

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Minutes of the Trustees of Sycamore Township Meeting
Sycamore Township, Hamilton County, Ohio
February 13, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. Present for the meeting were President Connor, Vice President Weidman, Trustee LaBarbara, Fiscal Officer Porter, Law Director Miller, Administrator Bickford, Zoning Administrator Holbert, Parks/Recreation Director McKeown, Fire Chief Penny and Lt. Smith from the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office. Superintendent/Assistant Administrator Kellums was excused.

Cincinnati Bell Presentation Small Cell Project

Mr. Ted Heckmann from Cincinnati Bell presented information on a proposed small cell tower that they are requesting permission to install on Ronald Reagan Drive. It would be located on the south side of the road in the existing sidewalk and in line with the existing street lights. The proposed height is approximately 35 feet. The purpose of the tower is to fill in gaps in cellular coverage.

Mr. Weidman asked if they would consider placing it on top of the wall in the pocket park. Mr. Heckmann stated they could look into that.

The Board agreed to take the request under advisement while Cincinnati Bell looked into the alternative location.

Fire Department Update

Chief Penny reported that Horton Ambulance had submitted their scope of work. Mr. Miller stated there were questions that he has on the warranty since this was not a completely new squad that were answered by Horton. The cost of the refurbishment will be \$138,322 after the insurance claim is applied. The Chief stated that this will effectively be a new squad as the most common wear and tear parts are being replaced.

The Chief reported that Ross McClellan the newly hired firefighter will be sworn in at the Thursday meeting.

Mr. LaBarbara stated that the department received a nice letter from a family whose son was helped out by the Fire Department.

Sheriff Department Update

Lt. Smith reported on a bank robbery that occurred in Mt. Healthy last week. The car that was used was found in the Township and the investigation is ongoing.

Lt. Smith also reported that Deputy Johnathon Hoover who runs a District Three County car is deploying with the Navy for one year and if anyone is interested in sending him care packages they can work with Lt. Smith.

Parks and Recreation Update

Mr. McKeown reported that \$28,000 was offered to Dave Mason and Steve Cropper to perform at the festival in Sycamore and they countered that they would only accept \$30,000. Mr. McKeown noted that the casinos are driving up the prices. Mr. Weidman stated that it's up to our fund raising efforts to make sure we can accommodate the higher cost.

Mr. Weidman made a motion, seconded by Mr. Connor, to agree to \$30,000 for Dave Mason and Steve Cropper for the Festival in Sycamore. All voted yes.

Mr. McKeown reported that the restoration of Schuler park is underway for the 2018 season and work on McDaniel Park will follow soon once the weather cooperates. He also noted that permits for field usage is at an all-time high for the upcoming season.

Mr. LaBarbara noted that Bill Mees recently retired from coaching Indian Hill Boys soccer and asked if a proclamation was in order. Mr. Bickford will contact Mr. Mees to schedule a time to honor his achievement.

Mr. McKeown reported that Landmark Christian will be at the Thursday meeting to present a donation to the Trustees to be used for equipment at Schuler Park.

Maintenance Update

Mr. Bickford noted that the Township has plenty of salt for any remaining snow events this year.

Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance – Get Efficient

Mr. Bickford presented information on the Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance – Get Efficient Program. If the Township were to partner with the GCEA, the free program would benefit the Township and its residents by helping homeowners save on their utility bills by investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. The advantage of the program is that it will allow homeowners to tap into long term, low interest unsecured financing. The program is funded for the next two years as part of the Duke Energy utility rate settlement. The only requirement of the Township is that we use our various communication platforms to notify residents about the program. The GCEA handles all aspects of the program.

Mr. Weidman made a motion, seconded by Mr. Connor, to participate in the program, subject to Mr. Miller's review. All voted yes.

Employee Handbook

Mr. Bickford reported that Clemons Nelson and Doug Duckett Consulting have submitted qualified proposals to update the employee handbook. Both firms are quoting a price of approximately \$5,000 on a time and materials basis. Mr. Bickford advised the Board that both firms are highly qualified and would do an excellent job. Should the Board desire an off the shelf handbook, then Clemons Nelson would be the better suited choice and if the Board desired a modification of the existing handbook, then Doug Duckett would be better equipped to do that. Mr. Weidman stated he felt we have a good base for the handbook and we should modify what we have.

Mr. Weidman made a motion, seconded by Mr. Connor, to hire Doug Duckett. There was discussion on the motion. Mr. LaBarbara requested that the book receive an outside review for some of the sections. Mr. Weidman stated that was the purpose of having Mr. Duckett look at the book. Mr. Bickford stated that is what Mr. Duckett would do. He is well versed in the current language of human resources and will make sure the required language and terms are in there. He also stated that the Trustees will have the ability to add and subtract things in the book so that they are catered to Sycamore Township. All voted yes.

Mr. Bickford stated that the Board would be able to have discussions on the book while it was being worked on before the final product is released.

Mr. LaBarbara stated that there should be discussion on employee evaluations for transparency. He noted several examples of what other organizations do ranging from ranking scales to reports as well as using outside firms. He urged the Board to consider this for the future. He noted that reviews are helpful in praising and motivating employees as well as protecting the Township from problem employees.

Mr. Miller stated that this is something Mr. Duckett can consult the Board on and put it in the document.

Mr. Connor asked if there was any legal aspects to placing something in a personnel file and how much of its contents are a public record and if it is possible to separate actions. Mr. Miller stated that when something is in a personnel file, it is a public record. He also noted that some union contracts follow a specific schedule for what can be in the file and how long it can be in there.

Mr. Bickford stated that he has already spoken to Mr. Duckett about performance reviews and there are several ideas that he has which will be presented to the Board for their consideration.

Mr. Weidman noted that several employees who were dismissed in the past had several items in their personnel file. He also noted that he would put this maintenance staff up against any other in the area.

Mr. Bickford recommended to the Board that they wait until Mr. Duckett comes back with recommendations at which point the Board may discuss and decide what works for them at that time.

Upcoming Public Hearings

Mr. Bickford reported that the applicant in the Mercedes Benz case is requesting a continuance to March 15th at 6:00 p.m. He also advised the Board that the Tax Incentive Review Counsel meeting will take place at 6:45 p.m. on March 15th. Mr. Miller stated it would be better to hold the Tax incentive review meeting at 6:00 p.m. in case the Mercedes public hearing went over time. Mr. Bickford advised the Board that the Community Improvement Corporation meeting will be moved to April 5th.

Mr. Bickford noted that Mr. Holbert would be presenting the Mercedes Benz parking lot drawings to the Board so they are familiar with the case prior to the public hearing on March 15. He also noted that the Zoning Commission did recommend approval of the case.

Mr. Holbert advised the Board on some of the communications that he has received on the project including discussion from the Wellington Glen HOA president who was in favor of the project.

Purchase Orders Over \$2,500.00

Mr. Bickford presented the following purchase orders for approval:

BPS Heating & Cooling	Furnace for 4713 Orchard Lane	\$2,800.00
Blanket Vendor	Fire Building Costs	\$5,000.00

A motion was made by Mr. Weidman, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, to approve these requests.
Vote: All Aye

Mr. Miller indicated that the closing for the Godar property is slated for later in the week.

Schedule

The schedule of upcoming events was read by Mr. Connor.

A motion to enter into **Executive Session to discuss Property Acquisition / Disposition, Personnel Employment, Personnel Compensation and collective Bargaining** was made by Trustee Weidman and seconded by Trustee LaBarbara.

Mr. Porter called the roll. Vote: Weidman: Aye; Bishop: Aye; Connor: Aye.

End regular session: 10:09 a.m.

Begin Executive Session: 10:12 a.m.

End Executive Session: 10:43 a.m.

Back in regular session: 10:44 a.m.

Mr. Bickford suggested that the Board consider tearing down the former Taco Bell building while leaving the billboard intact until future development is ready. Mr. Weidman suggested that the billboard be removed as well to maximize the potential of future tax increment financing. Mr. Miller stated that the billboard company is responsible for removing the billboard. He also stated that he would look into the value of the billboard from a land value standpoint. Mr. Weidman made a motion to raze the existing Taco Bell structure, seconded by Mr. Connor. All voted yes.

The resolution "Authorizing and Directing a Transfer of Funds for Economic Development Purposes to Sycamore Township CIC, Inc., the Designated Community Improvement Corporation of Sycamore Township" was read. A motion was made by Mr. Weidman, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, dispensing with the second reading. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye.

Resolution No. 2018-08 approved this 13th day of February, 2018.

Mr. Weidman made a motion to hire Ernie McFarlin as the Planning and Zoning Inspector, seconded by Mr. Connor. All voted yes.

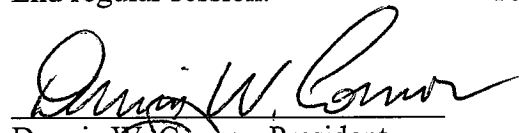
Mr. Weidman made a motion to create a Park Supervisor position to keep up with park maintenance and improvements. The position requires the employee to have a pesticide license as regulated by the State of Ohio. The motion was seconded by Mr. Connor. All voted yes.

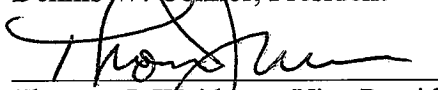
Mr. Weidman made a motion to hire two additional laborers for the Maintenance Department, one to replace Ernie McFarlin and one to enable the Township to bring contracted services back in house. The motion was seconded by Mr. Connor. All voted yes.

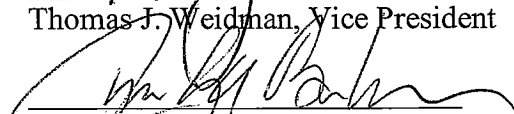
Mr. Miller stated that the Township was required to file the utility aggregation information with the Public Utilities Commission.


A motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Weidman and seconded by Trustee LaBarbara. Vote: All Aye.

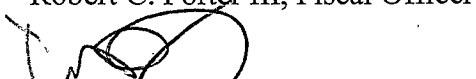
End regular session: 10:50 a.m.


Dennis W. Connor, President


Thomas J. Weidman, Vice President


Jim LaBarbara, Trustee


Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer


Greg Bickford, Administrator
Workshop Minutes 02/13/2018