

Franklin Township Trustees  
Tuesday, October 26, 2021  
Regular Meeting Minutes

At 7:00pm Chairwoman Ann Hanna called the meeting to order. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2<sup>nd</sup> Keith Benjamin. Mr. Benjamin voted yes. Mr. Swan voted yes. Ms. Hanna abstained.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Jeff Coffee – representative of the Village of Sugar Bush Knolls addressed the board stating that the village is interested in working collaboratively in financial issues, citing a mutual contract with the City of Kent for a new fire/ems contract in particular. The trustees were in agreement that such a relationship should be explored. Meeting dates will be determined.
2. Hal Lehman – 2218 Leonard St. – expressed gratitude to the township board and the road department for their hard work and good provision of services to the residents.

#### ROAD REPORT

Submitted as written by both Lee Smith and Keith Benjamin and is attached to the official record. Additionally, road crew employee Adam Boron informed the trustees that the mow truck, identified as Unit #1 has been inspected by the crew and is in need of serious body and engine work and is on its last leg.

#### ZONING REPORT

Submitted as written by Joe Ciccozzi and is attached to the official record. Additionally, when informed of the Zoning Commission's denial of a request made by a developer to rezone the parcel along Powdermill Road north of the railroad tracks to R-2 with the intent to build single family homes, trustees have requested that Mr. Ciccozzi contact the commission Chairwoman Mary Organ and ask for the reason behind the denial be communicated to them in writing. Also, Keith Benjamin noted, for the record, that additional residents are needed to serve as regular and alternate members of both the Zoning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals. Administrator Jenny August will contact resident Reed Havel who earlier in the year expressed an interest in serving on either board. After discussion it was determined that a structure on Cherry Lane that was inspected by the Health, Building and Fire departments and determined to be unfit for human habitation and unsafe, shall be signed as such in the event of a fire so that the responding fire department does not enter the structure to fight the blaze.

#### FIRE UPDATE

Richard Smith reported that the new Mod Wash located on ST RT 59 in front of Gabriel Brothers has passed its final inspection and is now operational. It was noted that numerous "Now Open" signs have been erected without proper authority sought. Mr. Ciccozzi will pursue the matter. Also, there was a small house fire on Leonard St. this week that was called in by a passing motorist who dialed 911 when they spotted flames in the window. It was quickly contained with no injuries sustained.

#### OLD BUSINESS

1. Approval was granted for attorney Chad Murdock to further pursue the legality of the contract that exists between the Portage County Solid Waste District and the township as it pertains to the collection of leaf assessment fees from residents and the reimbursement to the township its portion annually by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2<sup>nd</sup> Ann Hanna. All three trustees voted yes.

2. Davey Tree Expert Company has communicated to the township in writing that they intend to move forward with a request to annex township property they hold along ST RT 43 north into the City of Kent. They cite concerns about emergency service response times, specifically by the Portage County Sheriff's Office, and water hookup surcharges as the main reasons for doing so, despite Franklin Township's attempts to assuage their concerns with attempts to seek solutions. Scott Swan elaborated that meetings and discussion with other entities have begun to discuss what the establishment of a JEDD along that area would entail. When township officials approached the City of Kent several months ago about the establishment of a Joint Economic Development District along ST RT 43 north, the City responded that they would not be interested in such a venture and saw no benefit in it, in all likelihood knowing that Davey Tree Expert Company expected to seek annexation. Trustees have communicated with the City of Akron to begin discussion of water hookup accessibility possibilities for both businesses and private residences in the area, ways to increase the rapid response times of both police and fire/EMS departments, and have been in contact with officials from Sugar Bush Knolls and the City of Streetsboro about partnerships regarding these issues. Keith Benjamin stated the importance of notifying the Portage County Commissioners as soon as possible of Davey Tree Expert Company's intent and let the commissioners know that Franklin Township intends to fight the annexation which would cause further loss of land, current taxes (which exceed \$43,000 annually), and potential increases in revenue should it be approved. Administrator Jenny August will draft a letter immediately.
3. The Eagle Scout project started by the Amolsch family of a paved pathway connecting the existing walkway and pavilion at Phillips Park has been completed with assistance by the township road crew and Todd Lamb Construction, with the exception of some grading and grass planting in the spring.
4. Prior to discussion of establishing a job description for the position of road superintendent, an email from Franklin Township trustee candidate Glenn Russell was read aloud to become a part of the official record. In summary, Mr. Russell requested that both he and Kellie Kapusta, the other trustee candidate on the ballot, be included in the decision-making process as they will be directly impacted by the long-term effects of any determination made when taking office in January. All three trustees agreed that input from both candidates should be taken into consideration. After a motion made by Scott Swan to table the discussion until January 2022 was not seconded, Mr. Benjamin and Ms. Hanna suggested that a meeting be scheduled that included both Mr. Russell and Ms. Kapusta so that they be involved in the process. Lise Russell will contact Brett Bencze to find out if the meeting needs to be a publicized open meeting in order to comply with Ohio's Sunshine Laws.

#### NEW BUSINESS

1. The Holiday Lights Decoration Competition, spearheaded by Todd Peetz and the Portage County Township Association information can be found on the township's website at [www.franklintownshipohio.org](http://www.franklintownshipohio.org).
2. Resolution 2021-19 authorizing the township chairperson to prepare and submit an application to participate in the OPWC program and execute contract requirements was approved by a motion made by Ann Hanna; 2<sup>nd</sup> Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes.
3. Purchase of a new work truck with snowplow capabilities at a cost of about \$131,000 was approved by a motion made by Keith Benjamin; 2<sup>nd</sup> Ann Hanna. All three trustees voted yes.
4. A motion was made by Scott Swan to cancel the December 28, 2021 meeting due to its occurrence during the holiday week; 2<sup>nd</sup> Ann Hanna. All three trustees voted yes

FINANCES

1. Resolution 2021-20 – authorizing a supplemental appropriation to the Road and Bridge Fund in the amount of \$41,000 for the purchase of a new truck was approved by a motion made by Ann Hanna; 2<sup>nd</sup> Keith Benjamin. All three trustees voted yes.
2. Resolution 2021-21 authorizing a supplemental appropriation to the JEDD Fund in the amount of \$75,000 for contracted leaf pickup services this year was approved by a motion made by Ann Hanna; 2<sup>nd</sup> Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes.
3. Payment of bills, warrants #25573 through 25612, including payment vouchers since the last meeting and totaling \$83,765.55 was approved by a motion made by Ann Hanna; 2<sup>nd</sup> Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes.

At 8:15pm a motion was made by Ann Hanna to suspend regular session and enter executive session pursuant to ORC 121.22 (G) (5) to discuss matters that are required to be kept confidential pursuant to both federal and state laws; 2<sup>nd</sup> Keith Benjamin. All three trustees voted yes. At 8:47pm a motion to resume regular session was made by Scott Swan; 2<sup>nd</sup> Ann Hanna. All three trustees voted yes. A motion to adjourn was made by Scott Swan; 2<sup>nd</sup> Keith Benjamin. All three trustees voted yes.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Fiscal Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Chairwoman \_\_\_\_\_