Office Assistant, from \$15/hr. to \$18/hr., effective February 7, 2021. Mr. Cavener seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Mr. Boggs said he is in contact with the Franklin Co. Engineer’s Office and the bridge crew for assistance with Genessee Ave. He said the trench is over 7’ and the township does not have the safety equipment to be working that deep underground.

Mr. Boggs said he is still awaiting information from TecStone.

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CODE:

Mr. Boggs said there is nothing new to report regarding code enforcement violations.

POLICE:

Chief Phillips requested approval of the 2021-2022 Franklin County Sheriff's Office Two-year Dispatching Service Agreement in the amount of \$9,288.00. Chief Phillips pointed out the rate increased by \$2.05 per call, from \$9.75 per call to \$11.80 per call. She said that Minera Park and Blendon Township received the same rate increase; she believes it was an across-the-board increase. Mr. Cavener and Mr. Angelou said that this a big increase. Mr. Cavener asked why we go with FCSO for dispatching; could it be done through the MECC. Chief Phillips said no longer using the FCSO for dispatching could affect our response from the detective bureau that handles felony investigations, and it keeps us debt to what goes on in neighboring jurisdictions that provide backup. Chief Phillips said the increase is disappointing and quite a big increase. Looking over the call history of 2020, \$19,500 for 1,000 calls of dispatching services and we are budgeted for \$28,000 for 2021. Chair Stewart said at this point, she believes that we do not have a choice but to approve the agreement, but she would like Chief Phillips to investigate other options for the future. Chief Phillips agreed to do so.

Res. 42-21 Approve the 2021-2022 Franklin County Sheriff's Office Two-year Dispatching Service Agreement in the amount of \$9,288.00.

Mr. Cavener moved to approve with disappointment the 2021-2022 FCSO Two-yea Dispatching Service Agreement in the amount of \$9,288.00. Chair Stewart seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried. (See Referral File.)

Chief Phillips said the service includes a new dispatching system and a new reporting system. She said training on the new system will begin next month. There was discussion as to what constitutes a call. Chief Phillips has lots of questions as to what constitutes a call and is researching this. Chief Phillips agreed to provide follow-up information at the March 1st trustees meeting as to the FCSO's definition of a call and information on the severability of the agreement.

Chief Phillips provided updates to the trustees. She said Officer Hughes' cruiser was damaged during an arrest when a vehicle backed up into her cruiser. She said an apprehension was made.

FIRE DIVISION:

Chief Kauser requested the renewal of the maintenance agreement with B&C Motorola in the amount of \$9,288.00. This had been tabled at the last meeting.

Res. 43-21 Approve the renewal of the maintenance agreement with B&C Motorola in the amount of \$9,288.00.

Chair Stewart moved to approve the renewal of the maintenance agreement with B&C Motorola in the amount of \$9,288.00. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried. (See Referral File.)

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Chief Kauser provided updates.

OPERATIONS CENTER:

No requests.

MIFFLIN DISPATCH:

No requests.

MIFFLIN TECHNOLOGY:

Mr. Main said today's meeting technology was through a demo unit loaned to us through a company Mr. Main has used in the past. He said depending on today's recording quality will determine whether he recommends the unit be purchased. He said the quality of call is improved today based on input of those remotely connected. Mr. Main said a sound card will also be added to the PC which will provide additional options, including not having to press the microphone button to speak. The sound will come through the PC rather than the TV speaker. Mr. Main said the company said they would discount the demo unit. Chair Stewart asked that he inquire as to a price for the demo unit, the age, the warranty, and service agreement of the unit. Chair Stewart said it appears to be a vast improvement today, but it is important to know if Ms. Barnette can hear the recording and if it is improved.

Administrator White said that on Thursday afternoon the room will be assess the acoustics by a company recommended by the architect Moody Nolan.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

VISITORS COMMENTS:

No visitors.

Chair Stewart requested Chief Kauser and Service Director Boggs attend an Executive Session.

Chair Stewart requested an Executive Session per ORC Section 121.22 (G) (1)

Purpose: to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official, or the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual, unless the public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual requests a public meeting. Seconded by Mr. Angelou. All voted yea. Motion carried.

The trustees went into Executive Session at 12:27 p.m. The trustees came out of Executive Session at 1:19 p.m.

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Chair Stewart moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Cavener seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Lynn M. Stewart, Chair

Richard J. Angelou, Trustee

Kevin J. Cavener, Vice Chairman

Rick Duff, Fiscal Officer