

Community Room

August 7, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 2:01 p.m. by chairperson Port. Trustee Hare was 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 Giovanni Maltese and Fire Chief John Frazier were present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

MINUTES: *Mr. Hare made the motion to accept the minutes of the Special Meeting held on July 17, 2025, as presented. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.*

Mr. Mueller joined the meeting at 2:04 pm.

Mr. Hare made the motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on July 17, 2025, 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 25, 2025, as amended. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and the votes are as follows: Mr. Mueller yes; Mr. Hare abstained; Ms. Port yes; and the motion passed.

QUARTERLY REPORTS: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to accept the 2nd Quarter 2025 Police, Road, Zoning & Facilities departmental report. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

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

MS4 BIOSWALE: VERDANTAS PROPOSAL: Mr. Maltese stated he reached out to Verdantas because the APA had some recommended contract changes, and they are working on that. As far as the amount may seem high, but it was the only bid received. Stated that most of the work will be done by the Road Department so there is a cost saving in the end. Once we get the contract, Mr. Maltese stated Verdantas is a good option and then we can get a design started. Weather depending, it will give them plenty of time to install the bioswale before the deadline next year.

CENTERRA: Mr. Maltese stated that the fuel tanks are over 30 years old and are failing and has been shopping around for new fuel systems. Centerra tanks would be free as long as we purchase the fuel from them and they will maintain the tanks. Stated that we would need to pay for electrical upgrade but don't know the cost yet until we decide to go with them. There is a one-time \$150 setup fee and then a \$60 monthly fee, and we would have access to download our own reports. Mr. Maltese stated that he reached out to Ullman Oil to see if the township has any contracts with them but waiting to hear back. With Centerra, Mr. Maltese would have complete control over the system, such as adding and deleting employees. Mr. Maltese stated that there may be an opportunity for our old fuel system to be taken/purchased by Centerra. Mrs. Walder asked about the location of the new tanks and Mr. Maltese said that was still to be determined and that the Departments may need to use Circle K for fueling during the transition.

Mr. Mueller made the motion to accept the proposal from Centerra Co-op, for two 1,000 gallon, double wall, fuel tanks and a B-Smart Fuel Management System, proposal emailed July 30, 2025 from Road Superintendent Maltese to the Trustees, for a monthly cost of \$59.95 and a one-time installation fee of \$150.00; no shortfall charge on anticipated yearly fuel usage pending termination of Ullman Oil Services.

Community Room

August 7, 2025

Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to authorize Kristina Port to act as authorized signatory for the Centerra proposal, emailed July 30, 2025, for fuel tanks and Fuel Monitoring System. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

PREVAILING WAGE COORD: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to appoint Giovanni Maltese the Russell Township Prevailing Wage Coordinator for Russell Township Road Projects only, per ORC 4115.071. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

ROAD DEPT UPDATES: Ms. Port asked if the issue at Fernwood Rd and Birchmont Dr has been taken care of regarding signage. Mr. Maltese stated that he reached out to the County Engineer, and they came out and looked at it. Stated that signage is not an issue for any accidents. They did trim for line-of-sight issues and raised the stop sign 6" but everything was in compliance.

Ms. Port asked for an update regarding the culvert work with South Russell. Mr. Maltese stated he hasn't heard anything about it. Mrs. Palmer stated the last she knew they working with the engineer's office. Will wait for an update from South Russell.

FIRE DEPT: Chief Frazier stated that they joined the Police Department in attending National Night Out.

Ms. Port asked the Fire Department to review their cybersecurity policy before the end of September.

DRUG/ALCOHOL ALTERNATE LIAISON: *Mr. Hare made the motion to authorize Giovanni Maltese to act as the Russell Township Alternate Designated Employee Representative to the Geauga County Drug & Alcohol Consortium. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

POLICE DEPT: JKL MECHANICAL: Chief Swaidner stated that one of the current AC condensers went out, which is one of the original units on the building. Stated it makes sense to replace the whole unit and that they will need to use a crane to get it on top of the roof. The cost includes installation of the new unit and removal of the old unit. Chief Swaidner stated that there is a warranty on the labor and equipment. If he replaces the whole unit, it is eligible for NOPEC funds. He does have money in his building reserve fund for this project. Chief Swaidner is requesting to use the remaining \$3,483.37 in NOPEC funding to put towards the new HVAC unit to help offset the cost.

Mr. Mueller made the motion to accept the proposal from JKL Mechanical, for a Carrier WeatherMaker 4-ton 3 phase high heat package rooftop HVAC unit, proposal # q1165, emailed July 18, 2025, from Police Chief Swaidner to the Trustees, for a proposal cost of \$12,505.00. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

NOPEC ENERGY HVAC UNITS: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to authorize Chief Swaidner to request the remaining \$3,483.37 in NOPEC Energy Savings Grant funds to help offset Police Department expenses for a new Carrier Rooftop HVAC unit with an environmentally balanced refrigerant & 40% energy savings. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

Community Room

August 7, 2025

POLICE: DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY: *Mr. Hare made the motion, at the recommendation of the Police Chief, to dispose of the property identified in the email sent from Chief Swaidner to the trustees dated July 30, 2025, entitled "GovDeals Item for Approval" as the items are not needed for public use, are obsolete, or are unfit for public use. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

POLICE: DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY: RESERVE: *Mr. Hare made the motion, at the request of the Police Chief, to set a reserve price of \$4,584.00 for the "2015 Ford Police Interceptor", approved for disposal on August 7, 2025, that price is the lower of the two value ranges provided as documentary evidence for the item's estimated value. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

HALL UPFITTERS: *Mr. Mueller made the motion, at the request of the Police Chief, to approve the outfitting of the 2025 Ford Police Interceptor/Utility, by Hall Public Safety Upfitters, of Twinsburg, OH, per Estimate #EST-14865, dated July 17, 2025 for the amount of \$5,394.05 which includes labor and shipping. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

POLICE DEPT: Chief Swaidner stated that the Citizens Police Academy starts on August 26th and applications will be accepted till the end of this week. Applicants will be notified by email. Stated there will be hands-on activities and the group will learn about the different topics of law enforcement and services the Police Department provides.

ZONING DEPT: Mrs. Palmer gave a brief update on the Zoning Department. The Zoning Commission is finishing up the revised Zoning Resolution and then will submit it to the Planning Commission. BZA had a meeting on Monday with one variance. Mrs. Palmer stated that there is no update on the lot that's between Circle K and the Post Office.

ZONING MAP: Mrs. Palmer asked the Board if they were interested in hanging a zoning map in the Community Room. Stated that it is very large and would need to get a proposal for it to be framed. Mr. Hare stated for renting out purposes it may not be the best option. Trustees agree not to hang the map in the Community Room, and it can be hung in the Zoning or Admin office.

FACILITIES: INTERIM HANDLING/TEMPORARY COVERAGE: Mr. Hare stated that he sat down with the Fiscal Office staff and Mrs. Palmer to go over facility-related projects and identified a couple things that need temporary coverage. Needed coverage for lowering and raising the flag and Chief Frazier stated that the Fire Department can handle that since it's the same crank. The next is maintaining the Recycling Center. Mr. Hare asked Mr. Maltese if his department could handle this temporary and he agreed. Chief Swaidner suggested if it is going to be more long term, to see if our landscape company will give a quote on cleaning up as needed. Chief Swaidner offered to handle the recycling gate closure if necessary and the fiscal office staff will assist in locating the remotes.

Mrs. Walder stated that her staff has offered to provide interim assistance with facilities matters. Any issues with the Administrative Building, Town Hall and Recycling Center (other than cleanup & gate) should be addressed to Mrs. Ezzone. Any issues with the Community Room and Cemetery should be addressed with Ms. Dorka.

Mrs. Walder stated that the US Protective call list for Town Hall, Administrative Building, Community Room and Cemetery need to be updated. Mr. Hare stated that he will be second in line and Chief Frazier/Fire Department will be the primary

Community Room

August 7, 2025

contact.

Mr. Hare appreciates everyone helping in the interim.

FISCAL OFFICE: Mrs. Walder publicly thanked key individuals and groups for their contributions to the new Community Room. Senator Sandra O'Brien for her support for obtaining the One-Time Strategic Community Investment Grant. Thanked our architect, Strollo, and builder, ACM, for their diligence and attention to the construction itself, worksite safety, communication and scheduling. Thanked the Township Trustees for their leadership in seeing this project through, and particularly Trustee Rambo and Trustee Port who served as the liaison to the builder. Thanked ADP, Just Add Tech & Audimute, who installed our security cameras, access controls, network infrastructure, audio-visual technology and acoustic remediation. Thanked all township staff for their contributions toward upfitting and preparation for the use by the township and community. Thanked the Russell Township taxpayers, whose property taxes helped fund this project.

CJ LANDSCAPE CONTRACT: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to execute the contract with CJ Landscape Company for the "Russell Community Room Landscape Project" in Russell Township. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

FISCAL OFFICE: DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY: *Mr. Mueller made the motion, at the recommendation of the Fiscal Officer, to dispose of the item identified in an email dated July 31, 2025, entitled "Item for Disposal," as the item is not needed for public use, is obsolete, or is unfit for public use. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

OPCI CYBERSECURITY TRAINING: Mrs. Walder stated that all ADP users should have received an invitation from OPCI cybersecurity training and the cybersecurity policy that's been enacted for ADP users. Mrs. Walder suggested to the Board plan for some time to consider the requirements to ORC 9.64, which was updated as part of HB96. Some changes include the Township must adapt a Cyber program, training for all employees, requires notification of a cyber incident to Department of Homeland Security and Auditor of State. This takes affect September 30th.

VILIMAS PROPERTY: DEMOLITION RFQ: Mrs. Walder stated that the RFQ is about 90% done but needs to clarify with APA. Asked if there was any update on how the vehicles would be removed and the trustees have no update. Mrs. Walder stated that the notices that have been sent out, one was returned as undeliverable and have received three return receipts. Have not received any request for a public hearing.

FO REPORT 2Q: Mrs. Walder gave a few highlights on the 2nd quarter report stating that all major funds are in line with the budget. Cemetery revenue is above the budget and Zoning revenue is below the budget. There were 11 new vendors added this quarter. Mrs. Walder discussed some of the Community Room expenses.

Mr. Hare made the motion to acknowledge receipt of the 2nd Quarter 2025 report from the Russell Township Fiscal Officer. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

BUDGET HEARING: Mrs. Walder stated that the Budget Hearing is on August 18th and asked the trustees to let Mrs. Palmer know who would be attending the meeting for Sunshine Law purposes.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC WERE RECEIVED

Community Room

August 7, 2025

NORTHWOOD RD & CUYAHOGA TRAIL: Mr. Mueller stated that he went for an onsite visit and Cuyahoga Trail is a single lane and has lots of potholes. Stated that the Township needed to do something to get those roads under Township care. Mr. Maltese stated that the road would have to be brought to County standards, and the County would have to accept it and estimated costs of \$1-1.5 million. Mr. Mueller asked if there was any way the Road Department could plow those roads and Mr. Maltese stated it's not safe to send a guy there because of the hill and doesn't have the manpower to dedicate someone for that route. Ms. Port stated that she talked to the County Engineer and for them to walk the property, he would need an invite from the trustees. Mrs. Walder stated that public funds can only be spent on public right of ways, not private roads.

COMMUNITY ROOM: BLIND OPTIONS: The trustees do not think it is necessary to get blinds right now; will see if there is a need down the road.

COMMUNITY ROOM: OPEN & AVAILABLE FOR RENTALS: It was announced that the Community Room is now open and available for rentals. Mr. Mueller stated that Fairmount Center is planning on coming with some board members to view the Community Room for potential use.

BOARD OF ELECTIONS: *Mr. Hare made the motion to authorize Kristina Port to execute the Contract for November 4, 2025 Election Day Polling Location with the Geauga County Board of Elections. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

FACILITIES: COMMUNITY ROOM USE: *Mr. Hare made the motion to grant permission for the Geauga County Board of Elections to use the Community Room from 5:30 am – 9:00 pm, on November 4, 2025, subject to Township rules and regulations. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

For the Nov 4 Election, Ms. Dorka will serve as primary contact and schedule the building to be open, and the Police Dept will be backup contact.

Mr. Mueller stepped away at 3:31 pm.

FACILITIES: AUTHORIZATION TO APPROVE EVENTS: Mrs. Palmer stated that previously the trustees provided approval for each individual event. This

Motion would give Ms. Dorka the authority to decide on every event. Ms. Port stated that there should be an alternate and it was recommended that once we get a new facility manager they serve in that capacity.

Mr. Hare made the motion to authorize Jennifer Dorka to act as the Owner's designee for approving the use of and scheduling the Township facilities for

internal and external events & rentals, subject to Township policies, rules, and regulations. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and it passed.

POLICY for FACILITY USE: COMMUNITY ROOM: *Ms. Port made the motion to identify that the Community Room property is intended to be used as a public gathering space by appointment, reservation, or invitation; it is not to be used outside the scope of its intended use. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Mueller returned at 3:33 pm.

Community Room

August 7, 2025

PARK 1545 FUNDS REQUEST: They are requesting \$5,000 towards their 2026 budget. Mrs. Walder stated they provided their approved budget prior to this request, and it doesn't include the \$5,000 they are requesting. Mrs. Walder stated that the budget they approved starts 2026 with \$39,000 and will end the year with almost \$42,000. Mrs. Walder asked what the benefit is to the taxpayers to give them \$5,000 to just put in the bank. Mrs. Walder also stated that the Township has already submitted the 2026 budget, and there are two trustee positions open for 2026. The Board may want to consider if a vote today can bind a future board. Mr. Hare suggested continuing this at the next meeting and invite a representative from the 1545 to attend.

LIQUOR PERMIT: There are no objections.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to move into executive session to discuss the employment 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 3:46 pm.

*Item #1: Melissa Palmer & Chief John Frazier
In at 3:47 pm; out at 4:08 pm*

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

The meeting was moved to regular session at 4:09 pm.

#1 FIRE-EMS RECRUIT APPOINTMENT: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to appoint Mr. Evan Sustin to the position of Fire-EMS Recruit, effective August 8, 2025. Mr. Hare seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

PURCHASE ORDERS AND BILLS WERE APPROVED AS ATTACHED.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 4:09 pm.

Kristina Port, Chair

Karen Walder, Fiscal Officer

Recorded by: J. Ezzone