***Pleasant Township Board of Trustees Meeting Highlights***

**Date \_January 2, 2024\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Next Resolution No.\_ 15---1-2-2024\_ \_**

* **Call to Order -- The meeting tonight will also be on WebEx.**
* **Please stand for moment of silence. --Pledge of Allegiance-----Roll Call**
* **Visitors –**
* ***Hanna Poling*** with the Southwest Messenger via WebEx. (Hanna on maternity leave)
* **Minutes to approve**- No minutes
* **Financial Reports** – Motion to pay expenditures.
* ***Department Reports***
* **County Sheriff’s Report- Community Liaison, Deputy Adkins- absent**
* **Road Department****- Robert Bausch, Superintendent**
* Detour approval- email received about replacing a culvert at SLM 6.94 of U.S. 62 [Pickaway County] and will require a 14-day closure of the highway, sometime in August 2024. This project is in close proximity to Pleasant township and will impact township roads via an unsigned local detour. Would you please review the report / attached plans and return a signed copy of the local detour maintenance agreement (App. C-3). This work is expected to be started and completed in August of 2024. Let me know if you have any questions. Thank you, John Brosnahan, Transportation Engineer, ODOT District 6 / Planning and Engineering
* Annual report SWCD
* Repairs truck #22-new gas tank

*Unresolved items*

* *Any updates on the rocks/boulders in the right-of-way on Oakhurst Dr.*
* *Any updates on Gay Rd. about repairs due to heavy rains washing the roadway and gravel away. (meeting on 8-8-23 we said we’d keep it on the agenda till resolved in some way.)* Still doing work on Gay Rd.
* **Fire Dept. – Chief Whiting**
* Before Chief gave his report Nancy gave the following report of her findings.- I want to try to clear something up. There seems to be some misunderstandings about the Physical Trainer and the grant to pay for this service. The following is a recap of how the grant came about from my notes, and since it’s been a while, I verified by listening to the videos:

**Facts**

* **1-25-22**--This is from Chief Taylor's report at regular meeting on 1-25-22 (Randi was absent),

 The next AFG grant has been submitted. We have applied for a comprehensive wellness program and 20 sets of turn-out gear. Awards are expected to be announced beginning around the end of April or beginning of May. Totaling just over $200,000.

* **9-13-22**-This is from Chief Whiting's report at regular meeting on 9-13-22 (Nancy was absent)

 We have been awarded an AFG Grant in the amount of:

$176,882.85 - Federal amount

      8,844.15 - 5% township contribution

**$185,727.00**   total

The grant will fund the following:

·         additional sets of personal protective equipment (PPE)

·         replace older exercise equipment

·         Health and wellness exams and assessments

Once we accept the grant we will start the acquisition of gear and identifying other resources to fulfill the grant.

Trustee Sheets made Resolution\_\_\_\_50\_\_, seconded by Trustee Good to accept the AFG Grant in the amount of $176,882.85, the townships portion will be $8,844.15 which is 5% of the total amount of $185,727.00. Thank you Chief Whiting for the great work acquiring this grant saving the township over $176,000.

* **9-12-23**-Chief Whiting reported - (Randi absent)

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Ø  Physical trainer started working with units.

I (Nancy) have spent a lot of hours doing research about firefighter wellness programs since the wellness program that was included in the AFG grant we received has been questioned. Obviously, I had questions too thus my research.

Chief Brian Taylor applied for the grant totaling $185,727.00. The township taxpayers are responsible to pay 5% of this grant which is $8,844.15, leaving $176,882.85 of Federal Grant money going into Pleasant Twp. Funds. Specific items included in the grant are gear and a wellness program in hopes of lowering workers comp claims and keep our firefighters fit and healthy. Some have disagreed and believe a wellness program with a personal trainer is not a good use of money, but as your elected decision-making trustee, I believe after much research this to be a wise, cost affective decision along with using the grant for what it was specified for, which must be followed.

Some questions raised are, we are running out of money and need a levy. Yes, we have not had a levy in almost 15 years, the funds are getting low. I believe we have all been very diligent with taxpayer dollars to make a projected 5 year levy last almost 15 years now. Yes, we have utilized covid moneys in the amounts of over $900,000. Also other grant money thanks to our retired Chief Taylor and present Chief Whiting for being very good at grant writing. Keep in mind we all have stretched these funds almost 10 years beyond what we thought the last levy would last. Some think we need to cut back even more. I feel we have done an excellent job of this and there comes a time when you just can’t sacrifice with anymore cuts, you have cut all you can.

Pleasant Township deserves the best service we can offer within a reasonable budget and the budget we have to work with. We have an excellent road department that continually goes above and beyond the scope of their job for the residents. To keep them they deserve to make a competitive wage which we strive to keep them within that range, not at the top and not at the bottom. The same is true with the fire department. We recently added 2 additional firefighters. Fire department operates on a unit bases, there are 3 units that rotate, work one 24 hour day off 48 hours while the other two units work their shifts. We had three firefighters on two of the units and four on one of them. On the recommendation of our fire chief the trustees hired 2 additional which made equal manpower of 4 on each shift and lowering overtime cost. The main reason for this was cost effectiveness. The cost of over time to meet state mandated minimum manning is a large part of the need to hire two more. Therefore, if one person is off we still have three on each shift, not causing overtime pay. Lots of numbers to study to understand this completely and anyone who would like to understand more is welcome to sit down with any trustees or the fire chief to understand.

I feel it was very prudent on our part to secure this grant to receive $176,882.85 by spending $8,844.15 out of the budget. We have gained tangible items such as gear from this money, but we also gained a comprehensive wellness program for our firefighters.

One piece of research I came across was from an article in Fire Rescue 1 sponsored by Cigna from January 14, 2020, so this isn’t new. In summary of that article the purpose of the wellness program is *“A successful wellness program can improve overall health and reduce costs, and it should include physical fitness, stress management and mental health elements”.* *Firefighting is a strenuous job, and data from the United States Fire Administration identifies heart attacks as a leading cause of death for active-duty firefighters. Wellness programs can help. Various studies over the past decade have shown that an increased focus on physical fitness and overall wellness, including emotional support, can help decrease rates of obesity and anxiety – significant risk factors for cardiovascular problems. These programs can help individual firefighters be more fit and less likely to smoke, as well as more engaged on the job. The best wellness programs focus on more than just fitness. Fitness is important, but good wellness programs go beyond just exercise and include nutrition and a focus on behavioral health and stress management, because all these elements are connected. To maximize the benefit of a wellness program, be sure your program addresses both the physical and mental aspects of health.* This was taken from an article written by Sara A. Jahnke, Ph.D. who is the director of the Center for Fire, Rescue and EMS Health Research at the National Development and Research Institutes.

We have really benefited from grants, a new medic, a new grassfighter, radios, turnout gear, all very necessary and expensive items. The portion of the current grant in question for a personal trainer is something we can’t visualize but the rewards have been proven in healthier and stronger firefighters.

Since questions have risen about the physical trainer and the wellness program, I not only researched but I called Pete (the Twp. Legal Counsel). Pete advised we do not need a contract with the physical trainer and after I showed him the facts of how this transpired and the wording from meetings about it, he does not feel it’s needed but if we want just to make it clear we could make the follow resolution.

Nancy made a motion to adopt resolution\_15\_\_ retaining Matt Wenning to perform personal training and related services for the Fire Department in the amount of $2,083.33 per month for 2023 and 2024 to be paid with AFG grant funds and further authorizing payment for all previous services performed to date.

* Apparatus
* E-2 @ Prairie-Ed asked how long will they have the truck, Chief will find out.
* Resolution 16 to sell the extra medic to Prairie for $4,995. Chief research prices for trucks equal to that and that amount of money was in line for the worth of it. Also, according to the rules of the grant for our new medic, if we sold our old one for more than $5,000 we would have to pay some back.
* Tanker 231 went to All American for air leaks. (T-232 is back in service)
* Additional repairs will be done in the future, including pump valves and exhaust system.
* Station Truck-oil change, brakes
* C-231-tires, brakes
* Staffing
* Resignation-Resolution 17 to accept Jesse Wildman’s resignation. Resolution 18 to accept John Kaltenbach’s resignation.
* Adam Lake's resignation effective January 13, 2024 he is going to Whitehall and Whitehall will reimburse Pleasant for what we have paid for his medic school.
* Recommend hiring Firefighter Ben Noonan to replace the vacancy upon successfully passing the pension physical. Resolution \_19\_\_ to hire Ben Noonan as fulltime firefighter/paramedic to fill the vacancy upon successfully passing the pension physical.
* Training
* Paramedic School ongoing. Received a $3,000 grant for one of our fulltime firefighters currently in medic school.
* Station
* Bay doors repaired by Compton Doors.
* Community Risk Reduction
* Numerous smoke alarms were installed in the community.
* One fire fatality in Township in 2023 happened at the end of November.
* Received an OTARMA Grant for $1,000 for new headsets for the engine.
* Levy Update
* Starting initial planning for the educational component in the township.
* Communications (Dispatch)
* Fairfield Township
* The contract went into effect January 1, 2024.

No issues to report. Pete is working to finalize the contract. $200,000 per year and Fairfield Residents will have soft billing for transports, which means we will accept what their insurance allows for payment.

* Chief said purchases were made with Twp. Card for Christmas party of $85, he asked Paula how to reimburse that, she said a check. Chief will get that to her.
* **New Business –**
	+ Franklin County Township Association annual dinner will be held on Thursday, January 18, 2024, at the Hollywood Casino. Registration starts at 5:30PM and annual meeting and dinner will begin at 6:00PM. Elected officials are free of charge, and dinner for members and guests is $45 per person. To register, please send the following information for you or any guest(s) to Prairie Township at registration@prairietownship.org: full name, township affiliation, and

contact information (mailing address, phone number, and email address). Preregister and RSVP by January 10, 2024.

* Ed had a call from home owner on London Groveport Rd about ODOT trimming shrubs in the right of way only they went to far and got into their yard. Ed had Robert take a look at it and Ed call ODOT Distract 6 and they will go out and look into it.
* **Announcements-**

**Wreaths Across America** Thank you to our Rd Dept. for placing the Marker flags at the cemeteries for Wreaths Across America. Also, thank you to Carrie Cole, a Twp. Resident and veteran, for coordinating this project. It was a great success.

Carrie Cole, Coordinator reports we had enough wreaths in December to place them at not only Oak Grove but Ebenezer and Gundy Cemeteries. That was approximately 200 veterans remembered in Pleasant Twp.. This year the Wreaths Across America service to honor these veterans will be December 14, 2024. The next 14 days is a great opportunity to sponsor a wreath because your sponsorship will be matched by a sponsorship group. So today through Tuesday, January 16th, sponsor a wreath for $17 and we get a second one free. Sponsor 2 at $17 each and we get a total of 5, sponsor 5, we get 12 and sponsor 10 we get 25 wreaths. We want you to know this matching opportunity is not listed on their website when donating, please be aware of that. A total including the matching wreaths is sent to the coordinator, Carrie Cole. To date we have 63 wreaths sponsored. 137 more are needed to honor all veterans at Oak Grove, Ebenezer and Gundy Cemeteries in Pleasant Twp. If just 11 people sponsored 5 wreaths by January 16th the goal would be met and all Veterans at these 3 cemeteries would be honored. Everyone is welcome to participate in the laying of the wreaths during the ceremony. You do not have to sponsor to participate. Your help is greatly appreciated. Please use the link found on the Township website, Facebook page or Nextdoor to support Oak Grove Cemetery Wreaths Across America Project. Thank you.

* **Clerk Updates- Paula**
* Resolution 20 to transfer $10,000 from general to the medical fund.
* Resolution 21 to request advancements for Auditor for 2024
* Resolution 22 to authorize the Fiscal Officer to do temporary Appropriations.
* **Speaker Sheets-**
* **Adjourn at 7:45 p,m,**