

Franklin Township Trustees
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 9, 2023

At 7:00pm Chairman Glenn Russell called the meeting to order. Fiscal Officer Lisé Russell was excused. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2nd Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes.

Bid submitted by 7:00pm for the Hudson Road Phase III and Phase IV project were opened by the township administrator, Jenny August. Three bids were received prior to the 7:00pm May 9th 2023 deadline.

1. Eclipse Construction – total project bid of \$802,933.36
2. Barbica's Construction – total project bid Of \$884,834.55
3. Karvo Companies, Inc. – total project bid of \$1,048,965.39

All three bids contained a required bid bond sheet. The bids will be taken to the Portage County Engineer's office in the morning for verification and a recommendation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Joe Karpinski - 7620 Westlake Blvd. – shared concerns about a residence on Skyview for possible criminal activity. The home is right behind his daughter's home on Sylvan Drive. There are known sexual offenders living there as well as suspected drug activity. PCSO Detective Nick DeSerio responded to the concern by saying that the only provision in Ohio regarding where known sexual offenders cannot live is within a certain proximity to schools, unless otherwise stated in their probation or parole specifications so nothing can be done about that situation. He will make it a point to share the location with drug enforcement task forces associated with the sheriff's office and place it on everyone's radar. After placing a map of the area on the large screen in the meeting room the location was identified as 7485 Skyview Drive. Detective DeSerio was happy to share his contact information with concerned residents in case they could share names or any specific information about persons at that location. Another resident, Martha Somers – 7598 Birkner – shared the same concerns and expressed neighbors' gratitude for any assistance the sheriff's office can provide. Detective DeSerio strongly advised that all residents who witness activity or have concerns about a property like this contact the sheriff's department to file a report. This information can be vital in validating criminal offenses or solving crimes committed.
- Suzanne and Allen Frank – 1221 Greenwood – are also concerned about the activity at this property and asked if a welfare check had been requested for the woman who lives there, as she hasn't been seen. Detective DeSerio stated that would be confidential but encouraged them to call and request one themselves. Ms. Frank asked specifically what consequences are for drug offenses in the county and it was explained that the sheriff's deputies/detectives only make the arrests. Once that happens, it is out of their hands and dependent on the courts and prosecutor's office. He also assured Ms. Frank, when asked, that through the department's regular jurisdiction and extra patrols paid for by the township that all parks, including Phillips Park, are regularly patrolled.
- PCSO Detective Nick DeSerio – 8240 Infirmity Road – reported statistics for April calls totaling 283 calls. Calls for alarm drops, 911 calls, assists to other agencies, rescue squad assists, shots fired, suspicious persons and events, domestic situations, thefts, traffic stops and welfare checks are some of the types of calls. Asked about the location of the shots fired calls, he responded that he did not have that information. Mr. Arden Somers asked about the current ORC guidelines for firing a weapon within the township and Detective DeSerio stated that it is permitted with an appropriate backstop. Unfortunately, it is not clear what is deemed an acceptable backstop – that is a subjective call on the part of an answering deputy.

ZONING REPORT

Submitted as written by Joe Ciccozzi and is attached to the official record. Additionally, after speaking to a representative in the county tax map department, it was determined that there is no single place where paper road location information in the township is kept. Each individual road would need investigated. A resident seeking vacation of a paper road would need to hire a surveyor to devise a replat map; submit it to the county tax department, who would then forward it to the county engineer's office for approval or veto. There was also discussion on any provisions needed for outdoor dining at township establishments. The trustees stated unanimously that as long as the building department is satisfied that ADA compliance and guidelines have been met that it would be sufficient for Franklin Township. Also, LED lighting at vape stores has been brought to attention as a distraction and the possibility of needing language clarified in guidelines.

ROAD REPORT

Submitted as written by Dave Akerley and is attached to the official record.

FIRE REPORT

Submitted as written by Richard Smith and is attached to the official record.

OLD BUSINESS

- Residential survey – a brief survey was conducted during the annual Spring Cleanup held at the maintenance garage the last weekend in April. Among the questions asked, input about what people would like to see happen at our township parks was requested, such as Pickleball Courts, Lacrosse backstops, ballfield lighting and restrooms. Of the forty-eight respondents, forty-three were agreeable to having Pickleball courts available. Nearly everyone responded positively to ballfield lighting and restrooms as well. Other questions pertained to service priorities and forms of communication. Road Maintenance, leaf pickup and snow and ice removal were the highest priorities listed and our township website was the most popular choice for communication. This survey will help us be allotted extra points in the application process for a Natureworks grant to be used to install pickleball courts at Phillips Park. Thanks to our administrator Jenny August for doing such a great job writing this grant.
- Brush chipping and leaf pickup services at the Pines. – Glenn Russell and Dave Akerley drove the area and agree that getting some of our larger pieces of equipment back there could be an issue of liability because it is a private road. Mrs. Kapusta and Mr. Russell both agree that it is an issue but that the residents are entitled to the services as well. It was recommended by Brett Bencze at the prosecutor's office that an agreement be drafted and signed by the Pines HOA holding the township free from liability for road damage due to the use of chipping – related equipment. It was also noted that in the past, when the road crew did some brush chipping back in the Pines, there were complaints received about debris and such. Some of those residents no longer live there. ABC Landscaping, contracted by the township for leaf pickup has dated spreadsheets showing that ABC does go through the Pines for leaf pickup. Jenny August suggested that the residents' landscapers be asked if they could bring the brush up to Diagonal Road for them. An agreement will be drafted and sent to Mr. Bencze for approval.

NEW BUSINESS

- Agreement for use of Brady Lake Ballfield – Mr. Swan stated that the township wants to remain supportive of the Developmental Disabilities Board and the money they have invested in upgrading the ballfield and the park and seeing it used responsibly. While the community is welcome to use it when not being utilized by the board for Special Olympics, competitive teams will not be permitted scheduled practices and games. An agreement has been drafted and approved by trustees and by John Venetti and the Portage County DD Board and is available at the township offices.

- Flock Cameras – flock camera is a term used to describe cameras that are erected along roadways that can photograph and document the rear end of a vehicle as it travels a road. These cameras help supply information to law enforcement agencies for warrant searches, damage sustained in hit and runs, license plate information, Amber Alert notices, etc. Currently none exist in Portage County, however, the sheriff’s office and the police departments can access information collected from flock cameras in other counties/areas throughout Ohio, assisting them in the capture and conviction of criminals. Mr. Swan opened the topic for discussion about the possibility of purchasing one or two to be installed along busy routes in our area for such purposes. The cameras cost about \$1,000 each and there is an annual renewal fee associated as well. Detective DeSerio commented that the county sheriff’s department has begun discussions about seeking partnerships with surrounding entities in establishing their use. They believe flock cameras to be an effective tool. Mr. Swan pointed out that if word spreads that Franklin Township has flock cameras up and running that it could serve as a deterrent for people engaging in criminal behavior from passing through our township along our roadways. The topic will remain open for further discussion.

CORRESPONDENCE

A Reeves Ave. resident requested a chipping schedule (similar to leaf pickup schedules in the fall) so that he would know when to have his brush out on his tree lawn. After discussion with Road Superintendent Dave Akerley, it was determined that a set schedule could not be posted due to weather, volume of brush being collected, other unexpected township needs arising as factors that can impact the schedule. The resident was informed of this and appears to be appeased.

FINANCES

Payment of bills, warrant #26062 through 26070, including payment vouchers and totaling \$61,248.01 was approved by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2nd Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes.

At 8:18pm the meeting was adjourned by a motion made by Kellie Kapusta; 2nd Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes.

Date _____ Fiscal Officer _____

Chairman _____