

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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

Held

September 13,

2021

Chair Lynn Stewart called the Mifflin Township Board of Trustees Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, September 13, 2021, with Trustee Richard Angelou, Fiscal Officer Rick Duff, Township Administrator Nancy White, Fire Chief Kauser, Human Resources Director Becky Kadel, Service Director Roger Boggs, PIO Melissa Rapp, Police Chief Tammy Phillips, Officer David Briggs, and IT Director Main attending. Trustee Kevin Cavener arrived late to the meeting. Franklin Co. Sheriff Deputy Ken Upton was in attendance also.

TRUSTEES COMMENTS:

None

MINUTES & WARRANTS:

Res. 199-21 Approve the August 17, 2021, Special Meeting Minutes

Mr. Angelou moved to approve the August 17, 2021, Special Meeting Minutes. Chair Stewart seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Res. 200-21 Approve the August 17, 2021, Meeting Minutes with a modification.

Chair Stewart moved to approve the August 17, 2021, Meeting Minutes with a modification. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Res. 201-21 Approve October 2021 Warrants

Chair Stewart moved to approve the October 2021 Warrants. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Fiscal Officer Duff shared a document from Franklin County Public Health Commissioner Joe Mazzola about the positivity rate and increased hospitalizations due to COVID19. Upon discussion, it was decided that the former mask policy be reinstated to follow the Franklin Co. Public Health guidelines. Chair Stewart requested Chief Kauser provide a report at the next meeting as to the vaccination status of the Fire Division.

Res. 202-01 Reinstigate the previous mask mandate and follow the Franklin Co. Public Health Guidelines in all township buildings.

Chair Stewart moved to reinstate the previous mask mandate and follow the Franklin Co. Public Health guidelines in all township buildings. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Fiscal Officer Duff said there was an annexation notice for 3269 Westerville Road & Innis Road; a total of three parcels to be annexed to Columbus. One of the parcels is in Clinton Township, comprising of the former Schottenstein store which will be redeveloped for affordable housing and manufacturing. Mifflin Township will lose approximately \$1,500 in tax revenue. Chair Stewart reminded Administrator White to seek advice from legal counsel on objecting to annexation requests to create a policy on the township's stance on annexation. Administrator White also agreed to contact Clinton Township about objecting to the annexation request.

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FISCAL OFFICER'S REPORT:

Fiscal Officer Duff presented the 6-month credit card report for review and signature.

TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Administrator White said although the previously approved resolution for the contribution change was reviewed by Police and Fire Pension Fund for accuracy prior to signing, upon submitting it she was informed that it was incorrect. She presented a revised resolution that was necessary due to IRS guidelines.

Res. 203-21 Replace the previous Police & Fire Pension Fund resolution with a corrected resolution as presented.

Chair Stewart moved to replace the previous Police & Fire Pension Fund resolution with a corrected resolution as presented. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

To budgetarily sustain healthcare coverage, Administrator White said she spoke to Jon Hastings, Assured Partners, about suggestions to reduce the township's health insurance premiums over the next 3 – 5 years. Chair Stewart requested Administrator White invite Mr. Hastings to a Monday Trustees meeting to provide information.

Administrator White said the Juneteenth holiday is now in the Ohio Revised Code as a State holiday. Thus, it was determined that Juneteenth will also be a township holiday. Chair Stewart said it may be an opportunity to look at the township's holiday policy and possibly provide equal paid time off rather than the current eleven specified dates. She requested Ms. Kadel look into possibly overhauling the township's holiday leave policy to a paid time off policy in which an employee has a bank of paid time off hours to take at his/her own choosing rather than designated days, similar to policies found in the private sector. Administrator White agreed to research with legal counsel whether a retroactive Juneteenth holiday is required for 2021.

Administrator White said the policy on Take Home Vehicles needs to be amended with expanded guidelines. Chair Stewart said the policy should cover any equipment that is taken home, i.e., laptop, work tools, etc. Administrator White will be following up with recommendations upon advice from legal counsel. Chief Kauser said there is currently no obvious provision that states the vehicle should be secured to prevent unauthorized use or theft.

Administrator White said she will be at the GFOA conference next week. Mr. Cavener arrived at the meeting. Fiscal Officer Duff said Mr. Cavener had requested he revise the hourly wage schedule for the Police Division, considering that one officer would not be replaced. He presented a new increased hourly wage schedule model with Step 1 hourly wage at \$24 and Step 4 hourly wage at \$30. Fiscal Officer Duff said the new wages could be supported budgetarily for the next 3 years. Chief Phillips said the first time she saw the new wage schedule was when she received it for today's meeting. Chief Phillips requested time to review it prior to the trustees acting on it. Trustee Cavener said it was informational at this time to assist in brainstorming ideas to stop attrition. Chief Phillips said it is still to be determined if she is leaving Mifflin Township's police department. She said she is still

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deciding. She said comments at the previous meeting were a bit premature. She said she was only on vacation. She said she will be off on medical leave starting on Friday and she may not be coming back, however, she doesn't know where things stand with the other police agency; it is to be determined. She said her resignation is contingent and plans are being made for her exit. She said she is training Officer David Briggs to be the Acting Chief in case she doesn't return. She doesn't have anything official from the other agency. Chief Phillips clarified she is leaving but does not know when. She recommends not breaking the budget for these higher wages as there will be other issues that will cause staff to exit. Mr. Cavener said he would like to have a stronger department, and this is a starting point to brainstorm how to do that. Chief Phillips recommends making a police district. Officer Briggs said Mifflin Township is the lowest paid police department in Franklin County and one of the most dangerous jurisdictions to work in. He said officers begin at Mifflin Township, get their feet wet, and then are snatched up by other agencies. Administrator White said the millage is not generating enough money. Officer Briggs said the FCSO will be reactionary in a backup capacity due to the large area they currently patrol. He said there are three deputies that cover from I71 to the county line and the county line of Delaware to I70. They will not respond to non-emergency non-priority calls. FCSO is running 3 -5 deputies on overtime every shift currently. Chair Stewart said there is a lot to review. Fiscal Officer Duff said the renewal replacement levy revenue that passed in May will increase income by \$25,000. He said the police building levy generates \$100,000 per year. He suggested in 2 – 3 years the township attempt to get a replacement levy to expand the use of the funds to items other than just buildings and furnishings. He suggested making it a capital improvement levy. He said this would not cost the residents additional money. Chair Stewart said there are a lot of options to consider and will require creativity to stop the loss of officers. She requested more information be presented at the next Monday morning meeting.

HUMAN RESOURCES:

Ms. Kadel presented information on a relatively new organization called The Bridge started by two retired police officers to respond to the chronic post-traumatic stress of first responders, i.e., fire fighters, law enforcement officers and dispatchers. The Bridge offers a free confidential retreat (at the Marriott hotel in Dublin) a few times a year for first responders and their significant other to obtain mental health assistance and resources. She plans to send out an e-mail about this.

Ms. Kadel said she will have the updated performance review measures for review at the next meeting.

PIO:

Chair Stewart thanked Ms. Rapp for her hard work on the 9/11 memorial, which did not happen. She said her hard work did not go unrecognized.

Ms. Rapp provided the following updates:

Media and Digital Communications Update

Ms. Rapp said social and digital media is extremely robust this month. While we did not end up having a 9/11 event on Saturday morning, she did post many photos and posts on social media including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and NextDoor, and has received many

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likes/shares/positive comments on the posts. She said this is also National Preparedness Month and so she is posting preparedness messages for residents throughout the month. She said because of the cancellation of the Fire Prevention Week Open House, she will be changing gears and editing the press release, social media posts, and other materials which had been developed in anticipation of the event and will instead focus on education and safety materials to be shared online and through the schools.

Upcoming Events

Ms. Rapp said she has posted the Service Department's fall clean up days on the website calendar. She has received revised letterhead from the web developer/designer but has not had a chance (being out last week) to finalize and provide for a final review and approval. That will be completed this week.

SERVICE:

Mr. Boggs said this morning started off with a phone call that a grave had been disturbed. A police report was filed Friday evening. He said that after looking into it, it was determined that it wasn't disturbed.

There was lengthy discussion about the storm drainage situation in Leonard Park, Franklin County's zoning, and issues caused by Kenric Homes.

Mr. Boggs had an emergency request for funds for the Stormwater Drainage Project for Leonard Park in the amount not to exceed \$20,000 to purchase needed materials such as pipe, blocks, gravel etc. He said he received permission from Ms. White and Mr. Angelou to order pipe in the amount of \$10,427.84.

Res. 204-21 Approve emergency funds for the Stormwater Drainage Project for Leonard Park for the purchase of materials in the amount not to exceed \$20,000.

Mr. Angelou moved to approve the emergency funds for the Stormwater Drainage Project for Leonard Park for the purchase of materials in the amount not to exceed \$20,000. Mr. Cavener seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Mr. Boggs provided updates on Drake Road in which the berms did not need cut down as much as anticipated, saving approximately \$30,000. He said with the left-over money, he will have striping and painting done.

CODE ENFORCEMENT:

Mr. Boggs said that additional staffing is greatly needed in Code Enforcement. Chair Stewart requested that he meet with Mr. Angelou and provide a proposal for the needed staffing assistance at the next meeting. Mr. Boggs agreed to do so.

Mr. Boggs requested Code violations to be placed as a lien on the tax duplicate per ORC §505.87(B)(2), totaling \$900.00 for the following properties:

- 2676 Perdue Ave – High Grass - \$300.00
- 2634 Baughman Ave. – High Grass - \$300.00
- 2707 Woodland Ave. – High Grass - \$300.00

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Res. 205-21 Approve the following code violations be placed as a lien on the tax duplicate per ORC §505.87(B)(2), totaling \$900.00 for the following properties:

- 2676 Perdue Ave – High Grass - \$300.00
- 2634 Baughman Ave. – High Grass - \$300.00
- 2707 Woodland Ave. – High Grass - \$300.00
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Mr. Angelou moved to approve the above listed properties be placed as a lien on the tax duplicate per ORC §505.87(B)(2), totaling \$900.00. Mr. Cavener seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Mr. Boggs said the fall clean-up is scheduled for every Friday in October.

POLICE:

Chief Phillips requested the acceptance of the resignation of part-time Officer Cheyenne Hughes, effective September 9, 2021, and full-time Officer Cody Palmer, effective September 17, 2021.

Res. 206-21 Accept the resignation of part-time Officer Cheyenne Hughes, effective September 9, 2021, and full-time Officer Cody Palmer, effective September 17, 2021.

Mr. Cavener moved to accept the resignation of Officer Cheyenne Hughes, effective September 9, 2021, and full-time Officer Cody Palmer, effective September 17, 2021. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Chief Phillips said beginning September 20th, she will be on Family Medical Leave and she requested Officer David Briggs to be the Acting Chief in her absence.

Res. 207-21 Appoint Officer David Briggs as Acting Chief, effective September 20, 2021.

Mr. Cavener moved to appoint Officer David Briggs as Acting Chief, effective September 20, 2021. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Chief Phillips provided updates including information on Operation Unity, a mission to reduce the violence in the Linden area.

FIRE DIVISION:

Chief Kauser requested the acceptance of the resignation of Firefighter Tyler Burleson, effective September 19, 2021.

Res. 208-21 Accept the resignation of Firefighter Tyler Burleson, effective October 4, 2021.

Chair Stewart moved to accept the resignation of Firefighter Tyler Burleson, effective October 4, 2021. Mr. Cavener seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Chair Stewart requested Chief Kauser draft a policy that requests a commitment of time from the firefighter to assist with firefighter retention. Chief Kauser agreed to add this to his list of options to retain staff.

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Chief Kauser requested the adjustment to the purchase order #21-0000965 by \$4,324 for Sign Vision of Gahanna for pedestal signage.

Res. 209-21 Approve the adjustment to the purchase order #21-0000965 by \$4,324 for Sign Vision of Gahanna for pedestal signage.

Chair Stewart moved to approve the adjustment to the purchase order #21-0000965 by \$4,324 for Sign Vision of Gahanna for pedestal signage. Mr. Cavener seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Chief Kauser requested the authorization to adjust appropriations for the OPS Center Construction Project to \$13,151.00. Of that amount, \$12,151.00 will be reimbursed by the City of Gahanna. The additional \$1,000 was needed for a change to the bathroom doorway width.

Res. 210-21 Approve the authorization to adjust appropriations for the OPS Center Construction Project to \$13,151.00.

Chair Stewart moved to approve the authorization to adjust appropriations for the OPS Center Construction Project to \$13,151.00. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Chief Kauser requested the approval of the final plans for Fire Station 132.

Res. 211-21 Approve the final plans for Fire Station 132.

Chief Stewart moved to approve the final plans for Fire Station 132. Mr. Cavener seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

OPS CENTER:

Chief Kauser provided updates. (See Referral File.)

MIFFLIN DISPATCH (and 911/CAD System Partners):

No requests or updates.

MIFFLIN TECHNOLOGY:

Mr. Main provided an update on his 5-year plan. (See Referral File.)

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

VISITORS COMMENTS:

None.

At 12:15 p.m., Mr. Cavener moved to enter 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, license, or regulated individual, unless the

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public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual requests a public meeting. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

The trustees came out of Executive Session at 1:00 p.m. At 2:00 p.m., the meeting reconvened.

Res. 212-21 Authorize a 3-day, unpaid suspension (September 22 – 24, 2021) of Chief Kauser for the unauthorized use of a vehicle.

Mr. Cavener moved to authorize a 3-day, unpaid suspension (September 22 – 24, 2021) of Chief Kauser for the unauthorized use of a vehicle. Chair Stewart seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried.

Being there was no further business, Chair Stewart moved to adjourn today's meeting. Mr. Angelou seconded. All voted yea. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 2:04 p.m.

Lynn M. Stewart, Chair

Richard J. Angelou, Trustee

Kevin J. Cavener, Vice Chairman

Rick Duff, Fiscal Officer