

RUSSELL COMMUNITY ROOM

March 19, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. Trustees Hare, Port and Heutmayer were present. The Board Administrator was also present.

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

The Fiscal Officer was absent.

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.

ROAD DEPARTMENT: The Road Superintendent advised the Board that Carmella Shale, Geauga County Soil and Water Conservation District reviewed and edited the resolution and Pete Formica, Verdantas, reviewed the edits and had no issues with them, and the result is the resolution in front of the Board for approval.

RESCIND RESOLUTION: BIOSWALE: *Ms. Port made the motion to rescind Resolution 2026-7: A Resolution adopting post-construction Storm Water Management Regulations requiring Compliance with Ohio EPA Construction General Permit No. OHC000005, including Table 4b Practices in Russell Township. Mrs. Heutmayer seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

SECOND RESOLUTION: BIOSWALE: *Ms. Port made the motion to approve Resolution 2026-8: A Resolution adopting post-construction Storm Water Management Regulations requiring Ohio EPA Construction General Permit Table 4b Practices in Russell Township. Mrs. Heutmayer seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

WG COMMONS RESERVATION: AUTH SIG: *Ms. Port made the motion approving the Community Day Event for July 18, 2026, and authorizes Trustee Heutmayer to sign and execute the Pavilion Reservation Application for the event. Mrs. Heutmayer seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

ROAD DEPARTMENT: The Road Superintendent updated the Board on tree damage from the last storm, there are a lot of trees that still need to be cleaned up, and the department is working on it and going street by street.

ZONING: The Board presented a resolution of appreciation for Mr. Boucek for his service as a Board of Zoning Appeals member upon his resignation.

GO GREEN GRANT: ACCEPT FUNDS: Mr. Kolk was advised that after the Board accepted the Go Green Grant funds that he can submit a requisition to encumber the funds.

Mrs. Heutmayer made the motion to accept the Go Green Community Grant in the amount of \$3,500.00. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

RUSSELL COMMUNITY ROOM

March 19, 2026

LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE PROPOSALS 2026: MULTIPLE PROPERTIES:

Mr. Kolk presented three landscape quotes, with only one being complete and also the lowest.

Ms. Port made the motion to approve the CJ Landscape LLC landscape maintenance estimate distributed to the trustees in an email dated March 18, 2026, for the price of \$37,458.44. Mrs. Heutmaker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

AUTH SIGNATORY: *Ms. Port made the motion authorizing Fiscal Officer Karen Walder to sign and execute the CJ Landscape LLC contract for 2026. Mrs. Heutmaker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

FACILITIES: Mr. Kolk updated the Board on the salt shortage with the company contracted for plowing the township buildings, there is no longer a salt shortage, and he is unsure if the township will be charged the salt surcharge that was mentioned in January. He advised the Board he has an email from the company with how much salt was used at each location if they would like to see it.

Mr. Kolk mentioned the Fairmount Center would like the fence between their property and the Cemetery removed as it "looks bad" and is "falling apart", he was advised that the fence is needed and quotes for replacement should be gathered.

Mr. Kolk told the Board that he received a compliment from a Chester resident on how nice out recycling center is.

The Chairman of the Board advised that Mr. Podojil from the Citizens Park Board had passed and shared his calling hour times, and he was a long-time volunteer to the Townships Park Boards.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: The Chief updated the Board that he was still waiting to hear back from the state on the grant reimbursement. He noted that he might rescope and redirect the grant funds to another qualified project.

The Chief announced that the department will be hosting a safety day for seniors in May. There will be a presentation and safety tips.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: Pay application one for the dormitory project is ready for Board approval.

The Chief updated the Board that the community para medicine program is underway, and the data collection process has started.

The Fire Chief explained to the Board the importance of a full-time firefighter/paramedic being added to the roster, as the full-time person retired in 2017 and was never replaced due to their budget not being able to support the position, and with EMS calls on the rise this full-time position would be a major benefit to the department.

RUSSELL COMMUNITY ROOM

March 19, 2026

UCI: APPLICATION FOR PAYMENT #1: *Mrs. Heutmaker made the motion to approve Application No. 1 for Payment for the Fire Department Dormitory Project, invoice dated March 9, 2026, in the amount of \$45,829.80 to United Contractors, Inc., as recommended by JP Ptacek, Project Architect, Larsen Architects, and Architect's Certificate dated March 14, 2026. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

ELECTRIC UTILITY PLAN: *Ms. Port made the motion to approve the new electric utility plan terms for township owned facilities, presented by broker Ryan Boucher, of Fidelis United Energy Solutions LLC, for a 24-month fixed contract at \$0.0864 kWh, with Atlantic Energy. Mrs. Heutmaker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

FISCAL OFFICER AUTHORIZATION: *Ms. Port made the motion to authorize Fiscal Officer Karen Walder to sign the Atlantic Energy Sales Agreement on behalf of Russell Township based on pricing dated March 19, 2026. Mrs. Heutmaker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

The Board will not authorize the renewal of the ClearGov subscription as in the last meeting the Fiscal Officer did not recommend the continued use of the capital budgeting program. The Board discussed the continued use of ClearGov and, based on the Fiscal Officer's prior recommendation, determined not to renew the subscription.

STATE CAPITAL GRANT: The Board has requested that Mrs. Ezzone proceed with patio furniture and any other items needed for the Community Room to use the remaining balance of the State Capital Grant funding. They noted that the funds need to be spent by the end of June, and the Fiscal Officer has the funds appropriated for the Community Room.

PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS: The Board discussed by department the list of items that they will request the Fiscal Officer to include in permanent appropriations. Mr. Hare asked for a voice vote on each item when discussed.

ROAD: The Board discussed all the items that were entered into ClearGov and the additional items; Utility Truck and Roadside Mower that were submitted by the Road Superintendent. After discussion and the Board agreed that they will be requesting the Fiscal Officer to include all the items in permanent appropriations.

POLICE: The Board discussed all the items that were entered into ClearGov and the additional request to move the phone system update be moved from 2027 budget to the 2026 budget that was submitted by the Police Chief. After discussion and the Board agreed that they will be requesting the Fiscal Officer to include all the items in permanent appropriations.

FIRE: The Board discussed all the items that were entered into ClearGov and the additional request; Stryker Power Cot Load System, Full-time Firefighter/Paramedic, Chevy C4500 Braun Ambulance that were submitted by the Assistant Fire Chief. After discussion, the Board agreed that they will be requesting the Fiscal Officer to include all the items in permanent appropriations. The request for phase two of the dormitory project will be discussed in budget workshops.

RUSSELL COMMUNITY ROOM

March 19, 2026

GENERAL FUND: The Board discussed all the items that were entered into ClearGov and the additional request; one hundred thirty thousand dollars for I.T. services (to include website updates) and funds for the Police Department parking lot update. After discussion and the Board agreed that they will be requesting the Fiscal Officer to include all the items in permanent appropriations.

MONTHLY FINANCIALS & BANK REC: *Ms. Port made the motion to acknowledge receipt of the monthly bank reconciliation and financial reports for February 2026, as submitted by Fiscal Officer Karen Walder. Mrs. Heutmaker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

The Board requested a special meeting to consider Permanent Appropriations on Monday the 30th at 5:30 p.m. to approve Permanent Appropriations.

The Board discussed having the 2027 budget workshops in the evening this year, and when the Fiscal Officer is in attendance, they will discuss the schedule.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC WERE RECEIVED.

LEADERSHIP GEAUGA SIGNATURE: 1 EMPLOYEE: *Ms. Port made the motion to authorize the expenditure of \$2,750.00 for the support of one employee to attend the Leadership Geauga Signature program under a tuition loan agreement plan. Mrs. Heutmaker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

NOPEC COMMUNITY EVENT: *Mrs. Heutmaker made the motion to approve the application of the NOPEC Community Event Sponsorship for grant monies up to \$1,500.00 for community events per the agreement and at the discretion of the Board Administrator. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Mrs. Heutmaker made the motion to authorize Melissa Palmer to act as Russell Township's authorized signatory for the NOPEC Community Event Sponsorship Organization Acknowledgement. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION: DUSHAN BOUCHEK: *Ms. Port made the motion to adopt Resolution 2026-9: a Resolution of Appreciation for Dushan Boucek upon his retirement from the Russell Township Board of Zoning Appeals. Mrs. Heutmaker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

The Board discussed the GCTA dinner meeting on April 8th; Trustee Hare will give the welcome and Trustee Port will give the blessing.

TOWN HALL: Frank Kolk advised the Board that he was meeting with a contractor at the Town Hall the next day to get quotes to demo the building, move the building, and repair the building.

MEMORIAL DAY: Trustee Port updated the Board on the progress of the Memorial Day observance, and asked Frank Kolk to arrange for a temporary facility at Briar Hill for the day of the event.

AMERICA 250: CHESTER TOWNSHIP: Trustee Hare asked the Board if there was any interest in contributing funds to the firework display. The Board was concerned about liability for the fund donation and requested to know what other surrounding communities have contributed to the event.

RUSSELL COMMUNITY ROOM

March 19, 2026

COMMUNITY DAY: Trustee Port advised the Board that she has been communicating with Wiegand Lake Park about hosting a community day next year for the township's bicentennial.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: *Mr. Hare 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). Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

The meeting moved into executive session at 8:02 p.m. There were four items for discussion in this executive session, and the following people were invited to attend.

Item #1: Board Administrator, Chief Fraizer.

In at 8:06 p.m.; out at 8:10 p.m.

Item #2: Board Administrator, Chief Swaidner.

In at 8:10 p.m.; out at 8:15 p.m.

Item #3: Board Administrator.

In at 8:15 p.m.; out at 8:20 p.m.

Item #4: Board Administrator.

In at 8:20 p.m.; out at 8:48 p.m.

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

The meeting moved into regular session at 8:48 p.m.

BZA VOLUNTEER: *Ms. Port made the motion to appoint volunteer member Kate Walsh to the Russell Township Board of Zoning Appeals for the remainder of the five-year term ending December 2026. Mrs. Heutmayer seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

FIRE HIRE: *Ms. Port made the motion to hire Owen Brian Denton as a part-time Firefighter/EMT at the beginning rate, per Salary Schedule 45, effective April 1, 2026. Mrs. Heutmayer seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

POLICE HIRE: *Mrs. Heutmayer made the motion to hire Mitchell Gregor as full-time police officer and constable with the Russell Township Police Department. The conditions of employment are as follows: The official starting date is April 1, 2026. Pay scale will be based on Salary Schedule 45. Officer Gregor is hired at the 1-year experience level. A one-year probationary period commences on the official starting date. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

RUSSELL COMMUNITY ROOM

March 19, 2026

FACILITIES COORDINATOR: RESIGNATION: *Ms. Port made the motion to accept the resignation of part-time Facilities Coordinator Frank Kolk, based on the email addressed to the Russell Township Trustees, dated March 10, 2026, resignation effective March 27, 2026. Mrs. Heutmaker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

The Board intends to hire a part-time facilities coordinator and a full-time board administrator.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

PURCHASE ORDERS AND BILLS WERE APPROVED AS ATTACHED.

Chris Hare, Chair

Karen Walder, Fiscal Officer

Recorded by: J. Dorka