

TOWN HALL

September 7, 2023

The Chair, Mr. Rambo, called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. Trustees Kristina Port and Jim Mueller were present. Fiscal Officer Karen Walder and Board Administrator Melissa Palmer were present.

The following Department Heads were present: Fire Chief John Frazier, Road Superintendent Gene Layne, Zoning Inspector Shane Wrench, and Police Chief Tom Swaidner.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

**FIRE DEPT: BLOOD DRIVE:** Chief Frazier stated they hosted a blood drive, and it was very successful.

**FIRE DEPT UPDATE:** Chief Frazier stated the Stryker equipment that was approved at the last meeting has been ordered.

**ROAD DEPT: MOBILE RADIOS FOR VEHICLES:** Mr. Layne stated that he and the Fiscal Officer went down to the county engineer's office for information about their radio use. Based on that meeting, he recommends the Road Department convert to a similar radio system then request to share the county's FCC band. Mr. Layne stated he will have a meeting with someone from the Sheriff's office that handles this situation. Mr. Layne said the quote he received for the Motorola radios to run on a higher frequency is about \$31,000 for equipment and installation. Mr. Layne stated it's not something he has budgeted for right now but it's a recent development. Mr. Layne said he is looking at permanent truck mounted radios for the main line vehicles and a couple of portable radios as well.

**ROAD DEPT UPDATE:** Mr. Layne gave an update on the paving and stated that it is winding down. The contractor is doing some last-minute punch list items today.

**POLICE DEPT UPDATE:** Chief Swaidner stated that the Police Department, along with the Fire Department, participated in the West Geauga Unity Day and had a pretty good turnout.

Chief Swaidner stated that they got their Milo System in and is up and running now.

**POLICE DEPT: FIRST AMENDMENT AUDITS:** Chief Swaidner stated people are going around to public facilities and recording to test their first amendment rights. Chief Swaidner recommended that all departments control areas of access and suggested posting signs that say, "authorized personal" and that will limit where these individuals have access to. Chief Swaidner stated that the Police Department has been through training on how to handle individuals and recommended to the other departments that if someone does show up, to call the Police Department.

**ZONING DEPT:** Mr. Wrench stated that the BZA is currently reviewing the updated resolution and making any edits and then it will go back to the Zoning Commission. Mr. Wrench stated that there are 2 issues within the Township and is working with the prosecutor's office to work through them. Mr. Wrench stated the Zoning Office is busy now.

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**FACILITIES:** Mr. Wrench stated that he is waiting on estimates for several projects, including snowplowing for this winter season. Mr. Wrench said he has the monthly Safety Council meeting tomorrow. Mr. Wrench stated that the fire extinguisher company came out last week for their yearly check and will be back out tomorrow to drop off a couple of new extinguishers.

Mr. Wrench stated that he is still waiting for an estimate back on the cemetery outhouse repair. Stated that the Road Department was able to get the tree off.

**SCRAP TIRE EVENT UPDATE:** Mr. Wrench stated that Nick Reese from the Road Department manned the Scrap Tire event and collected 72 tires. Once we get all invoices and pay, he will be able to submit for reimbursement.

**PAVING: RECYCLING CENTER:** Mr. Wrench states that he has estimates for crack sealing for the recycling center and cemetery. The Recycling Center is currently scheduled for Saturday, September 23. Mr. Wrench stated that he has talked to Mr. Layne for the Road Department to relocate the recycling bins off the pavement. The recycling area will be closed Sept 23 (weather permitting) and the Board asked that residents be advised of this schedule via social media.

**FISCAL OFFICER UPDATE:** Mrs. Walder congratulated Jessica Ezzone on completing 5 years with the Township. Mrs. Walder informed the Board that as part of her review and appraisal and in line with her years of service and expanding roll, she has given Mrs. Ezzone a raise to \$29.79 an hour with an annual salary of \$61,963.20. Mrs. Walder is looking forward to working with her and stated that Mrs. Ezzone has asked to take on expanded roles with the budget and expand into appropriations, record retention and will help with ClearGov implementation.

Mrs. Walder stated that OTARMA has sent out 2023 Police and Fire Grant application as part of our renewal. Stated that the Police Department has applied for the grant and alerted Chief Frazier that there is a \$1,000 grant available to them as well.

**OPEC/HC LETTER UPDATE:** Mrs. Walder stated that she did provide the Board with a letter from our attorney regarding OPEC/HC matter but due to attorney/client privilege can't be discussed in an open meeting.

**CLEARGOV UPDATE:** Mrs. Walder gave an update on the ClearGov implementation process. Overall, the goal is to have the site operational by the end of October to start using it for 2024 capital projects. Mrs. Walder stated that we are currently on schedule, and ClearGov has been very responsive to requests. The site is up, and she and Mrs. Ezzone have been familiarizing themselves with the process. Mrs. Walder stated that she has provided ClearGov with our UAN data export and has a meeting next week to review it.

Mrs. Walder said the next steps will involve departments and asked each department to name a representative to join the implementation team to work with the fiscal office for testing. Currently we are starting to review the forms that we are going to use to submit projects and would like it to be a collaboration. Mrs. Walder stated that departments can start reviewing ClearGov Academy, the online virtual training, and has asked Mrs. Ezzone to provide the link and names of sessions that may be informative.

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Mrs. Walder said she needs to work with ClearGov to determine how the reserve projects will be populated.

**RESERVE SPENDING UPDATE:** Mrs. Walder said she sat down with each department head to review their reserve study spending. The purpose was to revisit what projects are still being planned for spending in 2023 as it is already September. Also, if any quotes came in higher than expected, it could be added to supplemental appropriations.

**COMMUNITY BUILDING PROJECT:** Mrs. Walder stated that \$200,000 has been added to the Supplemental Appropriation for the community building project, which now brings the total appropriated for this project to \$725,000. Mr. Rambo indicated the most recent architect's estimate was \$650,000. Ms. Port is concerned that if there isn't enough money appropriated, the Board will consider what other financial sources that could be used. Mrs. Walder suggested that it be clear to the architect to identify what we need in the base bid and what are the options. Mr. Rambo indicated that the goal is to get the final plans by mid-October.

**SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION #6: RESOLUTION 2023-20:**

*Ms. Port made the motion to adopt the Supplemental Township Annual Appropriation #6, Resolution 2023-20, to provide for the current expenses and other expenditures of the Board of Trustees, for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2023, as recommended by the Fiscal Officer. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

**NEW SQUAD: PROPOSE FINANCING:** Mrs. Walder gave a shout out to the vendors for turning around quotes on a weeks' notice. Mrs. Walder clarified that from the last meeting that one quote that had a 2% rate, it is an effective rate because once we open the escrow, they are going to put the \$337,779 and it will earn interest until we received the equipment in 2026. The actual interest rate for a 5-year term, 2 years interest only and 3 years interest and principal, with a prepayment penalty clause, was 5.87% with Leasing 2. Mrs. Walder stated that the agreement would need to be signed by October 22. Mrs. Walder said the other rates were 5.93%, with a similar prepayment penalty and Key Bank was 7.2% and had no prepayment penalty. Mrs. Walder recommends going with Leasing 2.

*Mr. Rambo made the motion to authorize the Request to Proceed with Leasing 2 toward lease finalizing for a new Ford F-550 Ambulance for an amount financed of \$337,779, at rate of 5.87%, for a 5-year term, per the proposal dated September 6, 2023. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

**AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: AMBULANCE FINANCING:** *Ms. Port made the motion to authorize Fiscal Officer Karen Walder to sign the Leasing 2 lease application and credit forms and to provide requested financial information relevant to the Ford F-550 ambulance. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

**2024 OHIO SAFETY CONFERENCE:** Mrs. Walder stated that the conference is next March, and the Fiscal Office usually sends a representative. Mrs. Walder stated that Mrs. Ezzone comes back noting that there are very valuable sessions that may be of interest to other departments. Mrs. Walder asked the department heads to consider whether they would want to send someone for a day or the whole conference. There is no charge for the actual conference, just travel.

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**KAREN REMOTE WORK:** Mrs. Walder informed everyone that she will be working remotely for the next 2 weeks, but she can be reached by email.

#### **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC RECEIVED**

**NOPEC NEC GRANT PROPOSAL: BLANKET:** Mr. Rambo asked Mr. Wrench about the status on the HVAC project for the Administration Building. Mr. Wrench said he got a contract from the vendor and sent it to the APA, and she made changes, but the vendor is unwilling to change his contract. The estimate was \$10,442.

Mrs. Walder remarked that the HVAC project would qualify for the NOPEC grant. Mrs. Walder suggests asking the APA to identify if entering the contract would be unlawful or not.

Mr. Rambo said at the last meeting Mrs. Walder suggested buying LED light bulbs for residents to come pick up. They are the warm white bulbs. The price would be under \$2 if more than 1,000 were purchased.

Mr. Rambo asked when we must spend the NOPEC money by. Mrs. Walder stated that we would have to place the light bulb order by the end of this month and the Township currently has roughly \$13,900 available in NOPEC funds. Trustees agree to spend up to \$3,500 for LED bulbs and the rest to go towards the HVAC project.

*Ms. Port made the motion to approve the purchase of 12W LED lightbulbs (in white packaging), invoiced from iPromoteu and then reimbursed by the NOPEC NEC Grant for an amount up to \$3,500. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion, and the vote was as follows: Mr. Mueller no; Ms. Port yes; Mr. Rambo yes and the motion passed.*

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** *Mr. Mueller 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 3:00 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 3:07 pm.

**ACCEPT RESIGNATION:** *Mr. Mueller made the motion to accept the resignation of Police Officer & Constable Ben Kimball from the Russell Township Police Department, effective September 15, 2023. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

**HIRE TO PART-TIME:** *Mr. Mueller made the motion, based on the recommendation of the Police Chief, to hire Ben Kimball as a part-time police officer and constable with the Russell Township Police Department. The conditions of employment are as follows: The official starting date is September 16, 2023. A one-year probation period will begin on the official starting date. Pay scale will be at the three-year level per the Salary Schedule 37. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

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**TRANSFER TO FULL-TIME:** *Mr. Mueller made the motion, based on the recommendation of the Police Chief, to move Dylan Miralia from part-time to a full-time police officer and constable with the Russell Township Police Department. The conditions of his new employment are as follows: The official starting date is September 16, 2023. A one-year probation period will begin on the official starting date. The pay scale will be at the two-year level per the full-time wage Salary Schedule 37. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

**ROAD DEPT PROMOTION:** *Mr. Mueller made the motion, based on the Road Superintendent's recommendation, to promote Nick Reese to the position of Laborer IIB, at the 3-year experience level, in the Russell Township Road Department. The promotion is effective September 16, 2023. A one-year probation period will begin on the official starting date. Pay scale per Salary Schedule 37. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

**ROAD DEPT PROMOTION:** *Mr. Mueller made the motion, based on the Road Superintendent's recommendation, to promote Ryan Munn to the position of Laborer IIB, at the 3-year experience level, in the Russell Township Road Department. The promotion is effective September 16, 2023. A one-year probation period will begin on the official starting date. Pay scale per Salary Schedule 37. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

**PURCHASE ORDERS AND BILLS WERE APPROVED AS ATTACHED.**

*Mr. Mueller made the motion to adjourn. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Matthew Rambo, Chair

Karen Walder, Fiscal Officer

Recorded by: J. Ezzone