

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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

Tuesday, January 17, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Fiscal Officer Porter.

Present for the meeting were Trustee James, Trustee Schwegmann, Trustee Weidman, Fiscal Officer Porter, Law Director Barbieri, Administrator Kellums, Superintendent Reutelshofer, Fire Chief Rob Penny, Planning & Zoning Inspector Clark, and Lt. Tarr from the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office. Planning & Zoning Administrator Uckotter was absent.

The invocation was read by Mr. Kellums.

Pledge to the Flag.

Mr. Porter called roll, and all three Trustees indicated they were present.

Organization of the Board

Mr. Porter requested a motion to organize the Board for 2023.

Mr. Weidman made a motion, seconded by Mr. James, for Ms. Schwegmann to serve as Chairman of the Board. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: James: Aye; Schwegmann: Aye; Weidman: Aye

Ms. Schwegmann then began to lead the meeting as Chairman.

Ms. Schwegmann made a motion, seconded by Mr. James, for Mr. Weidman to serve as Vice Chairman of the Board. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: James: Aye; Schwegmann: Aye; Weidman: Aye

Approval of the December 20, 2022 Public Hearing Minutes

The December 20, 2022 public hearing minutes were presented for approval. Mr. Weidman made a motion, seconded by Mr. James, to accept them.

Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: Mr. James: Aye; Ms. Schwegmann: Aye; Mr. Weidman: Aye

Approval of the December 20, 2022 Trustee Meeting Minutes

The December 20, 2022 Trustee meeting minutes were presented for approval. Mr. Weidman made a motion, seconded by Mr. James, to accept them.

Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: Mr. James: Aye; Ms. Schwegmann: Aye; Mr. Weidman: Aye

Public Comments

Maggie Kettler, of 8725 Shagbark Drive, addressed the Board in regard to frequent power outages in Heitmeyer Farms subdivision. She spoke about concerns about storing medication for her husband that must be refrigerated when there is no electricity and difficulties elderly and ill

neighbors have had due to the outages. Ms. Kettler stated she has lived in other places in the Cincinnati area and has never experienced this frequency of power outages.

Mark Vonderbrink, of 5340 Autumnwood Drive, addressed the Board about the power outages in Heitmeyer. He stated the power outages have been a huge long-term issue becoming more frequent and lengthier. Mr. Vonderbrink said there is an infrastructure problem in their neighborhood that seems to be getting worse. He stated Duke Energy said there was a committee to study the condition of the infrastructure but was unable to provide him with any details. Mr. Vonderbrink said tree-trimming done by Duke has had limited positive effect and some residents have gone to the expense of purchasing whole house generators. He requested the Board put some pressure on Duke Energy to solve this problem.

Adam Kocher, 5314 Autumnwood Drive, addressed the Board. Mr. Kocher stated he has lived on Autumnwood for 12 months and has already spent over \$2,000.00 on hotel costs, food replacement and other expenses due to power outages. He said after the latest outage on December 6th, he raised the issue to the neighborhood Facebook group and many people, some of whom were present, asked how they could help. Mr. Kocher requested help from the Board to explore what options exist with Duke. He said the tree-trimming done by Duke was sub-par. He noted the large number of posts about the issue on the neighborhood Facebook page and again requested the Board assist with getting Duke Energy to do something about the problem.

Diane Sichel, of 6048 Bayberry Drive, addressed the Board, saying she is a 20-year resident of Heitmeyer and has experienced frequent power outages. She noted there are other neighborhoods with mature trees and squirrels who do not have the same issues this portion of Heitmeyer does. She spoke about the problems caused by the outages such as trying to keep warm and disruptions for her while she is working from home and for her children trying to do homework online. Ms. Sichel says she loves Sycamore Township but hates the issues they have had with Duke Energy.

Mr. Weidman said about four years ago, Duke Energy had a pilot program to evaluate the cost of repairs in neighborhoods with frequent outages versus the cost of moving the utilities underground. He said he had asked them multiple times to look into the problems in Heitmeyer; that pilot program no longer exists. Mr. Weidman said the Board has heard this for years and is happy to do anything they can, unfortunately, the Township cannot go on private property and make those types of improvements. He said the Board will do whatever they can to help residents get some resolution from Duke Energy.

A member of the public noted the frequency of outages in Heitmeyer.

Mr. Weidman stated Duke Energy said the pilot program did not look at the issues in Heitmeyer because they said there were other areas with more frequent outages.

Mr. James and Ms. Schwegmann both live in the neighborhood and understand there is an issue. Mr. James said the Board asked Duke Energy for a report about a year ago and the power outages were caused by animals or fallen limbs. He said he had asked Mr. Kellums to follow up with Duke Energy.

Mr. Kellums stated he has spoken with Duke Energy's government liaison several times over the last few weeks and was told he would check with the reliability and vegetation control divisions.

He said Duke Energy states it is a tree issue but agreed with the residents that there are other areas with mature trees.

There was continued discussion about the power outage issues.

Brian Sheehan, of 4989 Bayberry Drive, addressed the Board. He asked the Board how the residents get Duke's attention and what other options they have that have not already been discussed. He stated he does not want new development until the issue is resolved.

Ms. Schwegmann encouraged the residents to call and report issues, even those already reported, as sometimes the squeaky wheel gets the grease.

There was discussion about power outages at businesses.

Mr. James also encouraged people to contact Duke Energy and to file a complaint with PUCO.

Mr. Schwegmann thanked everyone for coming and asked if there was one point of contact for the residents that Mr. Kellums could call with information if he hears anything from Duke.

Mr. Kellums requested residents email him with the number of outages they have experienced.

Residents from the audience continued to comment about the issues and what they have been told by Duke Energy as well as ask questions of the Board.

Mr. Barbieri addressed a resident's question about the Township researching the possibility of forming its own utility district noting it is a complex legal area, Duke Energy fights it tooth and nail, and it would be extremely expensive to litigate.

The Board also pointed out the Township does not have any authority over Duke Energy, they are regulated by the State of Ohio. Mr. James said the Board will put pressure on Duke and encouraged the residents to continue to do so also.

The Board requested Mr. Kellums provide the residents with contact information for filing a complaint with PUCO and will investigate whether there has been another municipality, such as Amberley Village, which has been successful in getting Duke to move utilities underground.

Ms. Schwegmann thanked the residents present for the information.

Sheriff Patrol Report

Lt. Tarr stated he had nothing to report.

EMS/Fire Report

Chief Penny reported over three days of the Christmas cold spell, the Fire Department had record 113 runs, including calls for frozen pipes, alarm drops, and people stuck out of their house due to frozen doors.

Chief Penny reported he has had three applications submitted for part-time firefighter from the schools and has gotten permission from the schools to come in and speak to the students to let

them know about opportunities at the Sycamore Township Fire Department. He noted there is now an online application available on the Township's website.

Planning & Zoning Report

Mr. Kellums reported on behalf of Mr. Uckotter stating there will be zoning public hearings before the Board of Trustees on February 7, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. He reported the cases to be heard are Zoning Case 2022-17MA for Landmark Recovery, a request for a Major Adjustment to a PUD which Zoning Commission recommended be denied, and 2022-18Z for Capital Investment Group which Zoning Commission recommended for approval.

Mr. James noted for the record that Jeff Uckotter is the Township's newly hired Planning & Zoning Administrator who had a previously planned vacation at the time he was hired. He said he is not at this meeting but will be at the next meeting.

Roads, Maintenance & Recreation Report

Mr. Reutelshofer reported the Montgomery Road Sidewalk Project from Stewart Road to Ken Arbe Drive will begin in the spring.

Mr. Reutelshofer reported utility relocation for the Gideon Lane Culvert Project will begin in the next couple of weeks with construction in the spring as well.

Mr. Reutelshofer stated the design phase for the E. Kemper Road Sidewalk Project, Baen Road to Snider Road, has begun and property owners affected have been notified about land surveying being done.

Mr. Reutelshofer reported preliminary engineering has been completed for another sidewalk project on Baen Road and Deerfield Road from E. Kemper Road to Schuler Sports Complex. He said he and Mr. Kellums met with business owners in that area and everyone is on board and in favor of the project.

Mr. Weidman asked the projected completion date for the Gideon Lane Project saying Cincinnati Bell is anxious to run fiber in the area but is waiting until after the completion of the project.

Mr. Reutelshofer answered it should be completed by late summer, 2023.

Law Director Report

Mr. Barbieri stated he had nothing to report.

Administrator Report

Mr. Kellums stated he had a couple of resolutions for the Board's consideration.

Resolution – Declaring Township Property as Surplus and Obsolete

The resolution "Declaring Township Property as Surplus and Obsolete and Authorizing its Disposition, Dispensing with a Second Reading and Declaring an Emergency" was presented by Mr. Kellums. Mr. Weidman made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Mr. James.

Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye.

Resolution 2023-001 passed this 17th day of January, 2023

Resolution – Authorizing a Contract with Safety Compliance Inspections, LLC

The resolution “Authorizing a Contract with Safety Compliance Inspections, LLC for the Provision of Life Safety and Fire Inspections as well as Fire Building Plan Review and Dispensing with a Second Reading” was presented by Mr. Kellums. Mr. Weidman made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Mr. James. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye. Resolution 2023-002 passed this 17th day of January, 2023

2023 Blanket Purchase Orders

Mr. Kellums presented the list of 2023 blanket purchase orders for the Board’s approval. He noted the Board had been sent the list for review prior to the meeting noting they are all for operations for departments throughout the year.

Mr. James made a motion to approve the list of blanket purchase orders presented. Mr. Weidman seconded. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye.

Purchase Orders Over \$5,000.00

Mr. Kellums presented the following purchase order over \$5,000.00 for approval:

23-58 BPS Heating & Cooling, LLC New Furnace Station 92 \$5,100.00

Mr. James made a motion to approve purchase order 23-58. Mr. Weidman seconded. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye.

Fiscal Officer Report

Pay Bills and Read Receipts

The receipts in the amount of \$284,356.75 and disbursements in the amount of \$590,320.33 for January 17, 2023 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

Mr. Weidman made a motion to adjourn. Mr. James seconded the motion. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye.

Mr. Porter stated it has been a pleasure working at the Township noting he has been working with Jonathan Deters, who will fill the remainder of his term, for a smooth transition.

Trustees Comments

Mr. Weidman stated, on behalf of the residents of the Township, he would like to thank Mr. Porter for 32 years of dedicated service to the Township. He pointed out Mr. Porter has had 32 years’ clean audits, which is a significant accomplishment. He thanked Mr. Porter for his leadership in the Fiscal Office and wished him the best in his retirement.

Ms. Schwegmann echoed Mr. Weidman's comments saying 32 years of service is unbelievable and the Board and Township residents are grateful for his service. She thanked him for assisting Mr. Deters with the transition, noting Mr. Deters will be present at the next Trustee meeting. She congratulated him on his retirement.

Mr. James thanked Mr. Porter for his years of service to the Township and noted he has had clean audits all the way through, which is good work. Mr. James said this was the first meeting of the new year and wished the residents Happy New Year.

Mr. James reported he is on the Reinventing Metro Committee and attended a meeting in which Metro announced the corridors it has chosen for rapid transit. He said they picked Reading Road corridor and Hamilton Avenue as the two initial bus rapid transit corridors. He said Glenway Avenue and Montgomery Road to Kenwood Towne Centre have been designated for enhanced corridor treatment and will get upgrades to the bus stops and possibly other infrastructure upgrades.

Mr. James congratulated Ms. Schwegmann as the new Chairman of the Board.

Announcements

Ms. Schwegmann stated the January 18th Board of Zoning Appeals meeting has been cancelled.

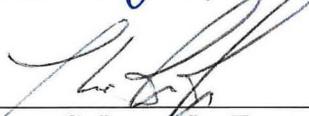
Mr. Weidman made a motion to adjourn. Mr. James seconded. Mr. Porter called roll. Vote: All Aye. The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.



Tracy Schwegmann, Chairman



Thomas J. Weidman, Vice Chairman



Thomas C. James, Jr., Trustee



Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer
Special Meeting 01/17/2023