

Town Hall/Virtual

April 23, 2020

Chairman Mueller called the meeting to order at 9:23 am. Trustee Gabram and Trustee Port were present. Fiscal Officer Karen Walder and Trustee Assistant Melissa Palmer were present.

The following Department Head was present: Police Chief Tim Carroll.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: *Mr. Gabram made the motion to move into executive session to confer with an attorney for the public body concerning disputes that are the subject of pending or imminent court action pursuant to ORC 121.22 (G) (3). Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

The meeting moved into executive session at 9:23 am.

Mr. Gabram made the motion to return to regular session. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting moved into regular session at 9:43 am.

MINUTES: *Ms. Port made the motion to accept the minutes of the Special Meeting held on March 14, 2020, as presented. Mr. Gabram seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Gabram made the motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on March 18, 2020, as presented. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Ms. Port made the motion to accept the minutes of the Special Meeting held on March 30, 2020, as presented. Mr. Gabram seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Gabram made the motion to accept the minutes of the Special Meeting held on April 13, 2020, as presented. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

QUARTERLY REPORTS: *Ms. Port made the motion the acknowledge receipt of the 1st Quarter 2020 reports from the Fire, Police, Road, & Zoning departments. Mr. Gabram seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

ATTORNEY FEES: COUNTY LINE ROAD: *Ms. Port made the motion to approve the 50% Hunting Valley/50% Russell Township split of the expenses for the law firm Mazanec, Raskin & Ryder Co., L.P.A., as negotiated by Todd Raskin, Esq., at the rates previously identified on March 30, 2020, retained by Russell Township pursuant to O.R.C. 309.09B, for the purpose of advising the Board of Trustees on the County Line Road reconstruction issue, legal services and expenses which will now be shared with the Village of Hunting Valley. Mr. Gabram seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

ROAD PROJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL WORK ORDER: *Ms. Port made the motion that the Russell Township Board of Trustees is in agreement with the Geauga County Engineer as to the necessity of Supplemental Work Agreements Subparts A-K (relating to remobilization, labor, and material cost adjustments for work in 2020), and agrees to same as recommended by the Geauga County Engineer, for an estimated contract cost increase of \$294,621.25. Mr. Gabram seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

POLICE DEPARTMENT: DONATIONS: Chief Carroll expressed thanks to B'Laster Corporation for its donation of hand sanitizer to the department, and also to a resident who donated 5 face shields.

FISCAL OFFICE: Mrs. Walder reported that we are receiving or expecting to receive a number of payments related to rebates or stimulus related activities. Mrs. Walder stated we have already received Health and Human Services Stimulus, which is about \$3,500.00, but we are waiting for directions on how we are to receive it. Mrs. Walder believes that a separate Fund needs to be created, if so, there may be Trustee action needed for establishment of the fund. Mrs. Walder reported that the township has received \$500.00 from the OTARMA CARES program to be used to towards COVID-19 supplies. Mrs. Walder stated that the township is expected to receive a refund from BWC, which Ms. Port stated expectation of a refund amount of \$38,500.00.

Mrs. Walder reported she received notice from OPWC that the July 2020 payment on the 10 year loan held by the Township is deferred until January 2021.

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Mrs. Walder reported that she has received a letter from the Geauga County Budget Commission recommending that all taxing authorities internally reduce their anticipated revenue collection to 95% for the second half collection period: Mrs. Walder noted the Township was budgeted at 98%. Mrs. Walder reported she has also received a notice from the Geauga County Auditor of a "Complaint Against the Valuation of Real Property" filed by the West Geauga School District for 3 properties on Kinsman Road.

Mrs. Walder reported that the township received notice for unemployment compensation benefits filed by Vince Gambino, which states the Township is responsible for up to \$4,800. Mrs. Walder reported she is working with Clemans Nelson on how to proceed with it.

Mrs. Walder reported that the lease purchase agreement with Key Government Finance has an associated escrow account, which carries some interest. Mrs. Walder stated that with the bank reconciliation the Trustees will see a banking statement from Key Government Finance indicating the balance of the escrow account and any interest accrued.

Mrs. Walder stated that she has started work on the 2021 Township budget and has requested from each department head an update to their 5 year capital spending plans.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC – NO PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

FFCRA SICK LEAVE: Mr. Gabram stated that in the Policy adopted by the Trustees on March 30, Section F excludes our first responders and would like to ask Clemans Nelson, to draft language that leaves the door open for the trustees to have flexibility and final say if something were to come up with our first responders. Mr. Mueller asked Mr. Gabram to look into this.

TELECONFERENCING: ZOOM & ALTERNATIVES: Ms. Port stated she attended the teleconference for OTA on April 9 and spoke with a representative about the different considerations for different platforms for hosting meetings. Ms. Port looked into other platforms that would meet our open meetings act and OTA did not give any specific recommendation but did give a list, which Zoom was one of them. Some other platforms were Work Place for Government, YouTube, and Facebook live. Ms. Port said she is still looking into other platforms but recommends to continue using Zoom.

ODOT TRAFFIC SIGNAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT: Mr. Mueller stated he was contacted by ODOT and they want to do all improvements at the same time for the intersection of 306 and 87, which looks like it wouldn't be completed till October 2021. One improvement would provide a couple more feet of concrete for tractor trailer rigs to make the turns (with the additional right of way acquired by eminent domain). Mr. Mueller said the other plan is for the traffic lights: ODOT is going to put them on poles and put them back further from the intersection and the lights themselves will be suspended on the far side of whatever traffic pattern you are going into. Ms. Port asked the status of the traffic red-light sensors for EMS use. Mrs. Palmer indicated that the Township was still awaiting an MOU and estimate of costs. Mrs. Port asked Chief Frazier to follow up and also expressed concern about the close proximity of the Town Hall to the intersection and the potential danger from accidents at the intersection.

OLD FIRE STATION: SHENBERGER INVOICE/LETTER: Mr. Mueller expressed his views as to the continued viability of the Old Fire Station. Mr. Gabram summarized investigations and expenditures going back to 2017 regarding the same and questioned the need for another study. Ms. Port requested time to do a walk through and to investigate roofing options. The chairman tabled the matter until the next meeting.

GSWCD FINANCIAL SUPPORT: *Mr. Gabram made the motion to approve payment of \$3,000.00 to Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District to support the services and programs they provide in meeting the township's NPDES goals and to Russell Township residents. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

MILLER-DODSON LEVEL II ASSESSMENT: Mrs. Walder reported that the proposal we have is for \$8,949.00, which would be a level II update and is a recommended follow up to the initial study done in 2015. This proposal includes all the same properties that were in the baseline study. Ms. Port stated she does not see the need to have this done and would like to review the initial study before she takes a vote on this proposal. Trustees Gabram and Mueller discussed the background of the reserve study as it relates to the Township budget process and recommendations of the County Budget commission. The chairman tabled the matter until the next meeting.

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ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE: ROAD DEPT: Mr. Gabram has met with the Road Superintendent, who is concerned about getting behind on some projects since he only has half the crew each week. Mr. Layne would like the crews reinstated, however, his thoughts would be to stagger the crews. One would be from 8:00 to 4:30 and other would be 7:00 to 3:30. There would then be 2 crews on projects that need to be done. Also, lunch periods would be split up.

Mr. Gabram made the motion that the Russell Township Trustees, as appointing authorities, intend the removal of all employees of the Russell Township Road Department from Administrative Leave with pay per ORC 124.388 (A); leave with pay is rescinded effective May 1, 2020 per the authority of the Russell Township Board of Trustees; regular work status & obligations resume on May 1, 2020 under the direction of Road Superintendent Gene Layne. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

PURCHASE ORDERS AND BILLS WERE APPROVED AS ATTACHED.

Mr. Gabram made the motion to adjourn. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 am.

Jim Mueller, Chairman

Karen Walder, Fiscal Officer

Recorded by: J. Sustar