

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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

Regular Meeting

Held at 2193 Frank Road

March 5, 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 March 5, 2020, at 2193 Frank Road.

Opening Prayer: Led by Pastor Womack, Police Chaplain.

The Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Trustee Fleshman.

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

Alex shared how the public comments/questions will be handled going forward. He explained that any audience member who wishes to comment or ask a question may sign the clip-board located on the podium at any time during the meeting until the “Speaker Card” section of the agenda is reached. Each person will be given three minutes to comment or ask a question, and at that time the board will determine if a response or comment is necessary.

Prior Meeting Minutes:

Fleshman motioned to approve the following minutes from the February 19, 2020, Special Meeting, the February 20, 2020 Special Meeting and the February 20, 2020, Regular Meeting. Horn seconded the motion. With no discussion a vote was taken as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. The motion was passed.

Old Business

Resolutions:

The Fiscal Officer recommended the adoption of the following resolution. Alex moved, Fleshman seconded the motion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Resolution 20-040

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves payroll ending on March 7, 2020, in the amount of \$149,082.00 and bills in the amount of \$135,683.92 for a total of \$284,711.92 from check number 62429 to check# 62559.

With no questions from the Board, Alex recognized Thea Walsh from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission as a guest speaker.

Thea Walsh, Director, Transportation & Infrastructure Development Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) opened by thanking everyone for allowing her to speak on the 2020-2050 Columbus Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan – Regional Transportation Priorities. Walsh provided a definition of what MORPC is and what they do as well as each portion of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Walsh shared

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the planning area, why the plan is important based on the projected increase in population in Central Ohio as well as Franklin Township. Preferences are changing and future generations will be focused on smaller homes, walkability, amenities, more mobility and green space, said Walsh.

Walsh explained the regional goals, the input, process and output of the MTP. This included strategic and project identification, regional strategies, the MTP web map, a draft of the fiscal analysis as well as next steps. Walsh asked all in attendance to go to www.morpc.org/mtp2050 for more information and there is an opportunity to make public comment on the link. The comment period ends on April 3, 2020, so Walsh encouraged everyone to take this opportunity to visit the website and share their comments on the MTP.

Alex asked if there were any comments or questions from the board. Fleshman expressed how the partnership with MORPC has been such a benefit to the Township. Horn commented that he believes an additional public transportation route going east and west is needed within the township. Currently there is only one route that runs north & south down Harrisburg Pike into Grove City. With the amount of businesses, schools, and residents near the Frank Road area a route is needed going east and west on Frank, Horn explained. Walsh said she would take these comments back with her.

With no further comments or questions from the board, Alex recognized Chief Welch to the floor for a report.

New Business

Fire Department Report:

Chief Welch explained that the Stryker CPR Machines are no longer under a service contract. Upon consulting with Stryker, they have determined it would cost the township more money to replace all of the batteries in the CPR machines versus signing up for a 1-year service contract, Welch said.

Fleshman moved for the following resolution. Horn seconded the motion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Resolution 20-041

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves Chief Welch to sign a 1-year contract with Stryker at a cost not to exceed \$2,500.00.

Welch provided an update on the progress of the 2010 Pierce fire engine which needs repairs/maintenance due to manufacturer defaults. I have asked our legal counsel to compile a letter indicating a timeline to Pierce on the repair. Currently Piece is back-logging and we cannot afford to go for an unpredicted amount of time without the engine. The timeline would hold Piece accountable, Welch said.

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With no questions from the Board, Alex recognized the Police Chief to the floor to provide a report.

Police Department Report:

Police Chief, Byron Smith informed the Board that a Township officer was found speeding through a school zone and was disciplined appropriately. Alex asked if the officer was required to pay the citation for speeding. Smith shared that law enforcement officers are exempt from paying traffic fines/citations.

Smith explained that part-time officer Joseph Howard submitted his resignation effective today (03/06/2020).

Fleshman moved for the following resolution. Horn seconded the motion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Resolution 20-042

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board accepts the resignation of part-time police officer Joseph Howard effective March 6, 2020.

Smith shared that he found an opportunity for the officers to receive ongoing professional development training through an online provider. The training is ongoing for all officers at a cost of \$1,536.75.

Fleshman moved for the following resolution. Horn seconded the motion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Resolution 20-043

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves the Police Chief to register with Police-One Academy an online training provider for the police officers to gain additional professional development and training at a cost not to exceed \$1,536.75.

Smith continued to share that a new indoor firing range has opened in neighboring Grove City. They are offering the Township Police Department an opportunity to use their firing range unlimited for \$1,600.00 a year. This is a great savings for the Township as our previous firing range was in London, Ohio and it was not always convenient for the officers to commute there, said Smith.

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Fleshman moved for the following resolution. Horn seconded the motion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Resolution 20-044

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves the Police Chief to register with Shoot Point Blank in Grove City, Ohio to provide the Township Police Department unlimited use of their indoor firing range at a price of \$1,600.00 per year.

Smith provided the following stats from the investigative position:

- Assisting Dublin/Columbus on an ongoing felony theft case involving tires/rims
- Utilizing unmarked cars to monitor numerous hotspots and drug areas in the Ransburg Avenue, Harrisburg Pike, Jackson Road and Havenwood areas. In one day, we were able to exercise the following utilizing the unmarked car:
 - 8 traffic stops
 - 11 citations
 - 3 vehicle impounds
 - 1 impound of narcotics

Currently the investigator has worked 20 cases of which 6 cases are still pending and the remaining 13 were closed, Smith said. All victims of a crime which is investigated receives a letter from the Township Investigator providing communication on the case or closure, said Smith.

Fleshman said he believes the residents will appreciate the letter/communication from the Township versus no follow-up before as it relates to misdemeanor crimes in the area. Smith said the unmarked car is going out tonight in the triangle area. Fleshman thanked Smith for his work in the Police Department. Horn added that the Franklin County Sheriff's Office has been an intricate part in assisting the Township. When Sheriff Baldwin took office he bridged the gap between the FCSO and the Township, said Fleshman.

Smith shared that an impound was made from a car leaving an alleged drug house on Jackson Road. Horn was pleased to hear this news.

Smith shared with the Board that him and Administrator Potts met with community leader Fred Reiser on his tiny home project. Smith said the first step for the Board is for the Township to reach out to our legal counsel. I recommend that we not sell our property but to lease at the cost of the property taxes, said Smith.

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Fleshman made the following motion allowing the Township Administrator and the Police Chief to communicate with our township legal team on gathering information on potentially partnering with Fred Reiser/Jordan's Crossing on all aspects of implementing a tiny home project in Franklin Township. Horn seconded the motion. With no discussion a vote was taken as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. The motion was passed.

With no questions from the Board, Alex recognized Deputy Holt from the Franklin County Sheriff's Office to the floor to provide a report.

Franklin County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) Report:

Deputy Holt shared that Deputy Carter was not available this evening and he was taking his place. Holt said he had no specific stats to share but he could confirm that car break-ins are still on the rise in the Township. The FCSO has attempted several times to arrange various operations to catch those who are stealing and breaking into cars, said Holt. Unfortunately, the weather and school closures have played a factor in the unsuccessful efforts of the operations. Success stories are coming soon, said Holt.

Alex asked if there were any questions from the Board. Horn asked what the FCSO is doing in preventative measures for the Corona (Covid-19) virus. Holt said the FCSO put out information internally to their staff today.

With no further questions from the Board, Alex recognized Road Superintendent, Jim Stevens to the floor to provide a report.

Road Department Report:

Jim Stevens, Road Superintendent said he had nothing to report.

Horn asked Steven when the Spring clean-up (tire collection) day would be? Stevens said he would look at his calendar and get back with him. Horn said that the Southwest Area Commission plans to host a clean-up day specifically targeting the Brown Road area this Spring.

With no questions from the Board, Alex recognized the Fiscal Department to the floor to provide a report.

Fiscal Department Report:

Lisa Morris, Fiscal Officer was absent so no report was provided.

Robyn Watkins, Assistant Fiscal Officer, updated the Board that the 2020 Spring/Summer newsletter is in progress. The department heads have until 5:00 pm on Monday, March 9th, 2020 to turn in their articles of submission for the newsletter, Watkins shared.

Watkins also asked the Board to consider exploring the idea of having a monthly newsletter available electronically through our Township website, electronic online subscriptions, as well as a link on Facebook. For those residents who would not have online access we would still offer the bi-yearly written newsletter available by mail, Watkins explained.

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Alex asked if there were any comments from the Board. Alex reminded all department heads to submit their newsletter contribution to the Assistant Fiscal Officer by the stated deadline. Fleshman said he would like Administrator Potts to research options for establishing an electronic newsletter.

With no other comments/questions from the Board, each Board of Trustee member was recognized individually to the floor to provide a comment or an update.

Trustee Reports:

Trustee Alex: Reminded everyone that Census Day is April 1, 2020, and encouraged everyone to participate.

Trustee Fleshman: Shared his experience in upgrading his business website with *GoDaddy* and said he believes it would be a great investment within the Township to upgrade their website as *GoDaddy* is having a special on upgrades. This goes along with the Assistant Fiscal Officer's recommendation on an electronic newsletter, and upgrade would assist in this project, said Fleshman.

Fleshman moved for the following resolution. Horn seconded the motion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Resolution 20-045

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves the Township Administrator to contact GoDaddy to build a new Township website at a cost not to exceed \$1,500.00.

Trustee Horn: nothing to report

With no further comments from the Board, Alex recognized Administrator Potts to the floor to provide a report.

Administrator Report:

Administrator Potts shared that he obtained a grant from the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (SWACO) for the Township to establish an internal recycling program including the purchase of recycling containers. The Township will be reimbursed \$1,767.13 of the cost of the containers, shared Potts.

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Fleshman moved for the following resolution. Horn seconded the motion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Resolution 20-046

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves the Township Administrator to purchase recycling containers from Recycle Away at a cost not to exceed \$2,356.17.

Potts shared that the Franklin County Metro Parks is asking for a letter of support from Franklin Township for their attempt at receiving the Clean Ohio Space Conservation Fund grant to acquire property in Franklin County (including Franklin Township). The grant would allow the Franklin County Metro Parks to obtain property in the South Hilltop area, approximately 40 acres, open space located in Franklin Township.

Alex made the following motion allowing the Township Administrator to compose a letter of support to the Franklin County Metro Parks in their attempt to obtain the Clean Ohio Space Conservation Fund grant. Horn seconded the motion. With no discussion a vote was taken as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. The motion was passed.

Potts continued by updating that Board on the upcoming Local Government Spring Conference on April 7th – 9th, 2020 at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Columbus. In the past the Fiscal Officer and the Assistant Fiscal Officer attended at a cost of \$200.00 each. Newly elected officials are subject to a fee of \$300.00 due to extra sessions specifically for them, said Potts. Potts also said that he would like to attend and he invited any or all members of the Board to attend as well. None of the trustees committed to attend the event.

Fleshman moved for the following resolution. Horn seconded the motion, the roll was called for its adoption and the vote was as follows: Horn, yes; Alex, yes; Fleshman, yes. Resolution passed.

Resolution 20-047

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves the Township Administrator to register the Fiscal Officer-Elect, Mary Rhinehart, the Assistant Fiscal Officer, Robyn Watkins and himself to the Local Government Spring Conference at the Hyatt Regency on April 7th – 9th of 2020 at a cost not to exceed \$900.00.

With no comments from the Board, Alex reminded the audience that if they have a comment or a question this is the time to ensure their name is on the speaker-card sheet. Alex reviewed the speaker card sheet and welcomed Robbyne Chaney to the floor for a comment/question.

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Speaker Cards:

Robbyne Chaney, audience member asked if the Township community garden participants would have access to water as they begin their Spring planting. The Fire Chief confirmed that water will be accessible.

Chaney asked the Board who is going to live in these purposed tiny houses? Why does Franklin Township need to fix the City of Columbus' homeless problem? Why is the Township working with Fred Reiser and his project when his business is not in the Township? The Township already donated money to Fred Reiser's initiative and used our Township equipment to remove trash in the City of Columbus. The homeless are Reiser's problem not Franklin Township, said Chaney.

Fleshman stated that the tiny home project is very successful in Denver and Fred Reiser/Jordan's Crossing assists with the homeless and drug intervention in the entire community. Fleshman encouraged Chaney to join him at Jordan's Crossing for a community feeding session to see that not all who come to eat are homeless, many are just down on hard times, Fleshman said.

Horn said his understanding is the tiny homes project would not just be exclusive to the homeless and those in recovery.

With no further comment from the Board, Alex welcomed Linda Mercer to the floor for a comment/question.

Linda Mercer, audience member asked if anyone knew the name of the family on Marsdale who was impacted by the house fire. Mercer said her block watch members are interested in assisting the family but are unable to reach them. Chief Welch said he would review the reports and see if he is able to find a contact name and number. Welch said he would get back with Mercer on his findings.

With no comment from the Board, Alex welcomed Mike Blevins to the floor for a comment/question.

Mike Blevins, audience member said that he attended the first informational meeting for the fire levy on Tuesday, February 25, here at Frank Road and Trustee Fleshman held up a map showing the Township including Valleyview and stated everyone would pay their fair share if the levy passed including Valleyview. There was a second informational fire levy meeting on Tuesday, March 3rd, where I was told that both Fleshman and Horn admitted that they were not aware that Valleyview would be impacted by the fire levy if it should pass. My question is how is it possible to have two different messages be provided at two different meetings? Both of you should have read up on the levy which you voted to place on the ballot, said Blevins?

Blevins asked the Board why bills and payroll are no longer listed on the meeting agenda.

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Blevins said that earlier during the meeting the board said that they would choose whether to answer or comment on the public's questions, this makes it hard for the public to even ask a question, said Blevins. There was a guy in Germany that tried to do this same exact thing, called censorship and this board is trying to censor the people. Everyone in this audience came here on their own fruition, of their own time, and the rest of you collect a salary to be here. I come because I care and because I want information and you're trying to censor my ability to ask questions and get answers. This is the first I knew about this new Speaker Card process so I will be more prepared the next time. I will sit down and wait for an answer, Blevins said.

Alex responded by saying to Blevins his comments comparing him to Hitler were offensive and that as a Jewish man the comments were greatly offensive to him personally. Blevins said he had no idea of Alex's religious status. Alex said his family had to flee Europe when the Nazis invaded and to be compared to Hitler is greatly offensive.

With no further comment or discussion. Alex adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

Signature on file
Aryeh Alex, Chairman

Signature on file
John Fleshman, Vice-Chairman

Signature on file
Ralph Horn, Trustee

Signature on file
Lisa Morris, Fiscal Officer
Robyn Watkins, Assistant Fiscal Officer

Minutes were taken & typed by: R. Watkins
Minutes approved by Board of Trustees on 03/19/2020