

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Meeting

BEAR GRAPHICS 800-325-8094 FORM NO. 10148

Held

20

MINUTES OF ELLSWORTH TWP BOARD OF TRUSTEE'S

REGULAR MEETING

November 13, 2024

Chairman Robert Toman called the November 13, 2024, regular meeting of the Ellsworth Trustees to order at 7:00 pm. A roll call was taken to establish a quorum: Chairman Robert Toman - present, Vice Chairman William Spellman - present, Trustee Fredrick Houston – present. Also, present was Fiscal Officer James DeCenso, Assistant Fire Chief Jillian Smith, Maintenance and Road Supervisor Joseph Serensky III, and Zoning Inspector Wayne Sarna. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: Assistant Fire Chief Jillian Smith reported that there were 48 emergency calls in the Township in October of which 27 were EMS related. There were 17 transports during the month that were all provided by Ellsworth. The Department provided mutual aid 16 times and received mutual aid 15 times. Chief Smith then presented an application from Megan Duarte. She is retired from the Army, a 36 Hr. Firefighter and an EMT Basic. Ms. Duarte resides in Berlin and is currently enrolled at Stark State to be a Paramedic. Chief Smith then requested approval for hydrotesting air cylinders at a cost of \$1,598. The Fiscal Officer requested that an additional amount be added to cover incidental repairs that will most likely occur. The amount was increased to \$1,900.00. She then added a request of \$2,064.64 for Class B uniforms for all active members. These would be worn instead of their polo shirts for ceremonies. Chief Smith then presented an invoice from the Mahoning County Fire Chiefs Association in the amount of \$75 for annual dues for herself, Assistant Chief Williams and Chief Edward Smith. The Fiscal Officer then added requests for approval of \$995.00 to MCCTC for Firefighter II Class for Lillian May, \$123.80 from Eastern Medical for (4) H Cylinder refills and \$273.98 from Fairway Ford for Oil Change/Tire Rotation on Medic 45. The total requested is \$5,432.42. **Motion 2024-129:** Trustee Houston made the motion to approve the \$5,432.42 as requested. Trustee Spellman seconded the motion. The roll call vote was all in favor. **Motion 2024-130:** Trustee Houston then made the motion to approve Megan Duarte as a probationary 36 Hr. Firefighter and EMT-B member of the Department. Trustee Spellman seconded the motion. The roll call vote was all in favor.

MINUTES: Fiscal Officer James DeCenso presented the minutes from the last Regular meeting, which was held October 9, 2024, and the Special Meeting held September 30, 2024, to vote on the proposed Zoning Amendment, regarding Solar Projects, to the Township Zoning Resolution. No one in attendance requested that either of the minutes be read. **Motion 2024-131:** Trustee Houston made a motion to accept the minutes from the last Regular meeting held October 9th and the Special Meeting held September 30th. Trustee Spellman seconded the motion. The roll call vote was all in favor.

FISCAL REPORT: Fiscal Officer James DeCenso reported that October's receipts were \$45,090 and expenditures were \$74,738. Receipts included the rollback payments from the State of Ohio in the amount of \$22,980 and \$4,284 (5.1%) in bank interest. Mr. DeCenso explained that the State reimburses the Township for certain Homestead, Owner Occupied and Non-Business credits that qualified residents receive from their property taxes. Expenditures included the approved \$13,200 in payments to Altieri's Home and Garden (CVS) for the demolition work recently performed for the Township, including the Township owned structure at 10774 Akron Canfield Rd for \$8,200 and the debris cleanup at 10653 Berlin Station Rd for \$5,000. The total gross fund balances as of October 31, 2024, was \$996,111 including \$21,217 in unspent ARPA funds; \$583,339 in Fire/EMS Operations and Equipment funds and \$295,100 in Road funds. The General Fund (including Cemetery and Zoning funds) balance is \$81,948 and there is \$13,768 currently unencumbered in the General Fund. The Fiscal Officer then presented a Zoning related invoice for \$192.50 from A&A Transcription from the October 2nd ZBA Hearing. Mr. DeCenso then discussed the 2025 BWC estimate for the Township. The BWC has requested \$29,442 as the estimate and he felt that was accurate. The estimate is due by January 2, 2025. **Motion 2024-132:** Trustee Spellman then made the motion to approve the invoice to A&A Transcription and the amount to pay the BWC for the 2025 estimate. Trustee Houston seconded the motion. The roll call vote was all in favor. The Fiscal Officer then continued by presenting the 2025 Group Health insurance renewal from Medical Mutual. The overall premium rate increase is 7.8%, however the total payments will decrease in 2025 as the new Maintenance Manager is a single rate. He felt that the price comparisons reviewed last spring did not identify any significant savings and so he requested that the renewal with Medical Mutual be approved. **Motion 2024-133:** Trustee Houston then made the motion to approve the 2025 Group Health insurance Agreement with Medical

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Regular Trustee Meeting November 13, 2024, Continued

Mutual. Trustee Spellman seconded the motion. The roll call vote was all in favor. The Fiscal Officer then requested approval to appropriate \$12,500 for the 2024-2025 Snow and Ice removal Agreement with Western Reserve Landscape. The first installment of \$5,000 is due November 15th. **Motion 2024-134:** Trustee Spellman then made the motion to approve the appropriation of \$12,500 for the 2024-2025 Snow and Ice removal Agreement with WRL. Trustee Houston seconded the motion. The roll call vote was all in favor. The Fiscal Officer then discussed the hiring of a part-time Fiscal assistant. He estimated that the maximum need would be 15 hours per week and suggested a pay rate of \$18.00 per hour. Mr. DeCenso reported that he had met with Carol Crowther, who is a Township resident, and felt that she would be qualified for the position. After a brief discussion of job responsibilities, **Motion 2024-135:** Trustee Houston made the motion to hire Carol Crowther as a Fiscal Assistant at a rate of \$18.00 per hour and to appropriate \$2,000 from the General Fund thru the balance of 2024 for that position. Trustee Spellman seconded the motion. The roll call vote was all in favor. Mrs. Crowthers was in the audience and accepted the position. Mr. DeCenso then reminded the Board that the remaining ARPA funds must be encumbered by December 31st or lost. Trustee Houston suggested that the remaining funds could be used for the SRO obligations for 2025 and 2026. The Fiscal Officer will attempt to confirm the amounts with the Sheriff's office that will be due. The Fiscal Officer then suggested that the Board hold their first 2025 budget workshop prior to the next regular meeting.

ROAD and MAINTENANCE: Mr. Joseph Serensky reported that he has completed dressing the graves of the most recent burials. He also trimmed trees at Ellsworth and Geeburg cemeteries. He reported that he has had issues with the Road building boiler and has had EMS Plumbing out a few times to repair. He also ran an underground electric conduit line from the new sanitary pump station to the Gazebo for future use. Mr. Serensky reported that he has completed painting the speed bumps on West Hill. He also caught up on all of the grass cutting that needed to be done. Trustee Spellman discussed the need to purchase new safety gear and clothing for Mr. Serensky. The cost would be \$326.00 from Berlin Graphics. **Motion 2024-136:** Trustee Houston made the motion to approve \$326.00 for new safety clothing for the Road Supervisor. Trustee Spellman seconded the motion. The roll call vote was all in favor. Mr. Serensky reported that there is a temporary helper working under a community service program that is no cost to the Township.

ZONING REPORT: Zoning Inspector Wayne Sarna reported that he had issued three Zoning permits since the last meeting: the first for a single-family dwelling on Palmyra Rd, a garage addition on Duck Creek Rd and a privacy fence on Baily Rd. He also issued two agricultural exemptions: both for pole barns on Leffingwell Rd to the same property owner. Mr. Sarna reported that the trailer and accessory structure at 12082 Palmyra Rd have been removed. He will continue to monitor that property's zoning violation. He continues to review with the prosecutor's office the violation letter sent to 11830 Palmyra Rd for debris and abandoned vehicles. He is also monitoring the clean-up of 5843 Gault Rd. Mr. Sarna continued by reporting that the removal of the tree debris at 10653 has been completed by Altieri's Home and Garden as ordered by the Board at the quoted cost of \$5,000.00. A lien was filed against the property for the \$5,000.00. Mr. Sarna reported on the Board's approval of the Solar Amendment to the Township Zoning Resolution and that he will deliver the printed copy to the Mahoning County Recorder's office. The fee will be \$20.00. Mr. Sarna then reported that he is unaware of any appeals filed from the recent ZBA hearing verdict that denied a permit for a small solar project on the Sandstrom properties located on Akron Canfield Rd. Mr. Sarna reported that he attended the November 11th Zoning Commission meeting where Mr. Sandstrom applied for zoning changes to the rear of his three parcels along Akron Canfield Rd, from agricultural to business. The Mahoning County Planning Commission will hear this request on November 26th and the Zoning Commission will conduct a public hearing on it December 10th. He finished his report by advising the Board that the trailer and tents that were in violation of Zoning, on Palmyra Rd along the Jackson township border have been removed.

At that time, Chairman Toman recognized both Angela Javorsky, secretary of the Zoning Commission and Jim Tripp from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Neither had any information to report. The Chairman then recognized Larry Spencer from the audience who asked the Board members to explain why they approved, in the solar amendment, expanding the maximum height of solar panels from 10 feet to 12 feet. The Board members explained that the increased height would make it easier to maintain the ground vegetation beneath the panels. Mr. Spencer objected to that explanation and felt that it is not up to the Township to simplify any maintenance for a solar entity.

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Chairman Toman then recognized the Fiscal Officer who requested an approval by the Board for \$300.00 from the Zoning Fund for the anticipated legal notice in the local newspaper for the upcoming Zoning Commission hearing regarding the Zone change requests as identified in the Zoning Inspector's report. **Motion 2024-137:** Trustee Houston then made the motion to approve up to \$300.00 for a legal notice that will be placed for the upcoming Zoning Commission hearing. Trustee Spellman seconded the motion. The roll call vote was all in favor. Mr. DeCenso reminded the Board that the new solar amendment should be added to the Zoning Resolution that is available on the Township's website.

Chairman Toman then recognized the Zoning Inspector, who needed to add a comment to his report. Mr. Sarna advised the Board that he had been contacted by the property owner at 12351 Akron Canfield Rd to notify him that the structure there will be razed. The Board indicated that the Township should add a demolition fee to the Zoning fee schedule at the next Organizational Meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Trustee Houston discussed his continuous involvement with the County Health Department to obtain the appropriate permits for the septic and water systems at the new property located next to the cemetery. He is working to find a County approved vendor to test the well water.

Trustee Spellman advised the Board and audience that there is assistance available to neighbors in the vicinity of the house explosion. He received some information from the Fire Department regarding the individual who has worked with them. He also commented that First Energy will be setting up a meeting in the near future to discuss the upcoming upgrade to the substation on Salem Warren Rd. He also confirmed that members of both the Zoning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals recently attended zoning seminars in Canfield. He also reported that he will be meeting with the County Engineer's office regarding some road erosion that is occurring on Gault Rd.

Chairman Toman reported on the Crime Watch. He also reported that the engineer that worked up the Elk Rd drainage issue is to send him a bigger map and a hard copy of their proposed upgrades to the drainage problems in that area.

OLD BUSINESS:

No old business

NEW BUSINESS:

The next regular meeting will be Wednesday December 11, 2024, at 7:00 pm at the Town Hall. A 2025 Budget workshop will be held one hour prior to the meeting.

The Wreaths for Veterans' service will be held at the Ellsworth Cemetery on Saturday December 7th at 10:00am. Also, the Christmas tree lighting will be held the evening of December 7th.

With no further business, at 9:02 pm, **Motion 2024-127:** Trustee Spellman made a motion to adjourn. Trustee Houston seconded the motion. The roll call vote was all in favor.

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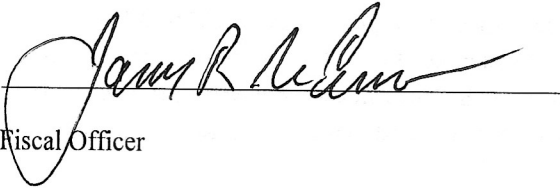
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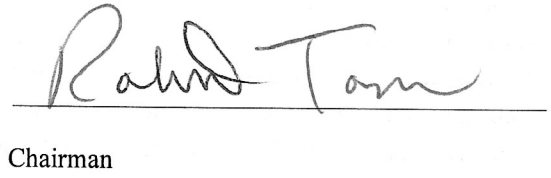
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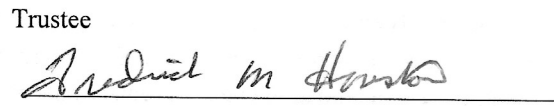
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Fiscal Officer



Chairman

Trustee


Trustee