

## **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, Maintenance Supervisor Bob Pharris, and Finance Officer Courtney Rogers. Visitors present: Chip Fellows, Gary Smith, many firefighters and Zack Justice's family members.

### **ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Ms. Mollard has old and new business. Mr. Collins noted that Chip Fellows was attending the meeting in place of Mike Durik.

### **PAYMENT OF THE BILLS**

**Mr. Ferguson made a motion to pay the pending warrants in the amount of \$403,878.97.**

**Ms. Mollard seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye. (Resolution 23111501)**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Ms. Mollard made a motion to approve the November 1, 2023 Board of Trustees Meeting minutes as submitted. Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye. (Resolution 23111502)**

### **SWEARING IN – ZACK JUSTICE**

Firefighter Zack Justice was sworn in by Ms. Mollard

### **LAND USE PLAN – GARY SMITH**

Gary Smith was in attendance to discuss Plain Township's Land Use Plan. He noted that there is a lot going on in the area and that it is happening fast. He noted that the unincorporated land and population in the Township is shrinking as parcels are being annexed into the City of New Albany, the City of Columbus, and the Metro Parks. Plain Township was 9,700 acres in 2020 and down to 4,900 acres at the start of 2023. Mr. Smith thinks the main question for the Township is what is the role the township has left to play? He noted that the lack of water and sewer limits what people can build and develop in the Township. That will likely lead to more annexation, or the larger lots will be split up to satisfy residential growth. Mr. Ferguson asked if

the Township should update the land use plan to indicate the areas that are considered “growth corridors” and are subject to zoning and annexation. The Township’s current minimum lot size is 2.5 acres. Mr. Collins stated that the Township has less than 1000 acres that could potentially be developed and there is nothing larger than 100 acres of undeveloped land that has not been acquired by Metro Parks, owned by the city, or owned by a vested party. It was also noted that if a designated land use changes, it would be worth updating the language and designation on the land use plan to adjust resident expectations. Mr. Smith said he would look at the land use plan to see how he can update it to change the expectations so that the Township has room for zoning changes for the right opportunities.

### **CITY LIASON – CHIP FELLOWS**

Mr. Durik was not in attendance. Mr. Fellows reported that the City of New Albany had a very successful Diwali celebration. Ms. Mollard added that it was very well done. The City of New Albany is trying to do more cultural events. Mr. Fellows also informed the Trustees that this upcoming Sunday will be the Holiday lighting at Market Square. The Rose Run phase 2 development has been indefinitely delayed.

### **ADMINISTRATOR**

Mr. Collins updated the board on Wreaths Across America. The Township is aiming for 570 wreaths this year. Currently, 125 have been sponsored. November 20, 2023 is the cutoff for orders.

The Township’s contract for mosquito management has expired with Franklin County Public Health. They are going to bid out the work and it is expected that the cost will increase by almost 300%.

Mr. Collins updated the Board on the Wellness plan. He and Mary Fee are continuing to work with all the staff to earn the Wellness credits to fund the HRA for next year. Ms. Mollard started discussion again regarding switching our HRA management company. Mr. Collins informed the Trustees that the current agreement with Chard Snyder would need to be cancelled by November 30, 2023, in order to provide the required 30 day notice. The potential benefit of switching to the new management company is that it will link to UHC’s database for the Explanation of Benefits. There will be one portal and it will automate the submission process.

Mr. Collins presented the end-of-season report on the pool. It was a very successful season. Total membership sales were even with the 2022 season, but daily gates and daily visits were up significantly. The pool saw an average of 550 visits per day. Ten days saw more than 1000 visits. The busiest day was July 4<sup>th</sup>, where there were 1600 visits plus an additional 350 for the fireworks. The Township spent over \$100,000 in capital investments prior to opening this season. Mr. Collins shared results from the end-of-season survey. The top responses were to limit guest visits and address the daily gate fee. Mr. Collins reported that Plain Township has the lowest daily visit fee in Franklin County and there is a price break in the afternoon. It was discussed to eliminate or adjust the afternoon discount and increase the daily price. Another recommendation would be that a visitor would need to be a member or resident to attend the



pool. Most of the survey respondents listed the following concerns: too busy, too many closures, bathroom cleanliness, attention to rules, and dress code. Swimsafe returned a lot of staff from last year. A weakness was in experienced leadership and customer service. The Township is planning to renew the contract with Swimsafe for 2024, the final year of the contract, with no increase in cost. Mr. Ferguson reported that a couple of residents have addressed their concerns with behavior that is happening at the pool. Ms. Reife reported that pool rentals were down this year.

The Township has several board appointments expiring at the end of the year: one Zoning Commission, one Board of Zoning Appeals, three Rocky Fork Blacklick Accord, and two New Albany Parks and Recreation representatives. Ms. Mollard inquired as to whether the Township appointees should be voting based on the Trustees' priorities and philosophy or as independent individuals. Specifically, she was referencing the Rocky Fork Blacklick Accord unanimous decision to approve the Thrive Community development on the corner of Walton Parkway and New Albany Road. Mr. Collins clarified that Mike Chappellear did not vote for the development. Mr. Ferguson explained that in the past, the appointees would come to Board meetings to give updates on activities but that it is not appropriate for them to have to follow the Trustees' views. Ms. Beckett-Hill concurred that the appointees should have their own independent opinion as they serve but that she likes the idea of them touching base and communicating what is going on with the Trustees. There are no specific term limits on the New Albany Parks and Recreation board. However, the Rocky Fork Blacklick Accord appointees can only serve for 3 consecutive terms. Mike Chappellear has one reappointment available. Ms. Mollard suggested that Mr. Collins reach out to the current board appointees to see if they are willing to continue for another term.

Mr. Collins explained that the current Township utility agreements are expiring in 2024. The Township needs to lock something in for electric before the summer. Mr. Collins explained that rates are up. He will have prices to present to the Trustees at the next meeting.

**Ms. Beckett-Hill made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 231115A1. Be it resolved, that the Plain Township Board of Trustees hereby approves the pool management contract renewal with SwimSafe Pool Management, Inc. for the 2024 pool season, in the amount of \$231,288 to be paid out of fund 2171-610-53060 (Pool – Contracts) for the 2024 pool season. Be it further resolved to pay 1% of the 2024 contract price, being \$2,312.88 upon signing.**

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

## **ZONING**

Mr. Collins reported that there were no variance applications. The field house architect has asked to meet with the Zoning Commission, generally local government jurisdictions are exempt from zoning restrictions.

## **ROAD/MAINTENANCE**

Mr. Pharris reported that the maintenance department is working on leaves and getting the dump truck back in service. It needs a new electric clutch on a hydraulic pump. Mr. Pharris also reported that the Township needs to add one more veteran to their list of veterans in Maplewood Cemetery.

## **CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Julie Doran, a resident on Bevelhymer Road, was in attendance. She expressed the need to widen Bevelhymer Road because of the increase in traffic to the athletic fields at Bevelhymer Park. It has become unsafe to travel that road with their farming equipment. Mr. Collins explained that back in 2014, Plain Township was the lead applicant on the Ohio Public Works Commission grant to replace the one-mile stretch of Bevelhymer Road from State Route 605 to the curve. The Township's hope is that the City of New Albany will be successful in annexing the 75 acres they purchased on the west side of Bevelhymer to tie that into the parks on the east side and that there would be an opportunity to widen the road at that time. He explained that there is no dedicated right-of-way. In order for the road to be widened, the Township would need to acquire an easement or dedicated right-of-way, preferably from every owner.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Chief Connor updated the Board on wanting to consolidate the five records keeping software into one program. Chief Connor prefers we contract with ImageTrend to replace all 5 software systems, but it is available as ala carte options. Battalion Chief Sponaule reached out to current clients of ImageTrend that are currently using the scheduling software, Slate. He spoke with Central Ohio Joint Fire Districts, which runs about half the staff of Plain Township. COJFD has been using Slate since June 2022 and had rave reviews. One drawback is that it does not do automatic time-off accruals. An EMS department in Dallas, TX has also been using Slate for two and a half years. They also had rave reviews about the product and have been working with ImageTrend to make improvements. Chief Connor would like approval to move forward with the fire reporting side of ImageTrend because of the CAD switch to Tyler Technologies. The upfront costs for ImageTrend cover the cost of year one. Mr. Ferguson inquired if the Township will be able to recover the Telestaff setup fee from UKG. Mr. Collins reported that there is a termination for convenience clause of 90 days' notice with UKG. UKG could deduct any work performed on the project but very little has been done. Ms. Rogers does not believe the Township would get any of the setup fee back from the HR Ready build, as that project was nearing completion. Mr. Ferguson supports the switch to ImageTrend but would like to hold off on Continuum until the contract is resolved with UKG.

Chief Connor explained that he met with Mr. Collins, Ms. Mollard, and Chief Eccleberry to work on the strategic plan summary. He feels that the original plan was designed to be a 5+ year plan but because of the growth, it is more like a 2-year plan. Ms. Mollard explained that the Township had two documents, the Strategic Plan and the Standards of Coverage. Neither document was in a format that worked for the Township. Months ago, Ms. Mollard and others



worked on the Mission, Vision, and Values statement, as well as priorities and goals. Once that was completed, the two documents needed to be merged into one document. The introduction section summarizes the priorities and the process the Township team went through. It provides a staffing structure with a high-level organizational chart, a brief statement on historical overview, a summary of the service and budget overview, and the coverage area. Ms. Mollard feels that the next step is to take all the objectives and measurables that have dates and put them into a chart. Mr. Collins added that Fitch and Associates gave the Township over 200 pages of strategic plan priorities, goals, objectives, and outcomes. Ms. Mollard has reworked that document into something that can be shared with the community. Ms. Mollard tried to keep a diverse mix of comments in the document. The team seemed to like the document format. Mr. Ferguson suggested a separate meeting to go through the Strategic plan in depth and make sure everyone is on the same page. He would like to understand how the team is analyzing the data. Chief Connor addressed the question about where to add another fire station in the future based on higher response times. Currently, there are two areas of the Township that have response times higher than the national recommendation. Chief Connor believes that the area north of Walnut Street needs to be a priority for a second fire station. Possible location areas were discussed. Fitch and Associates gave the Township targets that the Township can adopt as goals. These targets are based on national standards.

**Mr. Ferguson made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 231115F1. Be it resolved to amend the Plain Township Fire Department fire inspection and plan review fees effective January 1, 2024 according to the attached fee schedule.**

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

**Ms. Mollard made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 231115F2. Be it Resolved, that the Board of Trustees hereby approves an increase in the purchase order to pay Haines Enterprises, LLC for motor repairs to engine rescue 121 in the amount of 6,807.86 for a total of \$39,245.82 to be paid out of fund 2111-220-58024 (Fire – Repairs-Non-Routine).**

**Haines Enterprises, LLC  
8952 Township Road 304  
Millersburg, Ohio 44654**

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

**Ms. Mollard made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 231115F3.**

**WHEREAS, Mark Powell was hired as a full-time firefighter paramedic with Plain Township, Franklin County, on February 7, 2007, and completed rescue tech training in 2014; and**

**WHEREAS, after years of exemplary service as a firefighter and serving as a designated firefighter in charge, Mark Powell was promoted to Lieutenant on October 20, 2021; and**

**WHEREAS, on January 9, 2022, Mark Powell suffered a serious injury while responding to a residential house fire; and**

**WHEREAS, after many months of rehabilitation and hard work, Mark Powell was appointed to the position of EMS Coordinator on February 1, 2023; and**

**WHEREAS, Mark Powell has announced his intent to retire in 2023 and his service and devotion to the Township and its Fire Department have proven an enormous benefit to Plain Township and its residents, which have contributed to Plain Township having the finest Fire Department in the area.**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, PLAIN TOWNSHIP, FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO:**

**That upon his retirement, Mark Powell be recognized for his outstanding service as a member and officer of the Plain Township Fire Department, and that on behalf of the citizens of Plain Township, as well as for ourselves individually, we wish to express our sincere appreciation for his exemplary service and many contributions to Plain Township and the community.**

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

There will be a luncheon for Mark Powell on November 29, 2023, which is his last shift day.

#### **FISCAL OFFICE**

October 2024 Bank Reconciliation and Month-End reports were presented.  
October 2024 Credit Card statements were presented.

**Mr. Ferguson made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 231115B1. Be it Resolved, to increase Fund 2903-000-45019 OneOhio Opioid Settlement Fund receipts by \$913.96.**

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

**Mr. Ferguson made a motion to authorize Mr. Collins, after the public has had a chance to purchase wreaths, that the Township and the City of New Albay will sponsor the remainder of the wreaths for the Maplewood Cemetery veterans. Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye.**

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Mollard reported that she attended the Joint Parks District meeting. They shared images of the planned fieldhouse. It is going to be a 200,000 square foot building, with an expected opening date in 2026. Dave Wharton would like to attend a Board meeting and present the plans to the Trustees.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**



Ms. Mollard stated that Emily at Intel would like to present to the Trustees either at a Board meeting or one-on-one.

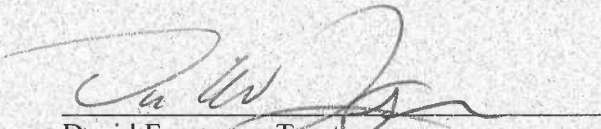
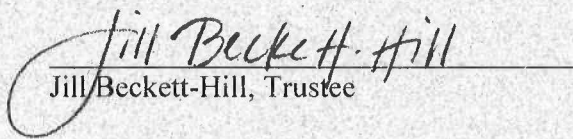
Ms. Beckett-Hill will attend the School Board meeting this Monday.

Mr. Ferguson followed up on the marketing discussion with Josh Poland and Joe Stefanov. Mr. Ferguson discussed possibly using their services. Prior to hiring Josh, the city used a consultant for their marketing needs. That consultant will outline some options for the Township to consider.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 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