

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

**Minutes of Franklin Township
Franklin County, Ohio**

Regular Meeting

**Held via Teleconference
COVID-19 Emergency Declaration
Ohio's Open Meeting Act**

April 2, 2020

Call Meeting to Order:

Chairman Alex called the Regular Meeting of the Franklin Township Board of Trustees to order at 6:30 p.m. on April 2, 2020, via teleconference.

Opening Prayer: Led by Trustee Fleshman

The Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Trustee Alex

Roll Call: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes.

Alex shared why this meeting is being held via a teleconference call per the guidance provided by the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Alex also welcomed Mary Rhinehart as she begins her term as Fiscal Officer at Franklin Township.

Prior Meeting Minutes:

Alex made a motion to approve the following minutes from the Special meeting held on March 16, 2020 and the Regular meeting held on March 19, 2020. Fleshman seconded the motion. With no discussion a vote was taken as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. The motion was passed

At 6:30 p.m. Alex paused the meeting briefly due to technical difficulties.

At 6:47 p.m. Alex resumed the meeting via teleconferencing.

Old Business

Resolutions:

The Fiscal Officer recommended the adoption of the following resolution from the police department:

Resolution 20-070

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves to pay Westway Body Shop for the repairs of Cruiser 309 not to exceed \$1,599.71.

Alex moved, Fleshman seconded the motion, with no discussion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

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The Fiscal Officer recommended the adoption of the following resolution from the road department:

Resolution 20-071

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio that the Board approves to enter into contract (#018-21) with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) for their 2020/2021 Winter Salt Program for a total of 150 tons of road salt.

Alex moved, Fleshman seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Alex asked the road superintendent to discuss the purpose of the contract. Road Superintendent, Jim Stevens provided a summary of the history of the contract and the benefits of collaborating with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) for annual road salt.

With no further discussion the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Fleshman moved for the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution 20-074

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio that the Board approves the Road Superintendent when deemed it necessary to work outside of the right-of-way on private property a Right-of-Entry (Memo of Understanding) would be signed by the property owner releasing the Township of any liability.

Discussion:

Fleshman discussed as to why this resolution is necessary to protect the Township from any liability upon entry of private property.

Horn said he is apprehensive of allowing the Road Department onto private property. The Road Superintendent explained why this resolution is necessary to release liability to the Township. Horn said he appreciated the clarification.

Alex seconded. With no further discussion the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

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The Fiscal Officer recommended the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution 20-072

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves bills in the amount of \$38,123.90 and payroll ending on 03/31/2020 in the amount of 126,627.19 for a total of \$164,751.09.

Alex moved, Fleshman seconded the motion. With no discussion the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

The Fiscal Officer recommended the adoption of the following resolution from the fire department:

Resolution 20-073

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves to pay Ohio CAT for repairs on Quantum, not to exceed \$9,859.62 in the Fire Department.

Alex moved, Fleshman seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Fire Chief, James Welch summarized to the Board the cost was due to the annual thorough preventive maintenance as well as front end work and new springs which were identified during the inspection on the Quantum. All services rendered are outlined on the invoice.

With no further discussion the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

New Business:

Trustee Alex explained that the Franklin County Public Health (FCPH) and Commissioner Joe Mazzola are calling for all Townships to send printed material related to COVID-19 to all of their residents. Alex continued by saying that the FCPH is willing to provide the COVID-19 information to our Township if we are willing to incur the cost of the postage to mail the information to all residents. Administrator Potts informed Alex that it would cost the Township approximately \$500.00 in postage for this mailer. Alex said he would like to make a motion, and asked for a second.

Fleshman said he would gladly support seconding a motion on this subject.

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Discussion:

Trustee Horn discussed that the Township could place the COVID-19 printed material from the FCPH inside of the Township's Spring/Summer 2020 newsletter. Placing the information inside of the newsletter would save the Township the estimated additional \$500.00 in postage, Horn explained.

Alex asked the Assistant Fiscal Officer and the Administrator what steps would be needed to ensure the information could go out into the newsletter promptly. The Administrator said the newsletter is very close to going to the printer. The Assistant Fiscal Officer, Robyn Watkins shared that if the information from the FCPH was available by early next week the newsletter could reach the printer by Wednesday. Alex agreed with Horn's suggestion and indicated that the COVID-19 information would be accessible for the newsletter insertion by next week.

Alex retracted his motion.

Trustee Fleshman informed everyone that Franklin County Auditor, Michael Stinziano, announced that the June 22, 2020 property tax payment would be extended until August 20, 2020.

Trustee Horn encouraged everyone who was listening on the teleconference to follow the COVID-19 guidelines provided by Governor DeWine and the State Health Director at their daily 2:00 p.m. televised conference. The Township is working to keep the residents up-to-date on the COVID-19 crisis and to please follow the guidance of the state officials and stay safe, Horn shared.

Fiscal Department Report:

Fiscal Officer, Mary Rhinehart thanked Franklin County Auditor Stinziano for administering her Oath of Office on Wednesday, April 1, 2020. Rhinehart continued by communicating to the board the necessity of becoming compliant with payroll related to payroll ending dates and pay dates. There are steps which will need to be taken to gain compliance and the cooperation of the department heads is greatly appreciated, said Rhinehart.

Trustee Horn welcomed Rhinehart and said he was pleased with their conversation and is looking forward to working with Rhinehart in the future.

Administrator Report:

Administrator, Mark Potts asked the Board to consider providing paid administrative leave to all staff members who are impacted by the COVID-19 crisis (documented or waiting on results) without utilizing their accrued sick leave.

Alex said he would move on such a resolution.

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Fleshman asked if there could be a time limit on how long the Township would approve paid COVID-19 administrative leave. Administrator Potts said this was not discussed initially. Fleshman said the board needs to identify two weeks, four weeks, etc., in establishing a timeline.

Alex shared that our first responders are the individuals who are out there and the testing is turning around pretty quickly. Alex recommended that language be added stating the administrative leave would be for the duration of the COVID-19 State of Emergency we are currently under, so that this is a short-term policy being adopted.

Fleshman asked Alex what the duration of the time would be. Alex replied that as soon as an impacted employee is cleared to return to work and that recovery time in most instances has been minimal. Fleshman asked if this would be four weeks and suggested the board put some type of cap or something on this. We are using taxpayer dollars, but I do believe we need to come to an agreement on how much time, said Fleshman.

Horn shared that Governor DeWine has established a recent timeline for a re-evaluation of the crisis which is thirty days. If we follow the Governor's thirty-day timeline then I would agree to this, said Horn.

Alex & Fleshman supported Horn's suggestion of implementing a paid administrative leave for employees impacted by the COVID-19 crisis with an evaluation to be completed if more than thirty days is needed per employee.

Administrator Potts recommended the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution 20-075

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio that the Board approves to create a COVID-19 Paid Administrative Leave Policy for a maximum of (30) thirty days and at that time the employee's situation will be evaluated by the Board. During the (30) thirty-day period the employee will be paid by the Township and will not use their accrued sick time.

Alex moved, Fleshman seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Administrator Potts shared with the board that there may be circumstances during the COVID-19 crisis when purchases may need to be made which will incur state sales tax. The reason for this resolution is there could be emergency situations where supplies are needed and there is no time to provide the tax-exempt certificate/status to a vendor, Potts explained.

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Administrator Potts recommended the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution 20-076

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio that the Board realizes that some purchases during the State of Emergency may incur state sales tax. Be it resolved to allow the Township to cover state sales tax for emergency purchases related to the Ohio COVID-19 State of Emergency.

Alex moved, Fleshman seconded the motion.

Discussion

Horn shared that the Franklin County Sheriff's Office is receiving donations for cleaning supplies from Lowe's Home Improvement stores. Horn asked for the Township to look into such an opportunity.

Alex explained that distilleries in the area that are no longer making product are making hand sanitizer. Administrator Potts said he will reach out to see what resources are available.

With no further discussion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Administrator Potts asked the board for approval to amend our current contract with *Change Healthcare*, the company that provides the Township's EMS billing. Potts asked Chief Welch to provide an explanation for the amendment.

Chief Welch explained that for the last 6 months at least, he has been renegotiating a new contract with Change Healthcare. We finally were able to get several other fire chiefs in the southwest area to obtain a reduced rate from Change Healthcare. The last contract was at a 6% rate and now with all of the negotiating Change Healthcare dropped to a 5% rate. This will be retroactive back to March of 2019, Welch shared. Change Healthcare will drop the rate by a half percent (1/2%) now from last March until now and anything from March 2020 until now will be at a 5% rate. The Township will receive approximately a \$3,000.00 to \$4,000.00 back check from Change Healthcare for the last year, and moving forward the Township will have a savings of approximately \$6,000.00 for the decreased rate from 6% to 5%. Welch said he reached out to another company in 2019 and the company said they could not touch the rate provided from Change Healthcare. Welch recommended to the board to accept this amended contract with Change Healthcare.

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Administrator Potts recommended the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution 20-077

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio that the Board approves Chief Welch to amend and sign for the re-negotiated contract with *Change Healthcare* regarding EMS billing. This amendment will be retroactive back to March of 2019. *Change Healthcare* will drop their current rate of 6% by a half percent (1/2%) from March 2019 through March 2020 and beginning April 2020 the rate will be at 5%. The Township will also receive approximately a \$3,000.00 to \$4,000.00 check from *Change Healthcare* for the last year. This is a savings of approximately \$6,000.00 for the decreased rate from 6% to 5%.

Alex moved, Fleshman seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Administrator Potts asked the board for approval on the cost of a mini excavator which was needed within the road department. Potts asked the Road Superintendent to provide any relevant information for a discussion.

Stevens explained that the mini excavator was rented to complete three major drainage issues within the road department.

Alex agreed to move on such expenditure and asked for a second.

Administrator Potts recommended the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution 20-078

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves to pay Franklin Equipment for rental of a mini-excavator at a cost not to exceed \$1,075.00.

Alex moved, Fleshman seconded the motion. With no discussion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Fleshman commented on allowing Stevens to explore the cost of purchasing a mini-excavator versus continuing to rent the equipment. Alex said he supports the idea of looking but reminded everyone that selective purchases only can be made during the COVID-19 crisis. We have to look at our financial situation after the crisis, said Alex.

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Fleshman made a motion to allow the Road Superintendent, Jim Stevens the ability to research the cost of a mini-excavator for the Township. Alex seconded.

Discussion

Horn asked for clarification to ensure they were not committing to purchase a mini-excavator at this time. Alex confirmed this is only to research pricing.

With no further discussion a vote was taken as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. The motion was passed.

Administrator Potts said that he had no further resolutions but had an update for the board. Potts explained that Chief Welch received a letter of resignation from Firefighter Jeffery Rosencrance. Welch read the letter of resignation effective April 16, 2020. Alex asked if Rosencrance was going to another fire department. Welch confirmed that Rosencrance accepted a captain position in the City of Ashville.

Alex made the following motion to accept the resignation of Jeff Rosencrance from the Franklin Township Fire Department effective April 16, 2020. Fleshman seconded the motion. With no discussion a vote was taken as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes.

Alex asked Potts if there were comments from the public via email or via teleconference.

With no comments from the public or further comments or discussion from the board, Alex adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Signature on file with original
Aryeh Alex, Chairman

Signature on file with original
John Fleshman, Vice-Chairman

Signature on file with original
Ralph Horn, Trustee

Signature on file with original
Mary Rhinehart, Fiscal Officer

Minutes were taken & typed by: R. Watkins
Minutes approved by Board of Trustees on 04/30/2020