

Franklin Township Trustees
Tuesday, January 11, 2022
Regular Meeting Minutes

At 7:00pm Scott Swan called the meeting to order and welcomed newly elected trustees Kellie Kapusta and Glenn Russell to the board. A motion was made by Glenn Russell to nominate Scott Swan as the Chairman for 2022; 2nd Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes. A motion was made by Kellie Kapusta to nominate Glenn Russell as the Vice Chairman for 2022; 2nd Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes. Minutes from the previous meetings, special meeting on December 7th and the regular meeting on December 14th were approved by a motion made by Glenn Russell; 2nd Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Beth Geist – 5724 Powdermill Road – expressed continuing concerns regarding excessive speeding on Powdermill Road. She states that motorists constantly speed and also pass stopped school busses. She has raised the concern previously and wants to know what they can do as residents to facilitate a solution. She has spoken to officers at the Ohio Highway Patrol and has been told that as a county road they have no jurisdiction there. She intends to keep speaking up until she sees change for the better. PCSO detective Nick DeSerio was in attendance and responded that when a special attention notation was given to Powdermill Road and patrolled by deputies signed up witnessed little to no speeding, but also acknowledged that it could be because cars slow down when they see a patrol sitting there. The department will continue extra monitoring. He addressed the issue of stopped school busses being passed and asked that license plates be written down and shared and the department will definitely address that. Ms. Geist also asked for information regarding firearms discharge regulations in the township as new neighbors are frequently firing guns on their property. Detective DeSerio explained that the discharge of firearms is permitted within the township as long as there is a “proper backstop”. The ORC is vague in what constitutes safe for a backstop so he suggests that she call the sheriff’s office and request deputies come out and speak with the individuals who are firing weapons and make a determination on whether or not they are doing so safely.
- PCSO – Detective Nick DeSerio – reported on statistics for the last month. There were 217 incidences that required a response from the department in the township, including but not limited to, 51 traffic stops, domestic violence calls, rescue and other agency assists, thefts, alarm drops, suspicious persons and vehicles, and canine uses.
- Glenn Luttner – 7568 Westlake Blvd – introduced himself as a four-year resident of the township and expressed a desire to serve on the zoning commission. He and his wife see this as a permanent residence.
- Chief Bill Myers – City of Kent Fire Chief – spoke a bit about the paramedicine program being formed in the city that will allow experienced paramedics to answer non-emergent calls and frequently seen addresses that call for assistance. He expects interviews to begin very shortly and have a presence in the community, including answering such calls in Franklin Township, within the next month or two.
- Ron Nichols – 1515 South Blvd. – expressed continuing concerns about a fence that he deems in violation of the zoning code and believes should be removed completely as an eyesore in the neighborhood. This has been an issue for some time. A portion of the fence deemed in violation by zoning inspector Joe Ciccozzi and the trustees has been removed and they collectively feel the remaining portion of the fence is compliant. Mr. Nichols strongly disagrees. He also shared concerns about the Zamos homes/[properties on North Blvd and SR 43 that have long been in violation. Mr. Ciccozzi has seen improvements on both - grass being mowed when cited and a junk car that has been worked on that now complies. There is another property at 7743 West Blvd. (on the bend where South Blvd turns into North Blvd.) that has been vacant for seven months. Mr. Ciccozzi will investigate.

ROAD DEPARTMENT UPDATE

No formal written report was submitted. Mr. Swan stated that trustees have unanimously agreed that the weather will be closely monitored by all trustees for snow and ice events and a collective decision on when to notify the road crew to come in and plow/spread salt. Glenn Russell stated for the record that he is very appreciative of the road crew and the great work they continue to get done. He said that they are making the trustees' jobs much easier. Mr. Swan also noted that seven or eight applicants have expressed an interest or submitted applications for the vacant road superintendent position. Applications are being submitted and all qualified applicants will be thoroughly vetted.

ZONING REPORT

Submitted as written by Joe Ciccozzi and is attached to the official record. Additionally, continued activities at the Jones' Hookah Palace continue and occupancy capacity violations have been witnessed and are suspected to be continuing. Mr. Ciccozzi will work with DFPO Richard Smith and the City of Kent Fire Department on the process for issuing such violations in order to get the ball rolling to bring about compliance or cooperation from the current owner and manager. Also, complaints received from Hal Lehman – residing on Leonard Ave. – regarding illegal parking on Washington and the Garfield intersection are being watched and addressed.

FIRE REPORT

Submitted as written by Richard Smith and is attached to the official record. Mr. Smith was excused from tonight's meeting due to illness.

OLD BUSINESS

- Discussion on the City of Kent's proposal regarding the parcel owned by The Davey Tree Expert Company and under a request for annexation was tabled so that the board could have a chance to further investigate the proposal and think through any ramifications of acceptance or denial of the proposal.
- Discussion about revisiting COVID protocols ended with a motion being made by Glenn Russell to post signs at town hall and at the garage stating that masks will be required for anyone entering a township facility; 2nd Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes.
- An update on the status of ongoing contract issues with the Portage County Solid Waste Management District concerning curbside recycling and leaf assessment rebate are in a holding pattern. Township recyclables will be collected by the District through January. After that is questionable as legal counsel for the County and the township are at an impasse over the leaf rebate provided for in the existing contract that runs through December 2024, which the County has voided unilaterally. Attorney for the township, Chad Murdock, is in the process of filing a complaint in Portage County Court for a finding that holds the County responsible to uphold the contract.
- Electric service at the Brady Lake Park pavilion is not working. There is currently no electricity at any township park. Bearing in mind that a Memorandum of Understanding is to be signed with the Portage County Board of Developmental Disabilities for the use of the park during their Special Olympics annually, consideration will be given to having service restored and costs will be assessed.

NEW BUSINESS

- The next meeting scheduled is January 25, 2022. Two of three trustees will be out of town. Due to a lack of quorum a motion to cancel the meeting was made by Scott Swan; 2nd Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes.
- Glenn Russell initiated discussion regarding how we can provide the road crew with the ability to safely communicate with each other while on the road or during work hours. The current township provided phones are outdated.

The road crew would like to use their personal cell phones, as they have become a good tool. Pictures can easily be taken and shared with vendors and the board, and Bluetooth capability installed in newer equipment quickly provides access to communication with the use of their phones. The trustees would like Jenny August to gather information about what other townships do.

- All three trustees will submit a list of interview questions for road superintendent applicants and a collective list will be compiled by Jenny August.
- Discussion regarding the possible installation of a ventilation system of some kind at the maintenance garage was initiated as an alternative to previously discussed HVAC updates. The road crew unanimously agree that ventilation is needed in the area of the shop where welding is done. Right now, no such ventilation is in place and all bay doors must be fully opened when any such work is being done in the shop, which is not healthy. A quote from Wright Heating and Cooling was provided at a cost of just over \$8,000 for a movable unit with hosing attached to suction out fumes. Two more quotes will be sought. IN the meantime, the purchase of a large industrial fan was approved by a motion made by Scott swan; 2nd Glenn Russell. All three trustees voted yes.
- Resolution 2022-02 appointing Glenn Russell to be the Franklin Township representative on the Standing Rock Cemetery Board was approved by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2nd Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes.
- Resolution 2022-03 appointing Reed Havel to as a permanent member of the Zoning Commission was approved by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2nd Glenn Russell. All three trustees voted yes.
- Resolution 2022-04 appointing Glenn Luttner as a permanent member of the zoning commission was approved by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2nd Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes.
- Resolution 2022-05 reappointing Sam Abell as a permanent member of the Board of Zoning Appeals was approved by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2nd Glenn Russell. All three trustees voted yes.

CORRESPONDENCE

A communication from Kent Roosevelt social studies teacher Nikki Marchmon-Boykin was received by Glenn Russell. In it, she stated that as part of a civic engagement activity two of her students wrote letter expressing concerns about road conditions in the community. She asks that a response be sent to the students. Letters from Natalie Thomas and Brandon Melin, both residing in the Brady Lake area of the township addressed concerns about the condition of the roads in their area and asked that paving be done to provide safer travel and cause less damage to vehicles due to the constant bumps and dips and narrowness of many roads in the Brady Lake area. Both letters will be attached to the official record. All three trustees expressed gratitude to the students for speaking up and sharing their concerns in such a constructive way. A response will be sent to each student detailing road work that has been done already in the first three years since the former village’s dissolution and absorption into the township, and explaining that prioritizing roads throughout the entire township is done and the most needed areas will be done first and that all of these decisions are made based on available funds.

FINANCES

Payment of bills, warrants #25423 through 25696, including payment vouchers, and totaling \$64,756.84 since the last meeting was approved by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2nd Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes.

At 8:29pm a motion to adjourn was made by Scott Swan; 2nd Glenn Russell. All three trustees voted yes.

Date _____ Fiscal Officer _____

Chairman _____