

RUSSELL TOWN HALL

JUNE 20, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. Trustees Port, Rambo and Mueller were present. The Board Administrator and the Fiscal Officer were also present.

The following Department Heads were present: Fire Chief John Frazier and Police Chief Tom Swaidner.

MINUTES: *Ms. Port made the motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on June 5, 2024, as presented. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

7:05 pm PUBLIC HEARING, 2025 BUDGET: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to open the public hearing on the proposed budget for the year 2025. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

The Public Hearing opened at: 7:05 pm.
...Public Questions or Comment...

Fiscal Officer Karen Walder noted that the hearing notice was placed in Chagrin Valley Times and the Maple Leaf, and the Budget was available at the fiscal office and on-line. The 2025 budget submission includes the revisions requested by the Board at the workshops, and consists of 2 years prior, actual, current year appropriations and one year forward, along with Schedule A and Schedule B. Mrs. Walder also reminded the Board of the Hearing before the Budget Commission on August 19.

Mr. Mueller asked if COLA increases were included in the budget, and Mrs. Walder indicated that the budget reflects the CBA raises with parity to all departments.

Mr. Rambo asked about the increase in medical premiums and Mrs. Walder indicated that an increase of 15% was used in the budget.

Mr. Mueller made the motion to close the public hearing on the proposed budget for the year 2025. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Public Hearing closed at: 7:10 pm.

2025 BUDGET: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to approve the proposed budget for the year 2025. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

RESOLUTION: 1996 AMBULANCE: PROOF OF LOSS: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to approve Resolution 2024-21, a Resolution to Dispose of Property Through Insurance Claim. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY: FIRE: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to dispose of township property listed in the document from Chief Frazier entitled "Inventory/Removal-Scrap 6-20-2024", as each item identified is not needed for public use, is obsolete, or is unfit for public use. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

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FIRE: Chief Frazier advised the Board that he was going to apply for the "Fire House Subs" grant. If the grant is awarded it will be used to replace battery operated tools. If the grant is awarded to the Township, it will cover the cost of the replacement one hundred percent and there is not match from the township.

Chief Frazier updated the Board on the stop light signals at the intersection of state route 87 and state route 306. The Fire sirens set off the sensor, but the Police sirens do not. He is looking into if it is a frequency or volume issue.

FISCAL OFFICER: Mrs. Walder thanked the Board for allowing her to attend the OAPT finance officer training, she commented to the Board that the Ethics law is fifty years old. There were many finance and market rate sessions held, along with the announcement of a new BWC program. Mrs. Walder also informed the Board that there is now a lot of A.I. fraud that everyone needs to be on the lookout for, and it was suggested that code phrases are used so that you know if you're talking to the real person or the A.I. generated person. She also noted a lot of discussion on H.B. 140 and recommended the Board review it.

BANK RECONCILIATION & FINANCIAL REPORTS: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to acknowledge receipt of the monthly bank reconciliation and financial reports for May 2024, as submitted by Fiscal Officer Karen Walder. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC WERE RECEIVED.

COMMUNITY BUILDING: APPLICATION FOR PAYMENT #3: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to approve Application No. 3 for Payment for the Community Meeting Building, invoice date May 30, 2024, in the amount of \$171,445.38 to ACM Construction Management LLC, as recommended by David Roose, Project Manager, Strollo Architects, in an email to Karen Walder, dated June 6, 2024. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

THEN & NOW PO: BUCKLEY: *Mr. Mueller made the motion, at the request of Fiscal Officer Karen Walder, to approve a Then and Now Purchase Order in the amount of \$2,082.50 to cover the Buckley Group, LLC Invoice #23-059-05, dated May 31, 2024, for Engineering services for the Community Building re: the Sewer Permit to Install (PTI.) Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

OPWC INTEGRATING COMMITTEE BALLOT: The Board Administrator advised them that Lake County has removed themselves from the group, and Auburn Township has also removed themselves from the group. PJ is a Trustee of Auburn Township, and he would like to stay involved, and is interested in being the representative going forward.

Mr. Rambo made the motion to appoint PJ Cavanaugh as Russell Township's nominee to the OPWC District Seven Integrating Committee & Small Government Subcommittee. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

GEAUGA SAFETY COUNCIL: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to approve the payment of \$300.00 to the Geauga Safety Council for the annual regular meeting registrations and lunch expenses, July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

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AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: SAFETY COUNCIL: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to authorize Chair Kristina Port to act as Russell Township's authorized signatory for the Geauga Safety Council regular meeting registrations. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

PARK 511: 2025 BUDGET: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to designate funds in the 2025 Russell Township Budget, in the amount of \$3,500.00, for the Russell Township Citizens' Park District, ORC 511. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

TRUSTEE AUTHORIZATION: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to retroactively authorize Trustee Kristina Port to act as the Kroger Opioid Settlements Authorized Official and to sign the document related to the settlement on behalf of the Russell Township Board of Trustees. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

FIREWORKS BAN REQUEST: A resident sent in a request to ban fireworks in the Township. The Police Chief noted that the state law allows fireworks as of 2022, and the number of complaints received by the Police Department has decreased every year since. He also recommended the Board speak to the County Prosecutor before moving forward with any action on this matter.

INDEPENDENCE DAY PARADE: The Board Administrator advised the Board that they need to register for the Independence Day parade if they would like to participate in it. Trustees Port and Mueller would like to walk the parade. The Police and Fire Chief's will send a vehicle to be in the parade, and the Trustees will call the Road Superintendent to see if he can have a truck participate as well.

NEW BUSINESS: The Board discussed the millage/tax windfall proposed options for 2025. Mrs. Walder indicated that they will have an opportunity to take some action this Fall. At this time, the Board has decided that the township will use the extra funding to supplement road paving, as some of this funding may be needed to fix the landslide on Hillbrook Lane South.

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 7:53 pm.

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

The meeting moved into regular session at 8:27 pm.

FIRE DEPARTMENT PARAMEDIC: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to approve a retroactive promotion for Mr. Dominic Ferrante's based on his advancement from EMT to part-time Paramedic due to his successful completion of the Paramedic Program. Pay scale, promotion date, & experience level for Mr. Ferrante will be based on the June 16, 2024, promotion date, per Salary Schedule 38. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

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FIRE HIRE: *Mr. Rambo motion to hire Kevin Ravakhah as a part-time Firefighter/EMT at the beginning rate, per Salary Schedule 38, effective July 1, 2024. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

FIRE HIRE: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to hire Dana Schlotzhauer as a part-time Firefighter/EMT at the beginning rate, per Salary Schedule 38, effective July 1, 2024. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

POLICE HIRE FULL-TIME: *Mr. Mueller made the motion, based on the recommendation of Police Chief Tom Swaidner, to hire Matthew Weaver as a full-time police officer and constable with the Russell Township Police Department. The conditions of employment are as follows: The official starting date is July 1, 2024. A one-year probation period will begin on the official starting date. The pay scale will be at the two-year level per Salary Schedule 38. Equipment to be provided by the Russell Police Department as required pursuant to the agreement between Russell Township and the Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, pending receipt of all paperwork by the Fiscal Office. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Kristina Port, Chair

Karen Walder, Fiscal Officer

Recorded by: J. Dorka