

# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of *MIFFLIN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES* Meeting

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Held

June 7,

2021

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Chair Lynn Stewart called the Mifflin Township Board of Trustees Meeting to order via an advertised conference call at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, June 7, 2021, with Vice Chairman Kevin Cavener, Trustee Richard Angelou, Fiscal Officer Rick Duff, Township Administrator Nancy White, Fire Chief Fred Kauser, Service Director Roger Boggs, HR Director Becky Kadel, Assistant to the Fiscal Officer Rebecca Rousseau and MORPC Intern Sarah Jonassen attending in-person. Administrative Assistant Melanie Barnette was online.

Police Chief Tammy Phillips, PIO Melissa Rapp and IT Director Craig Main were absent from the meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Stewart.

## **TRUSTEES COMMENTS:**

None.

## **GUEST SPEAKERS:**

Mr. Jim Jewell, Chief Deputy of Operations and Mr. Nick Soulas, Government Affairs Liaison, Franklin Co. Engineer's Office spoke about the state of the storm drainage on Genessee Avenue. They are proposing a 12-inch storm sewer. Mr. Jewell said the flow is restricted by collapsed and damaged drainage tiles. Mr. Jewell provided a proposal remedying the storm drainage issues. Mr. Soulas said the Ohio Revised Code roadway improvement limits have not been increased since 2003. He said the county's limit is \$30,000 per mile per roadway improvement which includes drainage. Mr. Soulas said there has been heavy lobbying to increase the limits with hopes to get the increase in the State's operating budget within the next week or two. He said the legal and practical problem is that the county engineer's office will not be able to construct this project with their own forces with the current monetary limits; the project will need to be bid out. Mr. Jewell said he spoke with the Franklin County Engineer Cornell Robertson in which he said that he would be Mifflin Township's engineer, if desired. They would hire a consultant to provide the design, create a full set of plans and they would administer the project for Mifflin Township and bid it out. The township would then pay the contracted amount. Mr. Jewell said another option is to wait in hopes of an approved increase by the legislature in the roadway improvement funds. Mr. Jewell said that Engineer Robertson told him if the legislation approves more funding, his engineers could do the project. He said work would be completed from 9 am – 3 pm every day. Mr. Jewell said there is sidewalk in front of some of the homes which should not be affected, however, they have videotaped the site in case there is any damaged caused by the project construction.

Mr. Soulas said he does not know what the increase will be, if approved, or when the increase would be effective. He said as a practical matter, even if there is a thirty-day waiting period after passage, there is enough work to be done during that time. Mr. Soulas said if Mifflin Township is working with the FC Engineer's Office on the project it qualifies as an exception to the competitive bidding requirement. Chair Stewart said it makes sense to wait to see what the increase will be in the State's operating budget.

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## MINUTES:

### Res. 125-21 Approve the May 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Angelou moved to approve the May 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes. Mr. Cavener seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

### Res. 126-21 Approve the July 2021 Warrants

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

## CORRESPONDENCE:

Fiscal Officer Duff said he received a letter from the Franklin County Board of Elections stating the May 4<sup>th</sup> Police tax levy officially passed. He said the replacement tax levy is now a permanent tax levy. Mr. Cavener thanked the voters of the unincorporated area.

Fiscal Officer Duff provided notices of annexations: the lot at the end of Codet Road is being annexed to the City of Gahanna. He said this was a delinquent property. He said as it is being annexed, there should be no loss of income to the township. The other annexation notice is KIPP Columbus, which operates a school near the police/fire station 132. They are annexing multiple parcels totaling 24.45 acres along Agler Road and totaling \$8,515.35 in current taxes. The trustees expressed their frustration with the loss of township land and income.

## FISCAL OFFICER'S REPORT:

Fiscal Officer Duff provided a Statement of Cash Position to the trustees for information only. He said he will be meeting with the City of Gahanna on the TIFs. He said the City of Gahanna is making Mifflin Township whole by paying the tax proceeds to Mifflin's General Fund. He said over the last 11 years however 100% of the money has been credited to Fire. He said about 5.5% of the money should be going to the General Fund, approximately \$56,000. He said he hopes to have more information at the next meeting as to how he may adjust the distribution of funds.

Fiscal Officer Duff said the 2022 Tax Budget is due by July 20<sup>th</sup>. He said by law the public hearing notices need to be published. Administrator White said Ms. Rapp will advertise the meeting the week of June 21<sup>st</sup> with the anticipation that the public hearing will be held on July 7<sup>th</sup>. She said advertisement is not required for the actual adoption of the budget, however it is typically done within 10 days after the initial meeting.

Fiscal Officer Duff said he is continuing to work on the Fiscal Office reorganization. He said he would like to request approval of a 3% raise to the proposed next step for Ms. Rousseau. Ms. Kadel clarified for the trustees that when she originally created the pay scale for the administrative office in 2015/2016 there was never the intention of someone maxing out at Step 6, it was to be reevaluated at that point. It has not been reevaluated, she said. In the meantime, administrative employees are going without raises that they may be due while we revise or update the pay schedule. Ms. Kadel said no one else in the administrative office at this time is affected by this. Chief Kauser said pay increases have not been addressed in 2021

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for Fire; raises are on hold. Fiscal Officer Duff said the Fire department receives a cost-of-living increase each year which has not been done for the other departments for many years. Chair Stewart said her concern is not giving Ms. Rousseau the increase, but she does not want to cause a problem for another department by doing so.

**Res. 127-21 Approve the pay increase for Ms. Rebecca Rousseau to the proposed next step of \$29.85/hr., which is a 3% increase, effective June 13, 2021.**

Chair Stewart moved to approve the pay increase for Ms. Rebecca Rousseau to the proposed next step of \$29.85/hr., which is a 3% increase, effective June 13, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Angelou. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Fiscal Officer Duff said he has had to continue increasing his working hours and will need to do so until things settle down.

**TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:**

Administrator White said if the trustees would like to move the next trustees meeting, she will get it advertised. The trustees agreed the next trustees meeting should occur on Monday, June 21<sup>st</sup> at 3:30 pm rather than June 22<sup>nd</sup> due to a scheduling conflict. She reminded the trustees that the first meeting in July has been rescheduled to July 7<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m. and the first September meeting has been rescheduled to September 8<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. to accommodate the holidays schedule.

**HUMAN RESOURCES:**

Ms. Kadel presented the Lexipol invoices, totaling \$8,279, for the renewal of annual subscriptions for the Fire Division's housing of the policies and procedures and the Township's personnel policies for approval. Administrator White said she will apply to OTARMA for a \$1,000 refund for Fire. The trustees tabled this until the next trustees meeting since there is no urgency and to keep today's resolutions to a minimum.

Ms. Kadel said Ms. Barnette has been entering the required credential and licensure information for all employees into Paycor from last year's audit. Ms. Kadel said she has added a second layer of tracking and accountability by utilizing Paycor's reminder feature in which the employee and his/her direct supervisor will be reminded at various intervals of certification expiration. She provided a memo with this information and sample reminders.

Ms. Kadel said she provided the trustees with her performance review measures memo in which she provided updated projected dates to present the final product for review and approval and the date for full rollout, September 21, 2021, and January 3, 2022, respectively.

**PIO:**

Ms. Rapp is out of the office today.

**SERVICE:**

Mr. Boggs said the storm drainage on Genessee Avenue will need to be addressed. It is an item that he made the trustees aware. He said each year it will require maintenance of some

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sort. He said he will keep in touch with Jim Jewell, Franklin Co. Engineer's Office. He said there has been flooding and small sinkholes in the area.

Mr. Angelou requested Mr. Boggs be removed from probation and promoted to Step 1, a 3% pay increase, for the Service Director position in the amount of \$36.02/hr., effective June 13, 2021.

**Res. 128-21 Remove Mr. Roger Boggs, Service Director, from probation and promote to Step 1 in the amount of \$36.02/hr., effective June 13, 2021.**

Mr. Angelou moved to remove Mr. Roger Boggs, Service Director, from probation and promote to Step 1 in the amount of \$36.02/hr., effective June 13, 2021. Mr. Cavener seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Mr. Angelou said Mr. Boggs' reviews will occur on August 1<sup>st</sup>. He confirmed Mr. Boggs would be eligible to move to Step 2 in one year.

Mr. Boggs requested the buyback of Grave 3 on Lot 12 of Section M, Block 4 from Ruth Baas for the original purchase amount of \$400.00.

**Res. 129-21 Approve the buyback of Grave 3 on Lot 12 of Section M, Block 4 from Ruth Baas in the amount of \$400.00.**

Mr. Cavener approved the buyback of Grave 3 on Lot 12 of Section M, Block 4 from Ruth Baas in the amount of \$400.00. Chair Stewart seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Mr. Boggs said he had planned to request a promotion for Mr. Hunt McKnight, but will table it until the next meeting when the new rate schedule is available.

**CODE:**

Mr. Boggs requested the approval to place a lien on the tax duplicate in the amount of \$300 per ORC §505.87(B)(2) for 2059 Loretta Avenue for excessive dirt in the Right-of-Way.

**Res. 130-21 Approve a lien be placed on the tax duplicate in the amount of \$300 per ORC §505.87(B)(2) for 2059 Loretta Avenue for excessive dirt in the Right-of-Way.**

Chair Stewart moved to approve a lien be placed on the tax duplicate in the amount of \$300 per ORC §505.87(B)(2) for 2059 Loretta Avenue for excessive dirt in the Right-of-Way. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Mr. Boggs requested the approval to place a lien on the tax duplicate in the amount of \$300 per ORC §505.87(B)(2) for 2043 Loretta Avenue for excessive trash in the Right-of-Way.

**Res. 131-21 Approve a lien be placed on the on the tax duplicate in the amount of \$300 per ORC §505.87(B)(2) for 2043 Loretta Avenue for excessive trash in the Right-of-Way.**

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Mr. Angelou moved to approve a lien be placed on the on the tax duplicate in the amount of \$300 per ORC §505.87(B)(2) for 2043 Loretta Avenue for excessive trash in the Right-of-Way. Mr. Cavener seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Mr. Boggs said he is receiving daily calls about high grass on all types of properties. He and his staff have mowed all the properties of complaint. He said this one-time mowing is considered a “freebie” to curtail rodents and for safety in general. COCIC is running behind on their mowing of properties but are working to catch up.

## **POLICE:**

Chief Phillips was out of the office today.

## **FIRE DIVISION:**

Chief Kauser provided updates in Station 132. He said material and labor costs are high and revisions continue to be made to stay within the construction budget. He said a Variance application will be filed this morning with the City of Columbus to construct the station on two parcels. Mr. Boggs offered his staff to tear down the house that remains on the property. Chief Kauser said the target date to bid the project is July with a late August/early September groundbreaking.

Chief Kauser said Station 131 and 134 are due for concrete repairs. He said the overall project will be scaled back and will focus on the concrete repair work and the signage.

Chief Kauser said he contacted the engineer to provide a quote to recalculate the impact on the building environmental and HVAC systems and to generate an estimate to perform the necessary engineering work prior to removing the 22 window panels and replacing window glazing.

Chief Kauser said he has been meeting with the Fiscal Office regarding the General Fund budget and staffing levels. He is also working with the Fiscal Office to refine the fiscal policy protocols.

Chief Kauser said he continues to have discussions about the need for a Facility Manager position. He said it may be premature to create a job description given the unknowns of the complex systems within the Ops Center. He said he has met with Mr. Boggs and recommends the appointment of someone with experience on a part-time basis through the remainder of 2021. At that time, there will be better understanding of hours needed for the position and requirements of the position. He said because this individual would potentially serve the Service Department on a contingent basis, the recommendation will be to hire the individual as a township employee. Mr. Angelou inquired about the individual working a greater number of hours during emergencies. Mr. Kadel said it is not an issue unless the average hours worked are 30 hours are more per week. If so, health insurance would be required of the township. Chief Kauser said he is confident the hours can be managed by flexing the work hours.

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Chief Kauser said levy planning is still underway for Spring 2022. He said fixed costs must be identified but he knows most are labor costs. He predicted the levy cycle to be a 6 – 8-year period which is a shorter, more conservative, and accurate timeframe given the economic conditions at this time. He said a goal is to phase out the pension pickup prior to the next cycle due to the inaccurate and negative public perception of it. Chief Kauser said it will affect the Fire employees, some positively and some negatively, depending on the number of deductions, marital status, income bracket, etc. He said the best approach is to transfer 10% to the employees' base hourly rate. He said it will increase the cost to the township and to the public as it is pensionable, but it will provide greater clarity on the cost of employment and compensation. He said those in the DROP program would be excluded. The target date is July 1<sup>st</sup>. Chair Stewart said she has a problem approving this based on the need to clear up negative public perception. Fiscal Officer Duff said he ran different scenarios of employment and budgetary impact. Chief Kauser said the 10% payroll shift will create a 2% increase to his costs. There were lengthy discussions as to the pros and cons of the switch from pension pickup to the 10% pay increase amongst the trustees, Fiscal Officer and Township Administrator. It was determined more analysis is required prior to the trustees voting on this matter.

Chief Kauser said provisions have been made for carryover of accrued time with the Fire Division in 2020 for 2021. He will be requesting the trustees permit the permanent carryover of 50% of earned vacation, effective 2021. He said this does not require additional costs. Administrator White suggested this be considered township wide.

Chief Kauser said he has also been having discussions about reassigning incentives to HSA within the Fire Division to offset the escalating cost of insurance and to ensure the long-term availability of HSA funding.

Chief Kauser said he is considering a slight pay increase following the pension pickup adjustment for the Fire Division in 2021 after comparing total compensation and hourly rates of the neighboring agencies.

Chief Kauser said an Addendum has been created for the original lease with the Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML) as we have gained experience over the past year. He said the Addendum clarifies some items in the lease. He said the Addendum has been reviewed internally and by legal counsel; we are ready to proceed. He said the lease will become the basis/model for the lease or MOU documents with the City of Gahanna and possibly the RCOG.

Chief Kauser is expecting upcoming vacancies and promotions within the Fire Division: Chief Wright and Captain Welsh will be leaving in August 2021. He said he will be meeting with the City of Gahanna soon to inform them that we will no longer be filling Steve Welsh's previous role as a credentialed Fire official for the City of Gahanna because no one else has the same credentials.

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Chief Kauser said firefighter vacancies are expected due to the pending retirement of three career firefighters. The hiring process has been extended due to the lack of applicants.

Chief Kauser said he has seen some relief in the pandemic operations to reflect the Governor's changes.

## **OPERATIONS CENTER:**

Chief Kauser said loading dock and building maintenance meetings will be taking place this week. On Friday, there will be two sessions with township and library staff to review the campus security policies in place. He will be acquiring a police cruiser to park in front of the building. He is working with Chief Phillips on this matter.

Chief Kauser attended the ribbon cutting ceremony at Lincoln Elementary on Saturday. He said there is a public open house on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1 – 3 p.m.

## **MIFFLIN DISPATCH (and 911/CAD System Partners):**

No requests or updates.

## **MIFFLIN TECHNOLOGY:**

Mr. Main is out of the office today.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

## **VISITORS COMMENTS:**

No visitors.

Chair Stewart moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

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Lynn M. Stewart, Chair

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Richard J. Angelou, Trustee

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Kevin J. Cavener, Vice Chairman

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Rick Duff, Fiscal Officer