

COMMUNITY ROOM

February 5, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by chairperson Hare. Trustee Port was present and Trustee Heutmaker was absent. Board Administrator Melissa Palmer was present.

The following Department Heads were present: Police Chief Tom Swaidner, Road Superintendent Giovanni Maltese and Zoning Inspector Frank Kolk.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

CLERK PRO TEM: In the absence of a Fiscal Officer, Board of Trustees Chair Christopher Hare appoints Jennifer Dorka to serve as clerk pro tem.

MINUTES: *Mr. Hare made the motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on January 8, 2026, as presented. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.*

ANNUAL REPORTS: *Mr. Hare made the motion to acknowledge receipt of the 4th Quarter 2025 departmental reports from the Police, Fire, Road, Facilities, & Zoning. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.*

POLICE: SLCGP CYBER GRANT: Chief Swaidner stated that he is still waiting to hear back for clarification.

FIRE DEPT: DONATION: JUNCTION AUTO: Mrs. Palmer stated that at this time to go ahead and decline the donation from Junction Auto. Stated that Mrs. Heutmaker drafted a new policy regarding donations and sent it to Clemens Nelson. Mrs. Palmer suggests that a letter be sent to Junction Auto thanking them for their generosity and explaining that there is a new policy being put in place and may take some time to pass. Ms. Port stated that she would draft the letter.

Mr. Hare made a motion to decline acceptance of the \$1,000 donation from Junction Auto and the Board will send a letter of appreciation. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.

FIRE: DORMITORY PROJECT: CHANGE ORDER APPROVAL: *Mr. Hare made the motion, at the recommendation of James Ptacek, Larsen Architects, to approve Change Order No. 1 to the Fire Department Dormitory Project:*

<i>Change Requests per Owner</i>	<i>Add</i>	<i>\$10,339.65</i>
----------------------------------	------------	--------------------

resulting in a \$10,339.65 increase to the United Contractors, Inc. Contract Value to perform the action items identified in an email to Russell Township Trustees on January 23, 2026, from Chief Sambula, and on Change Order #1, from United Contractors, Inc., dated January 15, 2026, for a new contract value of \$152,139.65; the Contract Time is increased by thirty days. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Ms. Port made the motion to authorize Trustee Hare to sign Change Order #1 to the United Contractors, Inc. Contract, for the Fire Department Dormitory Project, on behalf of the Russell Township Board of Trustees, Change Order #1 dated January 15, 2026. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed.*

ROAD DEPARTMENT: Mr. Maltese stated that he talked to Pete at Verdantas and he is working on the bioswale resolution and will hopefully have a draft for the next meeting. Mr. Maltese stated that Pete is working on a resolution for another city, so the cost should be a little lower.

Mr. Maltese stated that his department helped Gates Mills because they needed help on Wilson Mills grinding a spot where concrete fell.

Ms. Port commented that she attended the webinars regarding salt and stormwater to make sure the township was doing their part with MS-4 and the stormwater project. Stated that the webinars are available on YouTube if anybody else wants to review them.

COMMUNITY ROOM

February 5, 2025

Ms. Port informed the board that she heard South Russell received back the cost of the project by Blackford for the drainage issue and said costs will probably be discussed by South Russell Village in near future.

GTSWMD DROP-OFF IMPROVEMENT GRANT (DIG): AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY:

Mr. Kolk is suggesting adding about 8 to 10 more trees to the Recycling Center with better soil. Also, putting a utility shed with tools at the Recycling Center for easier cleanup. The township is responsible for 10% of the total cost, which is \$821.

Mr. Hare made the motion to designate Trustee Port to act as Russell Township's authorized signatory for the Drop-off Improvement Grant (DIG) 2026 application, dated January 15, 2026, to Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste Management District. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.

EXSCAPE SALT EXPENSE INCREASE: Mr. Kolk stated that he got an estimate for a one-time charge for 50 tons of salt at each location, except the Administration and Recycling Center are combined at 50 tons. There are still some questions that need to be answered, such as what happens if they don't use the 50 tons or what happens if they use more than 50 tons. Mr. Maltese suggested asking for documentation on salt usage for each location. Hoping to have answers for the next meeting.

JUNK VEHICLE REMOVAL: CHANGE ORDER #1: *Ms. Port made the motion to approve Change Order No. 1, Quote #Q-10840, to the 8460 Ridgewood Junk Vehicle Removal Project:*

Change Request Not to Exceed the Addition of \$1,600.00

resulting in a not to exceed \$1,600.00 increase to the Green Vision Materials Contract Value to provide for the Junk Vehicle Removal action items identified in the email to Russell Township Board of Trustees from Karen Walder, dated January 15, 2026, and Quote #Q-10840, from Green Vision Materials, dated January 8, 2026, for a new contract value not to exceed \$23,000.00. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Ms. Port made the motion to authorize Trustee Hare to sign Change Order #1, Quote #Q-10840, to the Green Vision Materials Contract, for the Junk Vehicle Removal Project, on behalf of the Russell Township Board of Trustees, Quote #Q-10840 dated January 8, 2026. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed.*

JUNK VEHICLE REMOVAL: NOTICE TO PROCEED: *Ms. Port made the motion to approve the Notice to Proceed with Green Vision Materials, from Newbury, Ohio, effective February 6, 2026, for the project entitled Junk Vehicle Removal. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed.*

DEMOLITION REMOVAL: DRIVEWAY: CHANGE ORDER #2: *Ms. Port made the motion to approve Change Order No. 2, Quote #Q-10845, to the Demolition Removal Project:*

Request of \$3,450 paid at recommended 50% level: Add \$1,725.00

resulting in a \$1,725.00 increase to the Green Vision Materials Contract Value to provide for the driveway stabilization action items identified in the email to Russell Township Board of Trustees from Karen Walder, dated January 30, 2026, and Quote #Q-10845, from Green Vision Materials, dated January 15, 2026, for a new contract value not to exceed \$24,725.00. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Mr. Hare made the motion to authorize Trustee Hare to sign Change Order #2, Quote #Q-10845, to the Green Vision Materials Contract, for the Junk Vehicle Removal Project, on behalf of the Russell Township Board of Trustees, Quote #Q-10845 dated January 15, 2026. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.*

COMMUNITY ROOM

February 5, 2025

SCRAP TIRE EVENT: Mr. Kolk stated he will have scrap tire event approval for next meeting. It will be held on August 8th.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS: VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: Mr. Kolk stated that there is an opening for the Board of Zoning Appeals and applications are due by February 18th.

ZONING DEPT: Mr. Kolk stated that he will be looking at increasing some of the Zoning fees.

Mr. Hare stated that he attended the Zoning Commission meeting and Mr. Rogers was elected as the chair. Topic for this year is going to be EV stations and wants Chief Frazier to attend a meeting to discuss safety concerns.

There was discussion regarding the safety luncheons and who was going to be attending them. Mr. Kolk stated that he was attending for February and Ms. Port offered to attend March. Trustees agree that it should be rotated between all departments.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC WERE RECEIVED

GCTA EVENT FUNDS: HILLBROOK OR EOUV: Mrs. Palmer stated she received an estimate from Hillbrook, and it would exceed the \$35 charge for GCTA, so the township would have cover the overage. Stated that she put out an inquiry for EOUV but has not heard back. Mrs. Palmer asked for authorization to make the decision on the venue and the trustees agreed.

Mr. Hare made the motion to support the Geauga County Township Association dinner event to be hosted by Russell Township Trustees on April 8, 2026, with funding authorized in the amount of \$5,000.00, vendor contact to be made by M. Palmer. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.

NOPEC COMMUNITY EVENT SPONSORSHIP: Mrs. Palmer gave a reminder to Department Heads to let her know events, dates and cost for the community events so she can submit for the sponsorship. Asked to have information by the end of the month.

ROLL-OFF SCRAP/FALL CLEANUP EVENT: *Mr. Hare made the motion to authorize a roll-off scrap collection event at the Road Department and a senior scrap pick-up program in 2026 with the participation of Dept on Aging and paid township personnel for a cost of up to \$19,000.00. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.*

Mr. Hare clarified that a letter was not going to be sent to ADP regarding the invoice since they had a special meeting with ADP to resolve the issues.

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

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

*Item #1: Melissa Palmer, Chief Swaidner, Jessica Ezzone, and Jennifer Dorka
In at 3:32 pm; out at 3:35 pm*

*Item #2: Melissa Palmer, Jessica Ezzone, and Jennifer Dorka
In at 3:35 pm; out at 3:36 pm*

*Item #3: Melissa Palmer
In at 3:36 pm; out at 3:45 pm*

*Item #4: Melissa Palmer
In at 3:45 pm; out at 4:00 pm*

*Item #5: Melissa Palmer
In at 4:00 pm; out at 4:22 pm*

COMMUNITY ROOM

February 5, 2025

Ms. Port made the motion to return to regular session. Mrs. Heutmaker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously

The meeting moved to regular session at 4:22 pm.

#1 POLICE VACA BUYBACK: *Mr. Hare made the motion to approve payment for the equivalent of 160 hours of vacation for Lt. Scott Lillash. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.*

#2 FIRE-EMS RECRUIT APPOINTMENT: *Mr. Hare made the motion to appoint Reilly Leasure to the position of Fire-EMS Recruit, effective February 6, 2026. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.*

PURCHASE ORDERS AND BILLS WERE APPROVED AS ATTACHED.

Mr. Hare made the motion to adjourn. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 pm.

Christopher Hare, Chair

Karen Walder, Fiscal Officer

Recorded by: J. Ezzone