

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Minutes of the Trustees of Sycamore Township Meeting
Sycamore Township, Hamilton County, Ohio
March 17, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. Present for the meeting were Chairman LaBarbara, Vice Chairman James, Fiscal Officer Porter, Administrator Warrick, Superintendent/Assistant Administrator Kellums, Fire Chief Penny, Lt. Smith from the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, Assistant Fire Chief Cooper and Beth Gunderson. Law Director Desai and Planning & Zoning Director Miller were absent.

Trustee Weidman called into the meeting by phone and was able to listen and comment but was not eligible to vote.

Mr. LaBarbara reviewed the precautions being taken to hold the meeting in light of the Coronavirus public health crisis, noting each person in the room had undergone a health screening and members of the public were encouraged to watch the live stream of the meeting instead of attending in person.

Mr. LaBarbara made a motion to amend and shorten the agenda, seconded by Mr. James.

Mr. Warrick listed the agenda items staff had determined must be considered at this meeting before the discussion of COVID-19. He noted all other agenda items will be pushed to a later date.

Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye.

Approval of March 3, 2020 Trustee Workshop Minutes

The March 3, 2020 Trustee Workshop Minutes were presented for approval. Mr. LaBarbara made a motion, seconded by Mr. James, to accept them. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: James: Aye; LaBarbara: Aye; Weidman: Abstain

Approval of March 5, 2020 Trustees Meeting Minutes

The March 5, 2020 Trustee Meeting Minutes were presented for approval. Mr. LaBarbara made a motion, seconded by Mr. James, to accept them. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: James: Aye; LaBarbara: Aye; Weidman: Abstain

The receipts, in the amount of \$42,491.84, and disbursements, in the amount of \$70,056.05, for March 17, 2020 were read by the Fiscal Officer 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: /s/ Robert C. Porter, III
Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer

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

Mr. Warrick reported the checks will be electronically signed noting Mr. Porter will sign the check register. He said there are five manual checks for the CIC grants that must be signed.

ROADS, MAINTENANCE & RECREATION ITEMS

Purchase Order Permanent Easements for the Kugler Mill Road Project

Mr. Kellums reported he had a blanket purchase order for the permanent easements for the Kugler Mill Road project for the Board's approval.

Blanket Vendor	Permanent Easements Kugler Mill Road	\$36,000.00
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Mr. James made a motion, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, to approve the purchase order. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: James: Aye; LaBarbara: Aye; Weidman: Abstain

COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Mr. LaBarbara reported he had attended a meeting of the Hamilton County Public Health Advisory Council the week before. He noted, in response to concerns by residents voiced at a recent public meeting, he asked Dr. Jennifer Mooney, Assistant Health Commissioner, about health concerns having to do with 5G small site cell towers. He said Dr. Mooney assured him there are no health concerns about them.

Mr. LaBarbara went on to report links had been added to the Township website to several websites providing up to date information on COVID-19.

Mr. Warrick reported he had been in touch with other Townships and a variety of agencies about how to handle the public health crisis. He reported all park facility reservations and rentals had been cancelled through April and any payments refunded. He noted the fire stations have been closed to visitors. Mr. Warrick stated a virtual private network system has been put in place to allow employees to access their computers from home and staff is working on enabling Township phone lines to transfer to employees' cell phones if needed.

Mr. Warrick discussed the possibility of closing the building to the public noting the Planning and Zoning Department operates through glass and employees have been instructed how to protect themselves from exposure handling documents. He noted Mr. Weidman had suggested a four-week shut down of the building.

Mr. Warrick discussed the need to establish protocol should an employee become ill or need to work from home as a precaution due to an ill family member.

Mr. Warrick stated Lt. Smith had already forwarded updates to the Board regarding Sheriff's Office protocol and Chief Penny and Assistant Chief Cooper were present to discuss Fire Department protocol.

Lt. Smith reported the Sheriff's Office is operating under Phase 1 which means everyone within the department is on notice to be ready should things get worse. He noted they are working under a limited response procedure in which low priority runs and minor non-violent offenses are handled on a limited

basis. For example, reports for minor offenses and fender benders will be conducted by phone and officers will not respond for routine EMS runs, only for true emergencies. He noted the public has 72 hours to report a minor traffic accident by phone.

Lt. Smith said, if the Sheriff's Office moves to Phase 2, days off will be cancelled, special duty units will be activated, and everyone will be on 12-hour shifts.

Lt. Smith requested the public be patient noting his interactions with citizens that morning had found them to be in good spirits and understanding.

Chief Penny distributed a handout to the Board and said Coronavirus is growing and the situation is changing daily. He recommended the Board bar the public from future meetings and conduct them remotely. Chief Penny noted the concern is that people can be carriers of the virus before they show symptoms.

Mr. James asked if the general order document Chief Penny distributed would be posted on the website.

Chief Penny answered the order is meant for Fire Department personnel instructing them how to conduct themselves during this crisis. He stated he and Assistant Chief Cooper conducted research and discussed safety guidelines with the future medical director and emergency room doctors. He pointed out no family members will be able to accompany patients to the hospital in the squad unless the patient is unable to communicate, a minor, or near death.

Chief Penny then reviewed some of the guidelines spelled out in the general order designed to limit exposure to Fire Department personnel. He stated Assistant Chief Cooper will speak about staffing and operations.

Mr. James asked about making the general order public.

Assistant Chief Cooper answered the public is free to look at it but noted he is hesitant to post it as it is changing by the hour. He said most of it is CDC recommendations for EMS care.

Assistant Chief Cooper went on to list precautionary measures staff will take on runs to minimize exposure, noting patient care comes first. He said, if at all possible, only one paramedic will have direct contact with a patient and the paramedic will wear a mask and ask the patient to wear one also. He said the patient will be asked to walk to the ambulance if possible.

Mr. James inquired if the department has all the equipment it needs.

Assistant Chief Cooper noted it depends on the equipment, saying a lot of items are on back order.

Chief Penny discussed the stock selling out and trying to keep a six-month supply on hand of normal EMS supplies.

Mr. James offered the Board's support saying it will approve emergency supplies if needed.

Chief Penny discussed the possibility of a firefighter/paramedic becoming infected and the staffing issues that could result from that.

Assistant Chief Cooper noted normally the squad will leave the hospital and go straight to another run if necessary, now they will have to spend 15- 30 minutes decontaminating between calls. He stated another general order will be forthcoming to address reduction in services such as car seat checks and inspections. He noted the sharing of ideas with the Eastern Fire Chiefs' Group has been an invaluable resource.

Mr. James asked if there had been a downturn in runs and suggested the Fire Department personnel make educational videos during idle time to post to the Township's YouTube channel.

Chief Penny said there has not been much of a downturn noting they are making more runs to homes since businesses have closed.

Assistant Chief Cooper discussed concerns for elderly residents in retirement homes feeling isolated. He said the department is taking every precaution to keep people safe and noted they will still change smoke detector batteries for those unable to do so themselves.

Chief Penny requested the Board suspend random drug testing at this time to prevent personnel from being pulled away from their shifts to be tested during this crisis.

Mr. James made a motion, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, to suspend random drug testing for employees for the duration of the public health crisis or for 18 months, whichever is shorter. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: James: Aye; LaBarbara: Aye; Weidman: Abstain

Mr. Weidman thanked Chief Penny and Assistant Chief Cooper for doing a great job on the general order.

Mr. Warrick requested direction on Township operations and what to do about administrative staff and inspectors.

Mr. James and Mr. LaBarbara both suggested allowing Mr. Warrick to make those decisions.

Mr. Weidman stated, as the Board of Trustees, it is incumbent on them to ensure the safety of the staff and the public. He said keeping the buildings open to the public puts employees and their families at risk. He noted in this electronic age, the Township can communicate to residents in other ways.

Mr. James suggested the public be permitted to access the buildings by appointment.

Mr. Warrick said we could restrict access to the public to the lobby only and eliminate access to restrooms.

There was continued discussion about the possibility of closing the buildings. Mr. James asked the staff members present in the room their thoughts about closing the lobby and restrooms to the public

except for visits by appointment during the duration of the public health emergency, and the staffers present indicated they were comfortable with that arrangement.

Mr. James made a motion, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, to give the Township Administrator discretion to make decisions as to the continued operations within the building, as opposed to employees working from home, and to restrict public access to the Administration building for the next 30 days except by appointment. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: James: Aye; LaBarbara: Aye; Weidman: Abstain

Mr. Weidman requested Mr. Warrick identify any employees having childcare issues since schools have closed. He suggested they could have flexible hours or work from home.

There was then discussion about how long to keep public buildings and fields closed to rentals, as well as whether to cancel Maintenance Department events and other events in the month of April.

Mr. Kellums noted he is concerned about his staff at the Trash Bash events as they would have a lot of direct contact with the public. He suggested postponing until June.

Mr. LaBarbara suggested suspending all park facility rentals, including field rentals, for thirty days.

Mr. James and Mr. Kellums noted parks are not closed, but rentals and organized events have been cancelled.

Mr. James suggested there be additional cleaning at park shelters.

Mr. Kellums said rental season has not yet begun so they have not been cleaning them and the restrooms are not yet open and will remain closed.

Mr. Weidman suggested the Board give the Administrator permission to pay bills in the event the Board is unable to meet in April. He asked Mr. Warrick if there was anything else he could think of that he would need permission from the Board to do. Mr. Warrick could not think of anything at the time.

Mr. James said it is possible the Attorney General will issue clarification about holding meetings electronically during this time, but it is prudent to plan ahead.

Mr. James made a motion, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, to authorize Mr. Warrick to pay bills in consultation with Fiscal Officer Porter over the next 3 months using the following protocol: the Trustees must be emailed the check register and any check any individual Trustee indicates should not be paid will be pulled from the check run and held for future consideration by the Trustees, but all others will then be paid.". Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: James: Aye; LaBarbara: Aye; Weidman: Abstain

Mr. Weidman stated the Board should figure out how to set up an electronic meeting before April in case that is needed.

Mr. James stated Mr. Porter should review the budget as it is possible there will be a loss in JEDZ revenue as a result of this.

Mr. Warrick stated he will look at the budget noting all four JEDZ have reserves.

Mr. James made a motion, seconded by Mr. LaBarbara, to combine the March 31st Workshop and evening Trustee meeting into one meeting to be held at the regularly scheduled April 2nd Trustees Meeting. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: James: Aye; LaBarbara: Aye; Weidman: Abstain

Mr. Penny noted the Fire Department is tracking expenses incurred as a result of its COVID-19 crisis response in case any Federal reimbursement money becomes available.

Mr. Warrick requested Mr. Kellums track expenses as well.

Mr. LaBarbara made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. James. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: James: Aye; LaBarbara: Aye; Weidman: Abstain

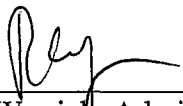
End regular session: 10:14 a.m.

/s/ Jim LaBarbara
Jim LaBarbara, Chairman

/s/ Thomas C. James, Jr.
Thomas C. James, Jr., Trustee

/s/ Thomas J. Weidman
Thomas J. Weidman, Trustee

/s/ Robert C. Porter, III
Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer



Ray Warrick, Administrator
Workshop Minutes 03/17/2020