

TOWN HALL

December 5, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chairperson Port. Trustees Rambo and Mueller were present. The Board Administrator Melissa Palmer and Fiscal Officer Karen Walder were present.

The following Department Heads were present: Police Chief Tom Swaidner, Fire Chief John Frazier, and Zoning Inspector Shane Wrench.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

MINUTES: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on November 21, 2024, as presented. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

SPEED STUDY: LETTER TO ODOT: Chief Swaidner stated that he has been working with Mrs. Palmer drafting a letter to ODOT District 12, however the request needs to come from the Board of Trustees. Has been collecting statistic-based information, such as, how many crashes have happened on State Route 87 in the past 3 years. Hoping to have the draft ready early next week. Chief Swaidner stated that it is good to have a study done since it's been a long time. Mr. Mueller asked about lowering the speed coming up to the main intersection and then resuming back to the normal speed once through the intersection. Chief Swaidner stated that he can add a speed reduction request to the letter as well.

POLICE DEPT: BUILDING UPDATE: Chief Swaidner stated that site prep has been done and construction can begin in the next couple of weeks, depending on the weather. Stated that there will be another contract from Pole Barns Direct regarding interior finishes and has sent that contract to the APA for review. Stated that he is meeting with a contractor this week regarding concrete.

FIRE DEPT: DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY: Chief Frazier requested approval to sell the 1996 Pickup truck on GovDeals, since the new truck has been placed in service.

DONATING EQUIPMENT: Ms. Port asked Chief Frazier about donating equipment to North Carolina or any states that have had flooding or hurricanes. Chief Fraizer stated that the State Fire Marshalls usually organizes that, and he has not seen any requests. Chief Swaidner stated that he has not seen any requests for Police equipment.

DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY: FIRE: *Mr. Mueller made the motion, at the recommendation of Fire Chief John Frazier, to dispose of township property listed in the email sent to the trustees with the subject "GovDeals Item" dated November 26, 2024, as the item identified is not needed for public use, is obsolete, or is unfit for public use. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

FIRE DEPT: Chief Frazier stated that the Federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant opened up and asked the Trustees for approval to apply and they agreed.

ANNUAL HIGHWAY MILEAGE CERTIFICATION: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to certify that Russell Township, as of December 31, 2024, was responsible for maintaining 55.455 miles of public roads. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

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ZONING DEPT: Mr. Wrench stated that Mrs. Guyer has been on board for a month and is doing excellent and has been to a BZA an ZC meeting. She has taken a few training sessions on iWORQ already.

Mr. Wrench stated that he has issues with the Caves Road property, and it's come down to doing weekly visits at the request of the prosecutor. Ms. Port asked Mr. Wrench if there were any updates to Airbnb and Mr. Rambo stated that there was a bill introduced prohibiting Township's from banning too much control over Airbnb's. Ms. Port requested that Mr. Wrench keep the Board informed of any developments.

Mr. Mueller stated that he received a call from Steve Gokorsch asking if the Trustees could do a resolution for Bill Downing recognizing his service to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mrs. Palmer stated that Mr. Gokorsch needs to provide her with all the details.

Ms. Palmer noted that the applications for the open position on the BZA are due December 19, and she has received one application to date.

CJ LANDSCAPE LLC: HOLIDAY LIGHTING PROPOSAL: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to accept proposal #1180 received November 25, 2024, for holiday lighting services by CJ Landscape LLC for the 2024/2025 season not to exceed \$1,000.00. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and the votes are as followed: Mr. Mueller yes; Mr. Rambo no; Ms. Port yes and the motion passed.*

HOLIDAY LIGHTING PROPOSAL: AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to authorize Kristina Port to act as authorized signatory for the CJ Landscape LLC proposal # 1180. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

WILLOWLEAF SIGN: AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to authorize Kristina Port to act as authorized signatory for the Willowleaf Studios proposal, dated November 20, 2024. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

FACILITY: RECYCLING GATE: Mr. Wrench stated that the electric gate is up and running. Stated that the gate opens at a 45-degree angle so has put reflective tape on the gate. Mr. Mueller asked about the cameras. Mr. Wrench stated that the cameras are up and will be tied into the new server once it is setup in the Community Room.

RESOLUTION – TAX ADVANCE REQUEST: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to approve Resolution 2024-38, a Request for Advance of Taxes Collected for 2025. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to adopt the Supplemental Township Annual Appropriation Resolution 2024-39 to provide for the additional sums (SUPPL#10 \$46,000) to be set aside and appropriated in*
FUND 2081 \$15,000.00
FUND 2111 \$11,000.00
FUND 2281 \$20,000.00
for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2024, as recommended by the Fiscal Officer. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

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SALARY SCHEDULE: Mrs. Walder stated that the salary schedule includes the 5.5% increase for the Police Department per their collective bargaining agreement and it also includes parity for the remaining departments, if the Trustees approve it. This will go into effect January 1, 2025. Ms. Port and Mr. Rambo asked to see that the Fiscal Office Assistant's salaries added to the salary schedule or even as a separate attachment. Mrs. Walder stated that she can add the attachment, and she plans on giving the same 5.5% increase to her staff as well.

Mr. Rambo made the motion to adopt Salary Schedule 40, content approved and effective January 1, 2025, as amended. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

ADP QUARTERLY MEETING UPDATE: Mrs. Walder stated that APD is moving to a new help desk system called Service Now and will offer training soon. It will allow us actually to create, view and update tickets. Talked about having ADP conduct a risk assessment for the admin complex and ADP suggested to wait until the Community Room is completed. Discussed the Trustee transition and Mrs. Palmer has been working on that. Mrs. Walder stated that they discussed the move to "@geauga.ohio.gov" because there is a mandate that all government agencies need to have a ".gov" email extension and starting to investigate what is involved. Mrs. Walder stated that Mike Dorka can be available for one-on-one training for any Admin folks who need help with OneDrive.

FO YEAR END UPDATE: Mrs. Walder asked Ms. Dorka to update the Board on our year-end activities. Ms. Dorka stated that spending should be pretty much finished unless there is an emergency. Now is the time to get any last-minute requisitions in and we want to get as many bills as possible in before the end of year. Stated that she is trying to closeout any POs that will not be used this year, such as orders that came in under budget. Ms. Dorka asks that everyone works on their 2025 purchase order and blanket requests, so those funds are encumbered at the start of the New Year.

Mrs. Walder stated that the Fiscal Office will be doing the annual UAN Year End Training all day Monday.

Mrs. Walder stated that a goal for 2025 is to reestablish the General Fund Reserve Fund and would like to reach out to Miller-Dodson to get a revised quote to include the Community Building in the reserve study.

FISCAL OFFICE: Mrs. Walder stated that we are in the open enrollment period for benefits and is available till December 9. One of the other items that can be done during open enrollment is, anyone that is on optional VLI, can increase coverage up to \$20,000 without a medical examination.

Mrs. Walder wanted to remind the Police, Fire and Road Department that there is a PO open for Circle K as a backup for fuel if needed.

Mrs. Walder stated that she will be out December 11 through December 18. If you need her, email is the best way.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC WERE RECEIVED

CANDIDATES FOR FUTURE VACANCY: Ms. Port and Mr. Mueller had a discussion regarding candidates. Mr. Mueller's picks are Jim Dickinson, who is interested, Tom Warren and Barry Rogers. Stated that he is meeting with Mr. Warren on Saturday to discuss the vacancy. Ms. Port's picks are Gary Gabram, Charlie Butters and Chris Hare. Ms. Port also noted three other people sent communication expressing interest: Bryan Kostura, Jonathan Stockdale and Trent Meter. Ms. Port expressed she is in favor of Mr. Hare and wants someone who is

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invested in the position and not just a fill-in. Mr. Mueller doesn't want this to have to go to Probate Judge Grendell, if they can't agree on a candidate.

TRUSTEE MEETING SCHEDULE: *Mr. Mueller made motion to approve the Trustee 2025 regular meeting schedule as presented. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and the votes are as follows: Mr. Mueller yes; Mr. Rambo abstained; Ms. Port yes and the motion passed.*

Mr. Mueller stated that he will not be available for the December 19th meeting and won't be available until December 27th. The Trustees agreed to move the next Trustee meeting to Wednesday, December 18th at 7:00 pm.

VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTERS' DEPENDENTS FUND BOARD:

Mr. Mueller made the motion to appoint Kristina Port and James Mueller as the Township Trustee representatives to the Volunteer Fire Fighters' Dependents Fund Board for 2025. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

COMMUNITY ROOM ACCESSORIES: Discussion on rugs for the Community Room, and the Trustees would like to go through Cintas for the cleaning services, rather than purchasing rugs. Mrs. Ezzone is waiting to hear back from Cintas on pricing. Trustees want the same water cooler that is in the Administration Building for the Community Room and that will be serviced through Distillata. There was discussion on blinds and Mr. Rambo stated that they can talk with David Roose because he had some ideas. Mrs. Walder stated that Mrs. Ezzone got a quote for a coat rack from MV Sales that will hold roughly 50 coats. Ms. Palmer indicated that some additional hardware would be needed to support livestreaming, and that ADP would advise based on the livestream method used.

DRAFT AGREEMENT: Ms. Port stated that she sent the draft to our APA for review. Stated she also asked the APA for her opinion on small businesses using the Community Room and wanting to give a portion of the funds back to the Township. Ms. Port asked if they want a price for non-profits, but Mr. Rambo advised against that because you would have to verify if they are actually a non-profit. Mrs. Walder suggested that if rental by a for-profit business is acceptable, it could be at a different fee schedule. Mr. Mueller suggested that if for example a Yoga Club wanted to rent the Community Room, they could arrange for the instructor themselves.

CONTACT FOR COMMUNITY ROOM: Ms. Port stated that she spoke with Bonnie about being the point of contact for the Community Room, but the issue is she is only here 3 days a week. Mrs. Walder said since the Fiscal Office is going to be involved with the deposits and returns, she would like to propose having Ms. Dorka to be the primary point of contact and Mrs. Ezzone as the backup. Ms. Port suggested getting a separate email for the Community Room and asked about an on-line calendar for sign up. Mrs. Walder suggested that this feature may be available with the website update currently underway.

Ms. Port also indicated that she is willing to be the Trustee liaison with Strollo for the construction work starting in January.

Mr. Wrench stated that he received an email from the Park Board asking which building they will be holding their meetings in for 2025 and the Trustees stated they will continue to hold them at the Town Hall, as would any homeowner associations.

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

The meeting moved into executive session at 3:32 pm.

Item #1: Melissa Palmer, Jessica Ezzone, and Chief Swaidner
In at 3:37 pm; out at 3:37 pm

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

The meeting moved to regular session at 3:37 pm.

#1 VACATION BUYBACK: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to accept the Memorandum of Understanding, signed on November 26, 2024, by local OPBA representative Michael McIvor, to approve payment for the equivalent of 48 hours of vacation for employee Daniel Fracci. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

PURCHASE ORDERS AND BILLS WERE APPROVED AS ATTACHED.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 3:38 pm.

Kristina Port, Chair

Karen Walder, Fiscal Officer

Recorded by: J. Ezzone