TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES REGULAR

Community Room October 16, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.by chairperson Port. Trustee Mueller and Trustee Hare were present. Board Administrator Melissa Palmer and Fiscal Officer Karen Walder were present.

The following Assistant was present: Asst. Fire Chief Nick Sambula was present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

MINUTES: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to accept the minutes of the Special Meeting held on September 30, 2025, as presented. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

QUARTERLY REPORTS: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to acknowledge receipt of the 3rd Quarter 2025 departmental reports from the Police, Road, & Zoning departments. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

FIRE DEPARTMENT: Asst. Fire Chief Sambula stated that they will be hosting a two-day advanced EMS and Extrication training as part of their national lecture series this Saturday and Sunday, which will run from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Stated they put out notices to other agencies in the area and have participation from six additional agencies. Asst. Fire Chief Sambula stated will have topics covered by Dr. Cozzi, Medical Director, City of Chicago Fire Department, Dr. Niehaus, University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center and their own Medical Director, Dr. Eric Beck. Stated they will have extrication and vehicle stabilization trainings and will have two Firefighter instructors, Matt Zaller and Sean Gore, Chicago Fire Department Squad 1 and 2. Asst. Fire Chief Sambula welcomed all of the elected officials and the public to stop over and see what they will be doing. Asst. Fire Chief Sambula stated they had eleven cars and two ambulances donated to this training event.

FUEL ISLAND: ULLMAN NOTICE: Mrs. Palmer stated that as the township transitions from one provider to the next, the township will need to provide 30 days' written notice to Ullman Oil of cancellation. Mrs. Palmer advised the Trustees they should authorize someone now to provide that notice, so there is no delay.

Mr. Hare made the motion to authorize Karen Walder to provide Ullman Oil with the necessary 30-day written notice of termination of fuel delivery services for all township departments at the Russell Road Garage to coincide with the schedule for the new fuel island upgrades project. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

FISCAL OFFICE: Mrs. Walder reminded everyone that early voting has started, and to go to the Board of Elections page to see the schedule. Urges all residents to exercise their right to vote.
Mrs. Walder wanted to provide some clarification on the postcard that was send in the mail regarding the 2.5 mill levy Police levy. The statement that stated, "the passing of this levy will ensure the departments yearly operating budget stability for an additional five years to include staffing, equipment, and training." Mrs. Walder stated she took issue with the term "ensure" because it is information she cannot verify or project to ensure would happen.
Mrs. Walder wanted to verify with the trustees that the MS4 project is going to be funded through the general fund, and the trustees said it was going to be paid from the general fund. Mrs. Walder stated will need to appropriate money for labor and materials and depending on the timeframe, it could be appropriated in supplemental appropriations for this year or included in temporary appropriations for next year. Mrs. Walder stated after talking to the Road Superintendent, he will not have the estimate for labor and materials until the design is done. Mrs. Walder just wanted to let the

board know that depending on when the funds are appropriated, the work may not start until 2026. Mrs. Walder stated depending on estimated cost, the project may need to go out for bid and has been working with the Auditor of State and APA on this matter.
Mrs. Walder stated she will be sending out information to the Board for them to act on the 2026 benefit renewal, salary schedule and supplemental appropriations.
Mrs. Walder stated that the Fiscal Office staff has completed the required OPCI training, which is due by October 28th. Mrs. Walder stated the Board may want to reach out to their direct reports under ADP to make sure they have or will be completing the training.

FACILITIES: MAINTENANCE & REPAIR PRIORITY ITEMS: Mrs. Walder stated that she sent a list a couple weeks ago from the walkthrough that she and her staff did and have highlighted several items that they thought should be addressed sooner rather than later. Mrs. Walder asked the Board if she should proceed with the items that have been identified and the Board agreed. Mr. Mueller asked if any of the work is going to exceed $2,500, that it is brought back to the Board for approval. Ms. Port stated that she talked to Mr. Maltese, and he recommended to hire a plumber to have the Town Hall winterized. As of now, there are no HOA meetings scheduled for that time period and can always let them use the Community Room until the Town Hall is opened back up.
Mrs. Palmer stated that the facilities position applications are due October 30th and has received one application and one inquiry so far. Mrs. Palmer stated that she appreciates the Fiscal Office helping out in the meantime.

Mr. Hare made the motion to proceed with arranging for the repair and/or other appropriate action, through the assistance & coordination of the Fiscal Office staff, on the items identified as priorities by the trustees on October 16, 2025, for safety, security or environmental reasons, trustee approval required for individual items with costs equal to or exceeding $2,500.00. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC WERE RECEIVED

LANDSCAPE UPDATE: COMMUNITY ROOM: BENCH PURCHASE: There was brief discussion if the Board wanted to proceed with a bench for outside the Community Room since it was discussed as part of the landscape design. The Board has agreed not to proceed with a bench at this time. Mr. Mueller suggested contacting the Eagle Scouts to see if they could help with a bench.

CJ LANDSCAPE: DRAINAGE PIPE: *Mr. Hare made the motion to approve the repair of the broken drainage pipe near the Community Room by CJ Landscape LLC based on the proposal dated September 29, 2025, for the sum of $1,300.00 payable upon completion. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

CJ LANDSCAPE: AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to authorize Karen Walder to act as signatory for the CJ Landscape LLC drainage pipe proposal dated September 29, 2025. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

SNOWPLOW BID: TOWNSHIP LOTS: Mrs. Walder stated Exscape Group was the lowest bidder for four of the five locations. Mrs. Walder stated she reviewed the terms and conditions and worked with the APA to review them, and she did provide some recommended changes. Sent the changes to Exscape and they agreed with those changes.

Mr. Hare made the motion to approve snowplowing services from Exscape Group LLC in the amount of $23,500.00 on a seasonal contract basis based on proposal dated September 29, 2025 at the Russell Township Administration ($5,595.00), Fire Department ($7,045.00), Recycling Center ($1,810.00), Police Department ($6,680.00) and Cemetery ($2,370.00) lots for the 2025/2026 season, pending FO certification, pending APA approval. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

SNOWPLOW: AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to authorize Karen Walder to act as authorized signatory for the Exscape Group LLC agreement dated September 29, 2025. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

NOPEC PROXY: ASSIGN: RETROACTIVE: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to retroactively appoint and designate Dr. William Koons as the Proxy for the 2025 Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) annual general assembly meeting on November 18, 2025. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

COMMUNITY ROOM: OPEN HOUSE: Mr. Hare stated that he reached out to Senator Sandra O'Brien, and she would be available to attend the Community Room open house in the morning. Trustees agreed to change the time of the open house to 9:00 am to 12:00 pm on November 15th. Mrs. Walder stated that she asked Ms. Dorka to help assist with planning the open house. Ms. Port stated that she has some ideas, so she will talk to Ms. Dorka.

HB 96: Mr. Hare brought up the new property tax relief options coming from HB 96 regarding the homestead and owner occupancy credit. The commissioners would like feedback from the townships as the new "piggyback" exemption would be funded locally. Mr. Hare stated he received an email from Mr. Walder regarding the letter from the commissioners and will have Mrs. Palmer distribute it. Stated that the Board of Commissioners would like a response by November 17th. Mr. Hare asked the board to come prepared to the next meeting with considerations for a statement.

CUYAHOGA TRAIL UPDATE: Mr. Hare gave a brief update on the process for partial dedication for Cuyahoga Trail. Stated it took a while to get a response from the Geauga Engineer's office and doesn't look like any easy task for the residents. There are some basic requirements that the residents could consider, such as serving three residents within 500 feet of road. As stated in the past, there will be a lot of consideration to defer, execute or dedicate of land or portion of land for public road purposes per ORC 5531. Mr. Hare is going to recommend to the residents of Cuyahoga Trail to seek counsel with the recommendations provided by the engineer's office when proceeding with looking into another option with the partial road dedication instead of trying to do the whole loop.

OTARMA: SOATs: Mrs. Walder asked the Board who is going to collect the data and complete the SOAT. Mrs. Palmer stated that she will work with the Police, Fire and Road. Mrs. Palmer asked Mrs. Walder if she could handle insurance cards, and she agreed.

GORRELL PROPOSAL: Mrs. Walder stated that she sent the board information and a proposal from Lori Gorrell regarding coaching. Stated the last session was August 2024 and reached out to Mrs. Gorrell for small group or individual sessions. The proposal that was sent would allow the township to schedule up to 12 sessions for small group or individual sessions. Mrs. Walder stated since we have had some staff changes since starting, the proposal would allow up to five new DISC assessments. Ms. Port stated that Clemens Nelson offers webinars and stated that Mr. Maltese is working on some team building with this team monthly and has been beneficial for his department. Trustees agree that the timeframe isn't good right now since there could be one or two new trustees and a new facility coordinator coming onboard. Trustees want to wait till 2026 once staff is settled.

TRICK-OR-TREAT: Mrs. Palmer stated that she received a request from a resident if the township consider moving trick-or-treat to Saturday November 1st because West G football is in the playoffs and will be playing on October 31st. The Police Chief is the one who makes the decision, but in conjunction with Chester Township. Mrs. Palmer stated that Chief Swaidner contacted Chester Police Chief regarding this but he had already publicly made his announcement when trick-or-treating was, so unfortunately it's a done deal for October 31st and the Police Chiefs are not recommending a change.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to move into executive session to discuss the compensation of a public employee pursuant to ORC 121.22(G)(1). Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

The meeting moved into executive session at 8:51 pm.

Item #1: Melissa Palmer
In at 8:51 pm; out at 8:58 pm

Mr. Mueller made the motion to return to regular session. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The meeting was moved to regular session at 8:58 pm

#1 VACATION BUYBACK: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to accept the Memorandum of Understanding, signed on September 28, 2025, by local OPBA representative Michael McIvor, to approve payment for the equivalent of 200 hours of vacation for employee Vince Valerio. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

PURCHASE ORDERS AND BILLS WERE APPROVED AS ATTACHED.

Mr. Mueller made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 pm.

Kristina Port, Chair

Karen Walder, Fiscal Officer

Recorded by: J. Ezzone