

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of Meeting

Plain Township Board of Trustee Meeting

The Plain Township Board of Trustees met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. at the Plain Township Fire Station, 9500 Johnstown Road, New Albany, OH 43054.

Mr. Ferguson called the meeting to order. Mr. Ferguson led the Trustees in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Roll Call: Members Present: Dave Ferguson, Kerri Mollard, and Jill Beckett-Hill. Others present: Administrator Ben Collins, Chief Connor, Assistant Chief Ecleberry, Administrative/Zoning Coordinator Mary Fee, Maintenance Supervisor Bob Pharris, and Finance Officer Courtney Rogers. Visitors present: Matt Shull, Deputy Upton, Erick Fisher and family, Chip Kinder and family, Jen Huber, Aaron Underhill, Jeff Heuerman, many residents and firefighters.

ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

Ms. Mollard requested an executive session for personnel matters.
Mr. Collins removed Resolution 231004F2.

PAYMENT OF THE BILLS

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to pay the pending warrants in the amount of \$355,530.62.
Ms. Mollard seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye. (Resolution 23100401)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Beckett-Hill made a motion to approve the September 6, 2023 Board of Trustees Meeting minutes as submitted. Ms. Mollard seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye (Resolution 23100402)

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to approve the September 20, 2023 Board of Trustees Meeting minutes as submitted. Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye (Resolution 23100403)

SWEARING IN CEREMONY

Kenneth "Chip" Kinder was sworn in by Ms. Mollard.
Erick Fisher was sworn in by Ms. Beckett-Hill.

CITY LIASON – MATT SHULL

Mr. Shull reminded everyone that New Albany's Oktoberfest is this weekend, October 6th and 7th. He also reported that the Pickleball courts have been very busy. They are averaging 350 people per day.

FRANKLIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE – DEPUTY UPTON

Deputy Upton was in attendance but did not have an update. Mr. Ferguson requested that the Sheriff's department monitor the speed of cars traveling along State Route 605 and Walnut Street.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA-LARRY POTTER

Larry Potter, of Troop 450, attended the Trustee meeting to promote the Wreaths Across America program and seek donations from the Township and residents. He explained that his Boy Scout troop was able to cover every Veteran's grave in Maplewood Cemetery last year with private donations as well as contributions from Plain Township and City of New Albany. Donations for this year have been slower and the price to sponsor a wreath is \$17.00.

ZONING HEARING

Mr. Ferguson reopened the zoning hearing for 6202 and 6204 Walnut Street, Case # 03132023. This is a rezoning application to change the zoning from Rural to Commercial Planned District. Mr. Collins reported that the applicant submitted two additional exhibits. He summarized the changes that the applicant made, specifically committing to operating hours of 7am-9pm 7 days/week, removal of the wall sign on the building, moving the set-back to the current 100 feet, providing a 6-foot shadowbox privacy fence, and will make every effort to include trees in the landscaping.

Ms. Mollard addressed the residents in attendance and acknowledged all the concerns that they have. She explained that the concerns of lighting, traffic, safety, and environmental impact have all been addressed by the applicant. Ms. Beckett-Hill and Mr. Ferguson echoed Ms. Mollard's comments.

Mr. Ferguson moved to close the zoning hearing. Ms. Mollard seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye.

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to move that the recommendation of the Plain Township Zoning Commission to deny Zoning Amendment Case # 03-13-2023 be and hereby is denied, rendering the proposed amendment *approved, with* modifications as set forth below:

Various changes reflected in the versions of the application documents and exhibits presented including:

1. An increased building setback to 100 feet from the centerline of Walnut Street, which matches the existing building setback of the oldest commercial structure on the site that sits closest to Walnut Street.

2. A maximum peak building height of 24'9"
3. Board and batten siding of all structures
4. A monument sign compliant with township zoning and no wall sign on the façade
5. A minimum 80% opacity screening on the west property line as provided on the landscape plan presented on July 11
6. A 6-foot shadowbox privacy fence of 100% opacity along the west and north perimeter of the site
7. Operating hours set at 7:00 am to 9:00 pm seven days a week
8. Additional ROW screening in front of the main structure, with best efforts to include trees as determined upon grading and engineering

Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the motion.

Vote: Mr. Ferguson – Aye. Ms. Mollard – Aye. Ms. Beckett-Hill – Aye.

ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Collins reported the Township was able to secure a 5% decrease in premium from United Healthcare for the Township's health insurance for 2024. These premium rates are even with 2016 rates.

Mr. Collins also explained that the Electric and Gas contracts will expire next year. He is working on securing new rates, however, current pricing is much higher than what the Township is currently paying. The Township's mosquito management contract is also expiring. Unfortunately, Mr. Collins is expecting bids to increase by 100% because of lack of competition and increased labor and chemical costs.

Ms. Beckett-Hill made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 231004A1. Be it resolved, to approve the renewal of the Plain Township health insurance coverage with UnitedHealthcare under the existing plan for a term beginning January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 at a 5% discount based on the following rates.

	Current	Proposed
Employee	\$587.44	\$558.07
Couple	\$1,171.34	\$1,112.78
Employee + Child	\$1,159.05	\$1,101.10
Family	\$1,751.13	\$1,663.57

Mr. Ferguson seconded the Motion. Vote: All Aye.

ZONING

Mr. Collins reported that Ms. Fee was able to assist a resident with a request for an expedited variance hearing and the Board of Zoning Appeals was able to schedule that for an afternoon meeting.

Ms. Mollard inquired about an issue with someone squatting on a property in Plain Township. Mr. Collins stated that the property owner must request a temporary restraining order through the county court and then work with the Sheriff's office if the order is granted. Deputy Upton explained that if the restraining order is granted, Civil will go out and serve the paperwork and the person could be removed from the property.

ROAD/MAINTENANCE

Mr. Pharris reported that the new Gator and lawn mowers have been ordered. There is a 12-week lead time on the Gator. The maintenance staff is currently replacing the fence at the pool. Ms. Mollard inquired about the flooding on Clouse Road. Mr. Pharris explained that there has not been a significant rainfall recently, so there have not been any complaints.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chief Connor reported that the fire department is currently trying to consolidate the multiple records management vendors into one vendor that can provide all the necessary services.

The fire department has received two estimates for the Engine 121 repair. The quote from Haines is \$32,437 and the quote from Cummins is \$59,950.

Chief Connor also sent out a rough draft of the Executive Summary of the Strategic Plan. He would like everyone to review it and send comments so that it can be shared at the next meeting.

Chief Connor reported that all the new interns have started and he is very impressed with the group. He believes that there are some potential full-time firefighters in the group.

Chief Connor also reported that the department continues to work on reducing overtime hours. His goal is to be below 5% for overtime. Mr. Ferguson noted that the overtime has increased substantially since 2020 and would like to understand why. He thought that the increased staffing was supposed to mitigate the overtime cost. Chief Connor explained that with the 11% raise, the elimination of the 10-hour overtime gap, and the training/professional development, that overtime is going to increase.

Chief Connor is also working on rotating and redistributing responsibilities within the Fire Department. For example, BC Dudley will no longer be working on the truck and equipment maintenance, he will be working on updating the Standard Operating Procedures. The purpose of this is to make the officers and firefighters more well-rounded.

Chief Connor recognized Ms. Fee for helping the fire department with HRA reimbursements and navigating the health insurance program.

The Fire Station open house is scheduled for October 15, 2023.

There was some discussion regarding the Fire budget. Mr. Ferguson noted that the 2023 Buildings and Additions account was substantially higher than previous years because of the

roofing and concrete projects but he questioned why the 2024 budget has \$500,000. Mr. Collins explained that the total includes bathroom renovations (\$40k), landscaping (\$25k), exterior painting (\$20k), generator (\$150), parking lot (\$250k), but not land acquisition. The Township has not spent much money on the fire station maintenance and is therefore catching up. It was also noted that there is \$2.5M projected in Fire Capital Equipment including the new Engine and Medic. Chief Connor discussed the need to acquire a piece of land for an additional fire station in the future. He would like to have a deeper discussion with the Trustees to determine if this is something that they think is necessary and to develop a plan on how to fund it. Mr. Ferguson agrees that the Township has been talking about a substation for years, and that it needs to be cohesive with our Strategic Plan. However, he would like to understand if this substation is necessary to support our current boundaries of Plain Township or different service territories. He does not think Plain Township can be subsidizing other jurisdictions. Mr. Collins added that there is residential growth in the City of New Albany north of Central College Road. There are 450 new housing units planned north of Central College Road. Ms. Mollard also added that the growth of the Recreational Complex at Bevelhymer with the new fieldhouse and pickleball courts will mean increased runs for injuries.

Mr. Collins reported that the property valuations have increased significantly. What that means for the Township is that the inside millage will increase significantly by that increased property value. The Fire Levy millage will adjust down. Mr. Collins expects the effective rate to drop by 15-20%. The Township will get the updated evaluations in December.

Ms. Beckett-Hill asked for a date that the Trustees and Fire Department can sit down and discuss the items in the Strategic Plan. It was discussed that a date in mid-November would be targeted to get the community stakeholders together to present the finished plan.

Ms. Mollard made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 231004F1. Be it resolved, that the Plain Township Board of Trustees hereby approves the cost of \$9,997.75 to be paid to Ron Potts RVS, 5669 Johnstown Utica Road, Johnstown, Ohio, for repairs to the fire safety trailer that will be covered by OTARMA insurance minus the \$500 deductible.

**Ron Potts RVS
5669 Johnstown Utica Road
Johnstown, Ohio 43031**

Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the Motion. Vote: All Aye.

Mr. Ferguson inquired about the Township's plan for the Safety Trailer. He thought the fire department was considering getting rid of it. Mr. Collins explained that the repairs are covered by insurance and the insured value is \$75,000. Once repaired, the fire department can decide what to do with it.

Resolution 231004F2 was removed from the agenda.

FISCAL OFFICE

Ms. Rogers reported that the annual Software Solutions renewal is 7% this year, which was higher than expected. She asked for a reduction in the increase but Software Solutions explained that this was not possible with their increased costs.

Ms. Rogers also updated the Board on the status of the UKG payroll conversion. The Township has put everything on hold with UKG. Work has not started on the Telestaff part of the contract and the fire department is investigating a vendor that could be used for all their record-keeping, including time-keeping and scheduling. Ms. Rogers explained that she plans to reach out to ADP to see what services they offer that the Township may not be fully utilizing.

Mr. Ferguson made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 231004B1. Be it resolved, to authorize and pay the amount of \$17,031.40 to Software Solutions, 8534 Yankee Street, Suite 2B, Dayton, Ohio 45458 for the Annual Software Support Contract (11/1/23-10/31/24) and Server Hosting for the VIP Accounting Software to be paid out of the following funds:

General-Twp-Other Expenses	1000-120-58099	\$ 2,558.87
Cemetery – Other Expenses	2041-410-58099	\$ 260.51
Fire District – Other Expenses	2111-220-58099	\$ 12,470.58
Roads District – Other Expenses	2141-330-58099	\$ 494.49
Pool – Other Expenses	2171-610-58099	\$ 640.44
EMS - Other	2281-230-58099	\$ 606.51
Total		\$ 17,031.40

Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the Motion. Vote: All Aye.

Ms. Beckett-Hill made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 231004B2.

WHEREAS, the Ohio Department of Public Safety/Ohio Emergency Management Agency coordinates activities to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 169 of the 134th General Assembly appropriated \$75 million to provide grants to support communities that have experienced adverse impacts to First Responder personnel during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Plain Township has applied for and been awarded funds through the Ohio EMA ARPA First Responders Retention Incentive Grant.

NOW THEREFORE, in compliance with H.B. 169, be it resolved by the Board of Trustees of Plain Township that the Plain Township Fiscal Officer take all necessary action to:

- (1) Establish the First Responders Retention fund, 2904-000-0000; and**

(2) Take any other measures required to comply with guidelines to receive the Ohio EMA ARPA First Responders Retention Incentive Grant.

Ms. Mollard seconded the Motion. Vote: All Aye.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Beckett-Hill is continuing to work on quotes for different maintenance projects for the fire station, such as the bathrooms and exterior painting. She will follow up in two weeks.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Mollard attended the Joint Parks District meeting and reported that the work on the fieldhouse is progressing. They are in the design review stage. Mr. Ferguson inquired about the lack of sewer and water access for the fieldhouse location. Ms. Mollard said it is still being discussed and negotiated with the City of Columbus.

Ms. Mollard also reported registrations are going well for the winter sports. The JPD also recognized two New Albany Little League baseball teams, the U10 State Champions, and the U12 Little League Championship qualifiers.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to adjourn into executive session at 8:04 p.m. pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 121.22 (G)(1) for compensation and personnel. Ms. Mollard seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye

Chief Connor and Mr. Collins attended the Executive Session.


Chief Connor and Mr. Collins left the Executive session at 8:23 p.m.

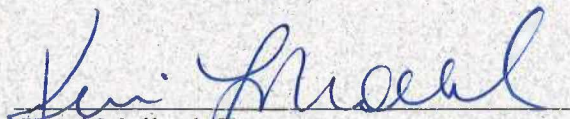
Ms. Mollard made a motion to close out of executive session 8:54 p.m. Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:



David Ferguson, Trustee

Kerri Mollard, Trustee

Jill Beckett-Hill, Trustee

Bud Zappitelli, Fiscal Officer