

Franklin Township Trustees
Tuesday, September 12, 2023
Regular Meeting Minutes

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

- State Representative Gail Pavliga – addressed the board and all in attendance to report on some of the projects she has taken on to benefit Portage County. Some of the important contributions she has steered our county's way are a \$2.8 million dollar grant that would be dedicated to a twenty-four bed crisis center in Portage County to help address mental health care needs – two of those beds would be dedicated specifically to use for children. She has also made affordable housing for seniors and workforce residents a priority. Kent and Ravenna have an above average income to rent ratio – 50% or more of a person's income dedicated to rent or mortgage – and there is a strong need for housing people can afford to buy. Dr. Pavliga has a background in mental healthcare and was also responsible for sponsoring the bill making #988 a dedicated mental health emergency crisis line – similar to 911 but for mental health crises - and is vying for this to become a line item in the state budget annually. She has also secured funding for NEOMED and much of that money will be dedicated to pediatric dentistry, which has been shown to be a shortfall of NE Ohio youth and was responsible for securing \$200k toward the Portage Hike and Bike Trail. She will be looking to meet with local government officials in her district to determine capital projects beginning next year.
- Portage County Sheriff's Office – Detective Nick DeSerio – reported on August statics and calls for service within Franklin Township. Some types of calls answered were for theft, domestic disputes, suspicious persons and situations, warrants for arrest, welfare checks, assists to the fire department, rescue squad and other agencies, and premise checks. The total calls for service answered in August for Franklin Township was 414. The sheriff department is showing a trend of increasing calls both in the township and in other jurisdictions. He assured the board and residents in attendance the department works diligently to address complaints called in but reminded everyone that their jurisdiction does contain the entire county. Resident Ron Nichols – 1515 South Blvd asked if Detective DeSerio was aware of parking lot break ins of cars at township parks. He responded that the department is aware of a fairly large group of individuals who have been targeting parks, trail heads and possibly a few churches across Northeast Ohio – and in neighboring states – by smashing car windows and stealing valuables. He reiterated that purses, backpacks, bags, and any other parcels that give an appearance of holding valuables should be left nowhere in a vehicle.
- Hal Lehman – 2218 Leonard Blvd. – expressed concerns about residents dumping debris into the lake. He has personally removed decking materials, a rolled carpet remnant, and other junk from the lake recently. Mrs. Kapusta stated that she has received a complaint for the same thing and has a specific address to investigate. She and Joe Ciccozzi will take a boat ride this week to get pictures. Mr. Lehman also expressed gratitude to the sheriff's office for the timely response to recent calls made about vehicles illegally parked at the lake, specifically one near the stop sign at Lakeview/Leonard and thanks to Dave Akerley from the road department for meeting with him to discuss a dangerous curve along Merrill Rd. at the Erie Street intersection.
- Jill Grimm – 1509 Merrill Drive – spoke on behalf of the Twin Lales Association and thanked the trustees for inviting an ODNR representative several meetings ago to speak about lakes associations and such, specifically the Ohio Lake Communities Association. This has proven to be a very informative and helpful resource and the TLA has made the decision to join as a result. She also asked zoning inspector Joe Ciccozzi to follow up on a property on Sylvan Drive at the Westlake Dr. split where there appears to be a business of some kind being run there; informed the trustees that their association has been advertising on their website and social media page and newsletter that there is a road crew position open; and asked if there was any township ordinance in place regarding a leash requirement for dogs when they are off private property. Mr. Ciccozzi referenced the Zoning Resolution for Franklin Township and no such ordinance is in place. Detective DeSerio referenced the Ohio Revised Code and stated that there is a provision for township officials to enact such an ordinance and that it would be enforceable through the dog warden's office.

ZONING REPORT

Submitted as written by Joe Ciccozzi and is attached to the official record.

ROAD REPORT

Submitted as written by Dave Akerley and is attached to the official record. Additionally, Mr. Akerley submitted a request to chip and seal Judson, Seasons, and Spell Roads at a cost of \$107,608.96. This will be split by three different companies and he believes this will extend the life of these roadways by 5-7 years. Edge repairs were made this summer and this chip and seal will preserve the repairs. A motion to authorize the chip and seal resurfacing of Seasons, Judson, and Spell Roads was made by Kellie Kapusta; 2nd Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes.

OLD BUSINESS

- Hudson Road Phase IV and V status update. Mr. Russell reported that a meeting was held with Portage County Engineer project manager Mike Collins, Kelley Steigerwald, Dave Akerley, and Lisé Russell. Mr. Collins informed us that OPWC has approved the requested extension for Phase IV to next year and the request to combine it with Phase V and bid them as one project. After much discussion with pros and cons to proceeding, scrapping the project entirely, doing the project on our own, removing expensive bike lanes or postponing them the decision to move forward with the project as currently planned and approved by OPWC as a combined project to be bid very early in the spring and to be completed by end of summer 2024 by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2nd Glenn Russell. All three trustees voted yes. Mr. Swan then spoke on the record that when considering the magnitude of road work that needs done throughout Franklin Township and increasing costs of labor and materials being charged by construction companies that the township might at some point have to consider a road levy to generate the funds needed to make the necessary repairs.

NEW BUSINESS

- Resolution 2023-39 – a resolution authorizing a RUMA agreement with the county engineer’s office allowing county trucks and other vehicles to enter and exit Hudson, Judson, Seasons, and Cackler Roads was approved by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2nd Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes.
- Scott Swan reported that the Village of Sugar Bush Knolls approved the formation of a JEDD Exploration Committee and that a meeting of Franklin Township’s committee and the village committee would take place soon to begin discussions of JEDD options.

FINANCES

- Payment of bills, warrants \$26153 through 26164, including payment vouchers and totaling \$183,279.74 since the last meeting was approved by a motion made by Kellie Kapusta; 2nd Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes.

At 8:30pm Chairman Glenn Russell made a motion to suspend regular session and enter executive session for the purpose of discussing the hiring and compensation of a public employee; 2nd Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes. At 8:56pm a motion to resume regular session was made by Kellie Kapusta; 2nd Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes.

Scott Swan made a motion to hire road crew applicant Brian Rooth and an hourly rate of \$20.00, with the provision that his rate increase to \$21.00 once he attains a CDL and his 90 day probationary period has passed and this is approved by the Teamsters Local 24 union office; 2nd Glenn Russell. All three trustees voted yes.

At 8:59pm a motion to adjourn was made by Glenn Russell; 2nd Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes.

Date _____ Fiscal Officer _____

Chairman _____