

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Trustees of Sycamore Township Sycamore Township, Hamilton County, Ohio

October 19, 2021

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. by Mr. James.

Present for the meeting were Chairman James, Vice Chairman LaBarbara, Trustee Weidman, Law Director Desai, Fiscal Officer Porter, Administrator Warrick, Superintendent / Assistant Administrator Kellums, Planning & Zoning Administrator Miller, Fire Chief Penny and Lt. Tarr from the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office.

The invocation from All Saints Church was read by Chief Penny.

Pledge to the Flag.

Approval of the October 5, 2021 Trustees Meeting Minutes

The October 5, 2021 Trustees Meeting minutes were presented for approval. Mr. Weidman made a motion, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, to accept them.
Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye.

Public Comments

Ms. Tracy Hughes, of 4705 Duneden Avenue, addressed the board in regard to a neighborhood fund that Capital Investment Group had agreed to finance. She said she has been working with a lawyer for 22 months to determine how to use the money equitably. She stated they finally came to an agreement and that agreement has been with Capital Investments for approval for two weeks with no response. She requested the Trustees pressure Capital Investment Group to respond.

Sheriff Patrol Report

Lt. Tarr reported stated there is an uptick in vehicle thefts and thefts from vehicles in Hamilton County and encouraged people to lock their vehicles and leave valuables out of plain sight.

Mr. James asked if Lt. Tarr had been in touch with the Highpoint resident who spoke at the last meeting about issues in that neighborhood.

Lt. Tarr responded yes saying he has been emailing with her and will be speaking with her on Thursday.

EMS/Fire Report

Station Update

Chief Penny reported the Fire Department has been busy with four major fires occurring in the last week and a half.

Chief Penny reported the installation of the alarm system in Station 92 is almost completed and gave an update on the status of building improvements to Station 93. He stated Lt. Tim Feichtner has been doing a great job contacting contractors and making sure they follow through.

Mr. LaBarbara stated there have been comments on social media about the Fire Department being understaffed and asked Chief Penny if a meeting could be setup to address this issue.

Chief Penny answered a meeting could be scheduled with the head of the Union. He then explained how the lack of part-time help has caused issues with staffing.

Mr. Weidman commented the lack of part-time firefighters is a problem everywhere.

Chief Penny agreed saying there are only two part-timers left and the staffing issue needs to be addressed.

Mr. James stated he has been in touch with the union president about the staffing issues and the union is pushing to get that ladder truck staffed. He asked if there have been any safety concerns.

Chief Penny described the difficulties due to staffing levels at recent fire incidents.

Mr. James said the Board should meet next month to discuss Fire Department staffing. He stated if there is an immediate safety concern, Chief Penny should let the Board know.

Chief Penny stated there are safety concerns for Fire Department personnel and our residents. He said he understands the situation and why the Township isn't jumping into this and went on to discuss what happened in 2012 when the State pulled funding from the Township.

Resolution – Approving and Authorizing a Contract for the Sycamore Township Fire Department Station #93 Vehicle Exhaust Removal System

Mr. Warrick reported one bid was submitted for the bid opening for the Sycamore Township Fire Department Station #93 Vehicle Exhaust Removal System from the MagneGrip Group in the amount of \$67,002.00.

The resolution “Approving and Authorizing a Contract for the Sycamore Township fire Department Station #93 Vehicle Exhaust Removal System and Dispensing with a Second Reading” was presented by Mr. Warrick. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Weidman, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, dispensing with a second reading.

Mr. James asked if more than one bid had been expected and if this bid is within bounds.

Mr. Warrick answered the bid is under the amount projected and Chief Penny added the bid meets all the specifications.

Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye.
Resolution 2021-084 passed this 19th day of October, 2021.

Mr. James asked Lt. Tarr if there is a date for the Neighborhood Watch Program in the north section of the Township.

Lt. Tarr answered Deputy Bittermann will be leading that and it will resume in the beginning of November. He said the specific date is to be determined.

Roads, Maintenance & Recreation Report

Mr. Kellums reported the Maintenance Department is getting ready to winterize parks as there are only a couple more shelter rentals left this season.

Mr. Kellums stated in response to a discussion at the last meeting about an odor control proposal by MSD for Owlwoods Lane, he reached out to MSD requesting a representative present information and answer questions at a future Trustees Meeting. He stated MSD is working on accommodating that request.

Resolution – Authorizing Submittal of an OPWC Grant Application and Execution of Contracts as Required

Mr. Kellums reported he has a resolution for the Board’s consideration to authorize submittal of an application for an OPWC grant to replace a culvert on Gideon Lane.

The resolution “Authorizing Tracy Kellums, Assistant Township Administrator / Maintenance Superintendent, to Prepare and Submit an Application to Participate in the Ohio Public Works Commission State Capital Improvement and / or Local Transportation Improvement Program(s) and to Execute Contracts as Required” was presented by Mr. Kellums. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Weidman, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, dispensing with a second reading.

Mr. James commented as a general practice, the resolutions should not list a specific person by name when giving authority to do something. He stated it should only list the person’s title.

Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye.
Resolution 2021-085 passed this 19th day of October, 2021.

Mr. James asked if any bathroom facilities will be left open and functional at the parks in the winter.

Mr. Kellums answered only the one in the back by the maintenance building because it is heated.

Mr. James said if there is any way to find the funding to keep restrooms open, even if it is just port-o-lets, we should.

Mr. Kellums answered there are port-o-lets in all parks for the winter.

Mr. James asked if the Kugler Mill Road Project is falling further behind.

Mr. Kellums answered it is not falling further behind stating the flat work has been completed and they have begun doing dirt work. He reported the reclamation machine should be in use for this project at the beginning of November.

Mr. Miller noted the developer for the new Kugler Mill Road residential development was able to get all their taps in prior to paving of the road.

Mr. LaBarbara said a couple residents asked him if we could get temporary speed bumps as they have in Amberley Village.

Mr. Kellums stated the Township does not usually put speed bumps in noting there have been numerous studies that cars actually increase speed in between the speed bumps, they are very loud, not good for safety services vehicles or motorcycles. He noted the temporary ones are rough because the pavement must be drilled, and the speed bump attached and then they must be removed. Mr. Kellums stated water can get under the temporary speed bumps and cause freeze and thaw issues. He concluded it would be the Trustees' decision whether or not to install those, but he would not recommend it.

Mr. James said a resident suggested to him putting a stop sign at the bridge on the Charteroak side of Kugler Mill Road to help reduce speeding.

Mr. Kellums answered it is illegal to use a stop sign as speed control.

Mr. James said it would be put at Charteroak at the three-way intersection.

Mr. Kellums answered Hamilton County would have to conduct a study to determine if a stop sign is warranted there, but a stop sign cannot be added just because of speed.

Mr. James stated he is anticipating there will be a cross walk on the other side of the bridge once the development is finished and there is a walking path alongside the highway.

Mr. Kellums said that is something else the County will have to approve noting the County is very particular about crosswalk locations.

Mr. LaBarbara asked about 40 MPH speed limit signs on Montgomery Road.

Mr. Miller answered we are looking into 40 MPH speed limit signs south bound on Montgomery Road near Kennedy Lane.

Mr. Kellums noted there are no 40 MPH speed limit signs until you get to the condos past Glenover. He said this is up to ODOT noting he has contacted them and is awaiting an answer.

Mr. James said he spoke to Mr. Kellums about a resident's concerns about Miami intersection with Montgomery Road and Mr. Kellums was to reach out to ODOT about that as well.

Mr. Kellums discussed the intersection and the changes it has gone through over the years and said he sent the concerns to ODOT.

Planning & Zoning Report

Mr. Miller reported he had four nuisance resolutions for the Board's consideration. He stated there are two possible addresses for the first property, 8285 Fields Ertel Road, and 12185 Snider Road, which is a tall grass and weed violation. He said violation notices were sent and the owner responded initially but has not cut the grass.

Mr. Weidman noted it is a repeat offender.

Resolution – 8285 Fields Ertel Road Nuisance Property (AKA 12185 Snider Road)

The resolution “Providing for and Authorizing Removal of Vegetation, Garbage, Refuse and Other Debris and Declaring a Nuisance for the Property Located at 8285 Fields Ertel Road, Sycamore Township, OH 45249 AKA 12185 Snider Road, Sycamore Township, OH 45249” was presented by Mr. Miller. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Weidman, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, dispensing with a second reading. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye. Resolution 2021-086 passed this 19th day of October, 2021.

Mr. Miller reported the next three resolutions will be presented together. He said all three properties are owned by the same owner who is a repeat offender and all three properties have been in violation for junk, trash, and other debris. He said the properties have been previously discussed with the Board and it was decided to complete the initial cleanup so that proper evidence could be gathered to make a better determination on the status of the junk vehicles. Mr. Miller stated the Trustees each have a spreadsheet at their place which outlines the findings for all 15 of these junk vehicles. He noted the property owner is unresponsive and adversarial.

Resolution – 8308 St. Clair Avenue Junk Vehicles

The Resolution “Providing for the Removal of Junk Vehicles in Sycamore Township, Hamilton County and the Proper Disposal, Storage or Impoundment of Motor Vehicles by Implementing the Procedures Set Forth in Sycamore Township Resolution 2012-14, and Sections §§ 505.173, 505.85, and 505.871 of the Ohio Revised Code” was presented by Mr. Miller. A motion was made by Mr. Weidman, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara to approve the resolution dispensing with a second reading. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye. Resolution 2021-087 passed this 19th day of October, 2021.

Mr. Miller showed a 2020 aerial photo from CAGIS of 3684 E. Galbraith Road noting some of the vehicles have been parked there since before 2011. He said some of them have not moved and have been sitting on wood stumps.

Mr. James noted for the record this has been discussed many times previously.

Mr. Miller said yes, the Board has discussed all three of these properties, we are just now ready to pursue the junk vehicles.

Resolution – 3684 E. Galbraith Road Junk Vehicles

The Resolution “Providing for the Removal of Junk Vehicles in Sycamore Township, Hamilton County and the Proper Disposal, Storage or Impoundment of Motor Vehicles by Implementing the Procedures Set Forth in Sycamore Township Resolution 2012-14, and Sections §§ 505.173, 505.85, and 505.871 of the Ohio Revised Code” was presented by Mr. Miller. A motion was made by Mr. Weidman, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara to approve the resolution dispensing with a second reading. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye. Resolution 2021-088 passed this 19th day of October, 2021.

Mr. Miller stated there were two vehicles on 3684 E. Galbraith Road. He said the next resolution is for 3700 E. Galbraith Road which has 11 junk vehicles on site. He displayed an aerial photo of that property noting the illegal storage lot in the back.

Resolution – 3700 E. Galbraith Road Junk Vehicles

The Resolution “Providing for the Removal of Junk Vehicles in Sycamore Township, Hamilton County and the Proper Disposal, Storage or Impoundment of Motor Vehicles by Implementing the Procedures Set Forth in Sycamore Township Resolution 2012-14, and Sections §§ 505.173, 505.85, and 505.871 of the Ohio Revised Code” was presented by Mr. Miller. A motion was made by Mr. Weidman, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara to approve the resolution. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye.

Resolution 2021-089 passed this 19th day of October, 2021.

Mr. Miller reported due to quorum issues, the Zoning Commission is meeting this Thursday, October 21st at 6:00 p.m. instead of on the original date of October 12th. He stated the new business is a Major Adjustment to a PUD for the Villas of Kenwood which is the new development on Kugler Mill Road. Mr. Miller reported they have proposed a modification to the side yard setback to allow for a wider footprint of new home construction. Mr. Miller reported the Zoning Commission will also continue their discussion of the Land Use Plan and Text Amendments to the Zoning Resolution.

Mr. James asked for confirmation that the proposed change to the side yard setbacks is not for all the lots.

Mr. Miller answered the proposed change is for lots six through 11, and lot 11 is closest to the highway.

Mr. James asked if their goal is to build larger, more valuable residences there.

Mr. Miller noted the development is on its third home builder and the original site design does not accommodate the housing product this home builder had so they requested this modification to provide more options on site. He said ideally, they want a wider ranch home.

Law Director Report

Mr. Desai stated he had nothing to report.

Administrator Report

Property Insurance

Mr. Warrick reported it is the time of year for the Township to renew property insurance. He stated he formed a committee with staff members who met with brokers and reviewed quotes.

Mr. Warrick stated all three of the property insurance options have issues. He stated the Tokio Marine is our current carrier and their quote, in the amount of \$65,000.00, does not include the sheriff vehicles or cyber coverage. He said that agent obtained an outside quote for cyber coverage, which brings it up to \$77,000.00, but this still does not include the police cars.

Mr. Warrick reported the second option is property insurance through OTARMA, which is a pool of 1,055 of the 1,308 townships in Ohio. He stated OTARMA offers cyber coverage and will cover the police cars with a quote of \$102,000.00. Mr. Warrick pointed out the Township could also receive \$5,500.00 in the form of a dividend at the end of the year if the pool performs well.

Mr. Warrick reported the third option was from a broker called USI for Zurich Insurance Group. He said at first, Zurich also had a problem with covering the police cars. He said they will offer cyber insurance but asked a lot of questions about lawsuits. He stated he does not have Zurich's quote in hand tonight, but they indicated they may be \$20,000 less than OTARMA.

Mr. Warrick stated we do want to see the Zurich quote because, if it is less than OTARMA, that would be what the committee would suggest to the Board. He gave the Board two options: call a special meeting next week after the Zurich quote is received or consider a resolution tonight authorizing the Township Administrator to approve a contract with either company not to exceed the amount of the OTARMA quote.

The Resolution "Authorizing the Township Administrator to Approve a Contract for Property and Casualty Insurance and Dispensing with a Second Reading" was read in its entirety by Mr. Warrick. A motion was made by Mr. Weidman, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, to approve the resolution.

Mr. James asked if the Zurich quote will include cyber coverage and police cars.

Mr. Warrick answered yes.

Mr. James commented the resolution does not say Mr., Warrick should choose the lowest premium and asked Mr. Desai if he had any concerns with the resolution.

Mr. Desai said he spoke with Mr. Warrick about this, and they are both good policies. He stated the Zurich product is tailored to local governments and has some other bells and whistles. Mr. Desai stated with the possible dividend, the quotes would be within \$15,000.00 of each other. He noted since the policies are not exactly the same, the Township is not obligated to accept the lowest.

Mr. Weidman pointed out that the Township may not get the dividend from OTARMA that Mr. Warrick mentioned and asked if the pool goes over if the Township would be obligated to cover the overage.

Mr. Warrick answered no stating the pool is very healthy.

Mr. James asked if the Township had been with OTARMA previously.

Mr. Weidman answered no.

Mr. LaBarbara asked how much we pay currently for property insurance.

Mr. Warrick answered \$61,000.00.

Mr. LaBarbara asked if the current environment with lawsuits was affecting this at all.

Mr. Warrick answered they did have concerns about one lawsuit but that is all built into the quotes. He pointed out he will not make this decision unilaterally, the whole committee will look at it and if the committee can't agree, he will call a special meeting.

Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye.
Resolution 2021-090 passed this 19th day of October, 2021.

September Financial Reports

Mr. Warrick reported at nine months, or 75 percent, into the year, the Township is above budget in revenue and will end the year over budget in revenue. He noted the trend is good on spending saying the only department we have to watch carefully is the Fire Department whose spending is over 75 percent of their budget for the year. He said we may have to appropriate more funds for that department.

Mr. James asked Mr. Warrick to clarify that by over budget on revenue he means that the Township got more money in than expected.

Mr. Warrick answered that is correct.

Purchase Orders Over \$5,000.00

Mr. Warrick presented the following purchase order for approval:

684-2021	Tristate Preventative Health	Firefighter Physicals	\$15,861.00
690-2021	Barrett Paving	Sycamore Road Final	\$46,000.42
692-2021	OneTouchPoint	Fall & Winter Newsletters	\$6,000.00
693-2021	Ford Development	Larchview GCWW	\$198,976.59

Mr. Weidman made a motion to approve the request. Mr. LaBarbara seconded the motion. Mr. James noted the purchase order numbers for the record.

Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye.

Mr. Kellums pointed out this is the final purchase order for the Sycamore Road Project which came in \$500,000.00 under budget.

Fiscal Officer Report

Pay Bills and Read Receipts

The receipts in the amount of \$37,021.01 and disbursements in the amount of \$728,702.52 for October 19, 2021 were read by Mr. Porter and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

I hereby certify that the money for payment of these bills is in the fund provided and duly and properly appropriated.

Signed: 
Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer

A motion to approve was made by Mr. Weidman, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara.
Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: LaBarbara: Aye; James: Aye; Weidman: Aye

Trustee Comments

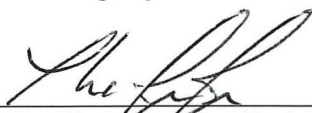
Mr. James reported the Hamilton County Board of Elections is still in need of paid poll workers. Mr. James stated it is election silly season and then read a statement sharing his thoughts about the election season as a lesson for public servants about role models, good and bad.

Announcement Changes


Mr. James stated as Mr. Miller already stated, the Zoning Commission Meeting will be held on a new date Thursday, October 21st and will include discussion about the Land Use Plan and Zoning Resolution Text Amendments. He stated those are important topics and encouraged people to attend. Mr. James pointed out the November 2nd Trustees Meeting has been canceled due to election day. He then referred people to the website calendar for other events.

A motion was made by Mr. Weidman, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: Mr. LaBarbara: Aye; Mr. James: Aye; Mr. Weidman: Aye.

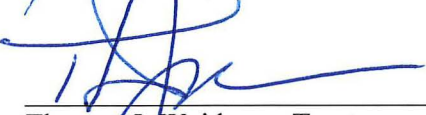
The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.



Thomas C. James, Jr., Chairman



Jim LaBarbara, Vice Chairman



Thomas J. Weidman, Trustee



Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer
10/19/2021