

RUSSELL COMMUNITY ROOM

August 21, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Trustees Port, Mueller and Hare were present. The Board Administrator was also present.

The following Department Heads were present: Police Chief Tom Swaidner.

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 Kristina Port appoints Jennifer Dorka to serve as clerk pro tem.

QUARTERLY REPORTS: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to accept the 2nd Quarter 2025 Fire report. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Mr. Hare made the motion to authorize Kristina Port to act as authorized signatory for the G.A.R. Paving proposal, dated August 12, 2025, for the proposed asphalt paving & crackfill at the Fire Department front lot and access driveway. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

FIRE: ACCEPT DONATION: *Mr. Hare made the motion to accept the Chipotle gift card donation from Mr. Brock Milstein in the amount of \$200.00 to the Fire Department. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Hare made the motion to approve the use of the \$200.00 gift card donation for the Fire Department at the discretion of the Fire Chief. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

ROAD: FUNDS REQUEST: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to approve funds in the amount of \$2,000.00 for team building, communications development, & enrichment experiences for the Road Department staff at the discretion of the Road Superintendent. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

POLICE: The Board discussed the Budget Hearing held with the County Budget Commission and clarified that the 2026 budget was passed. The Budget Commission removed the negative funding for salaries in the Police Budget and then passed the township's 2026 budget.

Chief Swaidner clarified that with this proposed levy revenue the department will meet the recommended cash reserves as they are currently about five hundred thousand dollars short of that recommended funding, this will allow the department to grow and add a new position, the department will be able to fund the reserve accounts fully. Chief Swaidner advised that the Fiscal Officer and staff prepared and projected the amount of funding needed, and the residents are taxed higher due to the amount of park land in the township that restricts the number of residents in the township.

Chief Swaidner announced that the Police Department is having its first year of the Citizens Police Academy which starts Tuesday August 28th.

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CHASE BANK OFFICIAL CUSTODIAN: *Mr. Hare made the motion to identify and document that the Official Custodian for Russell Township's government accounts with JP Morgan Chase Bank is the Fiscal Officer. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Mr. Hare made the motion to authorize Karen Walder to act as authorized signatory for the Official Custodian document as she is the Russell Township Fiscal Officer and designee from the Board of Trustees for Russell Township's government accounts with JP Morgan Chase Bank. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

BANK RECONCILIATION & FINANCIAL REPORTS: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to acknowledge receipt of the monthly bank reconciliation and financial reports for July 2025, as submitted by Fiscal Officer Karen Walder. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

OHIO ASSOCIATION of PUBLIC TREASURERS: *Mr. Hare made the motion to authorize reasonable and necessary expenses for 2 staff members to attend the OAPT 2025 Fall Conference, October 8-10, 2025, in Findlay, Ohio. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC WERE RECEIVED.

OPCI: MOU: Ms. Port advised the board that the Cybersecurity MOU for the Police and Fire departments was sent to the APA and there were minimal changes requested, she will keep the board updated on the progress.

RECYCLING CENTER: CLEAN UP: TEMPORARY: *Mr. Hare made the motion to approve the proposal by CJ Landscape, LLC for temporary assistance with weekly cleanup at the Recycling Center while visiting for their regular mowing/landscaping, for the price of \$60.00 per week beginning September 1, 2025, until the end of mowing season or until a Facilities Manager is employed whichever comes first. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

The board discussed the December 4th meeting and due to availability by board members that meeting is rescheduled for December 2nd at 5:30 p.m.

Trustee Hare advised the Board that he contacted the APA to ask questions related to the recommendations from the Budget Commission for the 1545 Park Board dissolution. The Park District is seeking council to help them look into the process, and Mr. Hare would like to see that park land they own be transferred to the board of trustees and not Geauga Park. He will keep the board updated as he receives more information. The board was in favor of having the park land go to Russell and not the Geauga Park District.

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

The meeting moved into executive session at 8:03 p.m.

There was one item for discussion in this executive session, and the following people were invited to attend.

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Item #1: Melissa Palmer, Chief Swaidner, Jennifer Dorka.

In at 8:03 p.m.; out at 8:20 p.m.

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

The meeting moved into regular session at 8:20 p.m.

#1 VACATION BUYBACK: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to accept the Memorandum of Understanding, signed on August 12, 2025, by local OPBA representative Vince Valerio, to approve payment for the equivalent of 200 hours of vacation for employee Todd Owen. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

PURCHASE ORDERS AND BILLS WERE APPROVED AS ATTACHED.

Kristina Port, Chair

Karen Walder, Fiscal Officer

Recorded by: J. Dorka