

TOWN HALL

August 1, 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, Road Superintendent Gene Layne, and Zoning Inspector Shane Wrench. Asst. Fire Chief Nick Sambula was present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

FRAUD TRAINING: VIDEO PRESENTATION Required Fraud Training Video as prescribed by Auditor of State in Bulletin 2024-5 was shown.

SOUTH RUSSELL CULVERT PLAN: MAYOR KOONS: Mayor Koons from South Russell Village asked the Trustees if they have made a decision regarding splitting the cost of the new, larger culvert under Hemlock Rd. Mr. Rambo stated that they haven't received any plans or estimates for the project and can't make any decisions until they see that. Mayor Koons stated that he will follow up with the County Engineer's Office. Mr. Rambo asked what the cost was going to be, and Mayor Koons stated that it will be about \$46,000 and asking Russell Township to pay half. Mrs. Walder stated that there is no money appropriated for this project, so a supplemental would need to be done.

MINUTES: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on July 11, 2024, as presented. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Mueller made the motion to accept the minutes of the Special Meeting held on July 17, 2024, as presented. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Rambo made the motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on July 18, 2024, as presented. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and the votes are as followed: Mr. Mueller abstained; Mr. Rambo yes; Ms. Port yes and the motion passed.

QUARTERLY REPORTS: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to accept the 2nd Quarter 2024 Fire report. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

FIRE DEPT: Asst. Fire Chief Sambula stated that he did apply for the OTARMA MORE Grant but just got an email stating they needed to use a different application specifically for Fire & EMS. Chief Swaidner said that the Police and Fire get an OTARMA Grant each year for training or equipment but if the Fire Department uses their grant towards and AED for the new Community Building, then the Fire Department loses out on the money for something specific for them. Mr. Sambula stated that the Road Department applied for the MORE Grant, and it can only be used once. The Board agrees to not use any OTARMA Grants towards the AED, and the General Fund will pay for it. Mrs. Walder asked Mr. Sambula to submit a requisition for the AED.

TRAFFIC LIGHT: Ms. Port asked if there was an update on the traffic light signal. Chief Swaidner stated that they had ODOT come out and take a look at it. Stated that the Fire Department wasn't having as big of a problem as the Police Department was. ODOT tested it and it was working fine but they will look at lowering or repositioning the sensor.

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LIQUOR PERMIT RENEWALS: Chief Swaidner stated that he has no objections to the places that are selling alcohol.

POLICE DEPT: Chief Swaidner stated that on August 6th they will be participating in National Night Out for Police and Fire, a community outreach program. The event is located at Chardon Square from 6:00 – 8:00 pm.

WELLNESS CHECKS: Ms. Port asked Chief Swaidner who gets dispatched first for a wellness check. Chief Swaidner stated that the Police Department assesses the situation first and if medical attention is needed, they will dispatch for the Fire Department.

ROAD DEPT: Mr. Layne stated that Dines Road has been started and is going well. Ms. Port asked when it will be completed, and Mr. Layne anticipates by the end of August. Ms. Port stated that they received a petition from resident's on Deerbrook about their road being paved. Mr. Layne stated that Deerbrook was on the radar to be incorporated with Dines Road, but when Dines Road costs were higher than anticipated, he had to eliminate Deerbrook for now. Mr. Layne stated that they will see what they can do.

ZONING DEPT: Mr. Wrench stated that they welcomed the new Zoning Commission member at last week's meeting and fits in really well.

Mr. Wrench stated that this coming Monday's BZA meeting for Laurel Schools is going to be postponed until next month.

Mr. Wrench stated that he had a phone conference call regarding the development of Hillbrook and the contractors seemed to have realized that the development isn't going to be doable.

Mr. Wrench stated that there are 4 houses currently working on for permits.

Mr. Wrench stated that Lisa from Soil and Water stopped in and said that there are over 35 active projects going on in the township.

Ms. Port asked Mr. Wrench if the new Zoning Commission member needs an iPad and Mr. Wrench stated that she has a personal one and is deciding if she wants to just use hers or not. Mr. Wrench stated that he will check with her again.

FACILITIES: Mr. Wrench stated that Safety Counsel lunches have started, and they have moved from the first Friday for each month to the second Friday of the month and is now at Kent State Geauga.

Mr. Wrench stated that the Scrap Tire and Shredding event are being held on August 17th.

Mr. Wrench stated that the annual testing of the fire extinguishers will be happening later this month and will give everyone a heads up.

INDEPENDENT TREE: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to approve the removal of the 24" maple tree from the Briar Hill Cemetery & associated stump grinding, per Estimate #20240718 from Independent Tree for \$1,115.00. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

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INDEPENDENT TREE: AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to authorize Kristina Port to act as authorized signatory for the Independent Tree proposal dated July 18, 2024. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

CEMETERY: Ms. Port asked for an update on the Redding plot issues, which Mr. Mueller was coordinating. Road Superintendent Layne indicated that he didn't know what could be done.

FISCAL OFFICE: Mrs. Walder that we received payment from West Geauga for the School Safety Officer per the Agreement.

Mrs. Walder stated she has been working with APA on the Laurel conditional use issue and did receive information from the Auditor's Office on the Russell local tax share going back to 2001. Stated she is in the process of comparing that to the receipts that we did receive and there seems to be a significant shortfall of the payments they provided. Stated that she is working with the Prosecutor's Office on the next steps.

Mrs. Walder let the Department Heads know that there is a grant offered by Cyber Ohio that will cover IT services. After this meeting she will send the information. Would provide up to \$20,000 and the Township can submit up to 5 different projects. The funding period is from December 2024 through June 2026. Portal is open for applications, and they are due by September 16, 2024.

OSWALD COMPANIES: OTARMA: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to name Oswald Companies as the Agent of Record for Russell Township's OTARMA policy, effective August 1, 2024. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

OHIO ASSOCIATION of PUBLIC TREASURERS: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to authorize reasonable and necessary expenses for up to three Fiscal Office members to attend the OAPT Fall Conference in Maumee Bay, Ohio, October 9-11, 2024. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

FISCAL OFFICER'S REPORT: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to acknowledge receipt of the 2nd Quarter 2024 report from the Russell Township Fiscal Officer. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC WERE RECEIVED

UNITY DAY: Chief Swaidner stated that they have reserved a spot along with the Fire Department. Mrs. Palmer stated that the Trustees need to decide if any other departments are going to participate or not and need to come up with a plan and who is going to fund expenses for the day. Ms. Port asked Chief Swaidner if he found value in participating and Chief Swaidner stated it gives the community the opportunity to meet and speak with departments and its value for giving back to the community. Ms. Port stated that she will spend some time under the Police Department's tent, and we will have some Township brochures to hand out. The

Board agrees to give each department \$100 towards giveaways for the event.

Mr. Mueller made the motion to authorize the 11 am – 5 pm participation in Unity Day and the purchase of refreshments, giveaways, & other event related material up to an amount of \$100.00 per department at the discretion of each participating department head (Police & Fire). Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and the votes are as followed: Mr. Mueller yes; Mr. Rambo no; Ms. Port yes and the motion passed.

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COMMUNITY BUILDING UPDATES: Mr. Rambo stated that there has been a requested change order for the EPA required manhole and the change order amounts to \$13,818.82. The manhole was \$10,619.69 but the extra trenching they had to do from the property line to the recycling center was \$3,199.13. Mr. Rambo stated that we still have an allowance left under the contract of \$5,742.21, which can be used or save the allowance for later. The Board agrees to use the allowance now. Mr. Rambo stated that he will email David Roose they will apply the allowance towards this change order. Strollo will submit the change order and then the Board will have to take action to approve it.

Electrical Design: Mr. Rambo stated that there will be a discussion with CEI about where the electrical is coming in. The way it was designed was for the electrical was coming off an existing pole and CEI doesn't like that plan and will need to be redesigned. May need to install a transformer and feed electricity from a completely different area. CEI will provide 2 different options, but it is going to be a significant cost. The township will have to pay 40% of the cost. Mrs. Walder stated that the Board should be prepared to pay between \$11,000 - \$15,600 for the CEI portion but still need to add the additional costs for ACM and Strollo. Mrs. Walder asked Mr. Rambo if he could find out what the additional costs may incur from Stollo so we can encumber funds. Mrs. Walder stated that depending on which option there might be an easement needed from the Township to First Energy for access to their transformer. Mr. Rambo also noted that the electric service delay may impact the project completion by 8-10 weeks.

Cameras & Access Controls: Mrs. Walder stated that had preliminary prices for the inside cameras and access controls for the new building but waiting for final prices with the installation cost.

Spectrum Fiber Line to Admin for Cameras: Mrs. Walder stated that Spectrum offers a fiber line. Currently the Admin Building is serviced by a coax line and talking with ADP and the Project Manager, they said as soon as soon as the cameras are installed in the new building and recycling center, we are going to want a more robust connection line. They recommended a 200Mbps fiber from the street to the Admin Building. Mrs. Walder stated that she has received preliminary pricing from Spectrum for \$675 a month.

THEN & NOW PO: IT ROOM & VALUE ENGINEERING: *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 \$6,168.00 for Strollo Invoice #23014.00-7, dated July 9, 2024, for additional work associated with IT Room changes & revisions associated with the value engineering items. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

WEBSITE PROPOSAL: COMPANY 119: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to approve the agreement from Company 119, of Chardon, Ohio, for website design & content migration, dated July 25, 2024, for \$10,760.00, approved by the Geauga County Prosecutor. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

COMPANY 119 AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to authorize Kristina Port to act as authorized signatory for the Company 119 proposal dated July 25, 2024. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

CEMETERY: Ms. Dorka stated that she had a resident say there was a Township policy that if anyone served on a Township Board, they get a free burial and asking if the \$300 burial fee can be waived for their family member that served on a board. Ms. Dorka stated that she doesn't know of any policy and thinks it's a case by case.

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Ms. Dorka said the only record she found that had a waived fee was for former elected officials. The Board agrees that since there is no known documentation of this policy, at this time they are not going to waive this fee.

COMMUNITY BUILDING: POLICIES & TASKS WORK SESSION:

BUILDING NAME: Mr. Rambo made the motion to accept the new Community Building name of Russell Township Community Room. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

STAFFING: Ms. Port indicated that this is to be determined.

USE POLICY: The Board had discussion on policies they want for the Community Building. Hours will be from 8:00 am – 11:00 pm with a minimum rental of 4 hours. The Board conferred with Assistant Chief Sambula regarding the maximum capacity that would be permitted. They agree to allow beer and wine only and Mr. Rambo and Mr. Mueller do not feel they need to require having a Police Officer on duty during an event if beer and wine are being served. No sales of alcohol would be permitted, and no smoking is allowed. No open flames, other than birthday candles. Agreed to having crockpots, hot plates and sterno equipment used by 3rd party caterers but no deep fryers. Had a brief discussion on different fees for residents, non-residents, organizations. Anticipated uses would be celebrations of life, memorial lunches, parties, and meetings. The Board agreed to no cleaning fee, but renters must take trash out, put tables and chairs away and sweep floors to get security deposit back. Security deposit must be received at least 7 days prior to the event. There will be no refunds due to weather. Music by a live band or DJ will be allowed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: *Mr. Mueller 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. Rambo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

The meeting moved into executive session at 4:07 pm.

Trustee Matthew Rambo left the meeting at 4:52 pm.

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

The meeting moved to regular session at 4:57 pm.

POSITION DESCRIPTION: ZONING INSPECTOR/FACILITIES MANAGER: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to adopt the position description for full-time Zoning Inspector/Facilities Manager, effective August 1, 2024. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.*

POSITION DESCRIPTION: ZONING SECRETARY: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to adopt the position description for part-time Zoning Secretary, effective August 1, 2024. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.*

SHANE WRENCH MOVE: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to move Shane Wrench to the position of Zoning Inspector/Facilities Manager in the Russell Township Zoning Department, at the 8-year experience level which will be indicated as \$35.00 on the next revised Salary Schedule requested of the Fiscal Officer. The promotion is effective July 1, 2024. A one-year probation period will begin on the official starting date. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.*

TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES

REGULAR

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PURCHASE ORDERS AND BILLS WERE APPROVED AS ATTACHED.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 pm.

Kristina Port, Chair

Karen Walder, Fiscal Officer

Recorded by: J. Ezzone