

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 Fire Station, 9500 Johnstown Road, New Albany, OH 43054.

Ms. Mollard called the meeting to order. Ms. Mollard led the Trustees in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Roll Call: Members Present: Kerri Mollard and Jill Beckett-Hill. Others present: Administrator Ben Collins, Assistant Chief Ecleberry, Maintenance Supervisor Bob Pharris, and Zoning Coordinator Mary Fee. Visitors present: Dennis Keese, Dave Gerhardt, and Dave Halsey. Trustee Dave Ferguson was absent.

ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

PAYMENT OF THE BILLS

Ms. Mollard made a motion to pay the pending warrants in the amount of \$507,516.82.

Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye, (Resolution 25070201)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Mollard made a motion to approve the June 18, 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting minutes with changes as noted by Ms. Beckett-Hill. Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye. (Resolution 25070202)

Ms. Beckett-Hill noted that NACo will reach out to a surveyor to review the lot split and an appraiser to complete an appraisal.

GOLD STAR MEMORIAL PROJECT – DENNIS KEESEE

Ms. Mollard welcomed Mr. Keese and explained the Trustees are interested in learning more about the Gold Star Memorial project, its costs, and how the Township can be supportive. Mr. Keese introduced two committee members, Dave Gerhardt and Dave Halsey, who are both Vietnam veterans and Plain Township residents. The project includes making a statue of Eleanor Butsko, a mother who lost her child to war, hanging a Gold Star on her front door. Mr. Keese was neighbors with the Butsko family for many years and saw the star on a daily basis. Mr. Keese saved the front door when the Butsko's family farm was torn down. The project's name is New Albany Vietnam Veterans' Memorial.

Ms. Butsko's son, Mike, was the only fatality of about 40 New Albany residents who served in the war. Mike was an OSU student and volunteered to join the Navy as a hospitalman. Mike later decided he could better serve his countrymen in Vietnam, so he became a Marine medic. Mike died at Ambush Valley after saving several men from a burning tank.

Mr. Keesee advised the goal is to raise \$200,000 for the project and donations total \$110,000 to date. The statue will be installed on November 11th. Ms. Mollard stated she would help with the fundraising personally, and the Trustees will discuss what the Township can do. Donations should be made to the Plain Township Historical Society.

NEW ALBANY CITY COUNCIL LIAISON – MIKE DURIK

Mr. Durik was not in attendance.

NEW ALBANY PLAIN LOCAL SCHOOLS LIAISON – PAUL NAUMOFF

Mr. Naumoff was not in attendance.

FRANKLIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE – DEPUTY UPTON

Deputy Upton had nothing to report. Ms. Mollard inquired about the series of auto accidents on State Route 62. Deputy Upton said their speed trailer is currently being used on the West side, but once it is available he will get it out there. Mr. Collins stated that the speed limit signs on State Route 62 will be replaced with reduced speed limit signs with the speed dropping to 45 mph. (Upon review, it will be reduced to 50 mph.)

CITIZENS COMMENTS

None.

ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Collins reported that the Aquatics Center has hosted 3 swim meets, and it will host the championship meet in 2026 which will draw 1000 people. Pool membership sales have been strong at \$224,000, which is \$7000 more than last year. The daily sales are down, which is most likely weather-related. Ms. Mollard inquired about concessions. Mr. Collins stated the township has a new concessions company, so it is a transitional period. The concession company has a nice variety of items which have been well received. This is the last year for the vending contract. The concession company is interested in the vending contract for next year.

Mr. Collins provided an update on the McCoy Center. The Township is accepting applications for an appointment to the board of directors. Mr. Collins has published August 6, 2025, as the date for interviews. There will be an additional vacancy in January 2026. Mr. Collins requested approval from the Trustees for the application language to be placed on social media. The approval was given.

Mr. Collins also reported that the owners of the McCoy Center are looking to revise the current operating agreement. The New Albany Community Foundation has been a substantial contributor, and they would like to transition funding to the city. That would give the City of New Albany more oversight over programming. The Community Foundation would no longer have 3 seats; they would keep one as an ex officio. The other two seats would be split between the city and the school district. Another suggested change is to reduce the size of the board from 15 members to 12. Mr. Collins added there are some potential upcoming capital needs for the McCoy Center including replacing the elevator. One firm has submitted a proposal to provide a plan to improve the ADA seating. The Township share for capital contributions is 23%.

Mr. Collins introduced two resolutions, the August pool payment, and the authorization of an amendment to the Annexation Agreement. Mr. Collins explained the amendment adopts reciprocal legislation that updates the exhibits in the Annexation Agreement between Plain Township, New Albany and the City of Columbus. The exhibits reflect water/sewer service agreement areas, and there are no changes to the text of the agreement. Ms. Mollard and Ms. Beckett-Hill asked questions regarding the exhibit and Mr. Collins confirmed the amendment is for water/sewer service areas only.

Ms. Mollard made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 250702A1.

Whereas, the Plain Township Board of Trustees has approved a pool management contract extension, including opening and closing, with SwimSafe Pool Management, Inc. for the 2025 pool season, in the amount of \$238,226 out of fund 2171-610-53060 (Pool – Contracts).

Be it resolved, to set aside and pay the August pool management payment in the amount of \$47,646 from fund 2171-610-53060 (Pool – Contracts) according to the attached schedule.

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

Ms. Beckett-Hill made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 250702A2.

WHEREAS, the cities of New Albany and Columbus are parties to a Water Service Contract and a Sewer Disposal Contract, each of which establish the terms of service including the service area boundaries of the cities of New Albany and Columbus; and

WHEREAS, the cities of New Albany and Columbus recently amended the Service Area Boundary Map set forth on the Water Service Contract and Sewer Disposal Contract Exhibit A, effective April 10, 2025; and

WHEREAS, amendments to the Service Area Boundary Map have a direct impact on the Growth Areas that were designated and agreed to in the Annexation Agreement executed by Plain Township, the City of New Albany, and the City of Columbus on February 26, 2008, and the First Amendment executed by the parties on June 15, 2009; and

WHEREAS, the original Service Area Boundary Map was attached to the Annexation Agreement effective in 2008 and identified therein as Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, Plain Township, the City of New Albany, and the City of Columbus wish to replace the original Service Area Boundary Map with the current Service Area Boundary Map effective in 2025; and

WHEREAS, Plain Township, the City of New Albany, and the City of Columbus also desire to replace the Agreement Territory Map identified in the Annexation Agreement and First Amendment where they were designated as Exhibit B; and

WHEREAS, per section 1.3 of the Annexation Agreement, alteration of the Agreement Territory must be approved by the legislative authorities of all the parties.

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

Section 1. That this Board of Trustees hereby approves the amendment of the Annexation Agreement between Plain Township, the City of New Albany, and the City of Columbus which was executed by the parties on February 26, 2008, and the First Amendment executed by the parties on June 15, 2009; and

Section 2. That this amendment to the Annexation Agreement and First Amendment shall consist solely of the replacement of the Service Area Boundary Map and the Map of the Agreement Territory, identified in those agreements as Exhibits A and B respectively, with maps that are substantially similar to those attached hereto; and the Amended Service Area Boundary Map shall be the version which was approved by New Albany City Council and made effective on April 10, 2025; and

Section 3. That this Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Township Administrator to execute any documents and/or take the necessary actions to replace the previous exhibits with the altered Exhibits A and B attached hereto; and

Section 4. That this Board of Trustees finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning this legislation were taken in an open meeting of this Board, all in compliance with Ohio law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Section 5. This Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

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

ZONING

Mr. Collins provided updates on the Township's rental properties. The maintenance department continues to work on refreshing the 39 Second Street property. A potential tenant, with an October move-in date, would need to upgrade the space to meet his networking and connectivity requirements. Josh Staley is vacating the 45 Second Street location at the end of the month. The maintenance staff plans to replace the floors. There are no parties interested in the 45 Second Street property at this time.

Ms. Beckett-Hill inquired about the Land Use Plan. It was decided to table the discussion until August when Trustee Ferguson will be present. Mr. Collins reported that a developer requested a meeting to discuss some residential developments in the township. Most of that development would require access to sanitary sewer, although some could be done with a package plant. There is a property on State Route 605 that could potentially have access to water from Delaware County.

Mr. Collins advised there is a Board of Zoning Appeals hearing next week regarding the worship center on State Route 62. The owners have been reasonable about improving the aesthetics of the building. Ms. Mollard inquired about the storage facility on Walnut Street. Mr. Collins advised there have been some storm water issues, and the developer is doing their best to temporarily divert the storm water while the facility is being built. Mr. Collins also noted the elevated appearance of the site. The State requires a sprinkling system in the main building which is 40,000 square feet.

ROAD/MAINTENANCE

Mr. Pharris reported that the 2016 truck is back in the shop for repairs. The new pickup will be getting lights and fitted for the snowplow. The historical site sign at the cemetery on State Route 62 was plowed over. The maintenance staff brought the sign back to the shop to prevent it from being stolen. Mr. Pharris asked Deputy Upton to check to see if there is a police report indicating who was responsible. Mr. Pharris reported the work on 39 Second Street was a lot more than anticipated. They are almost done with the inside of the building and will then begin work on the outside.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chief Ecleberry reported the last session of Safety Town has concluded and graduation is tomorrow. EMS Coordinator Brad Essick did a nice job managing it, and the fire department continues to receive good feedback on the program. The fire crews have been training at the Discover Card building and a demolition permit has been approved. There was a house fire on Walnut Street and Assistant Chief Ecleberry thanked the mutual aid partners that assisted, there were seven agencies there. Investigators from the NAS-T team were also utilized and helped our fire investigator. Nothing suspicious was found.

Four new interns have been on-boarded. Their background checks have been completed, and they were taken for drug screening.

The fire department will provide Special Duty for the New Albany 4th of July race. Special Duty EMS will be present as well. Fire Marshall Sponaugle will make 2-3 trips to the fireworks site as they are preparing the fireworks.

Ms. Beckett-Hill provided an update on the Fire Substation. She shared the plan for the proposed lot split pointing out the northern portion is 6.35 acres. They are currently working on a legal description of the land as well as an appraisal. The New Albany Company is working on getting the details pulled together for the land donation. Ms. Mollard asked about the gas lines on the northern portion of the land. Mr. Collins advised AEP told him that distribution lines, not transmission lines, are being installed, which would be a maximum of 50,000 volts. Ms. Beckett-Hill advised the placement of the gas lines gives us a larger footprint and options for placement of the fire substation. Ms. Mollard asked about the egress on State Route 605. The current plan is to have access off State Route 605 and no access on New Albany Road depending on what happens with the other side of the property. Mr. Collins recommended that an easement for fire equipment be requested of the party that purchases the adjoining lot. Ms. Mollard asked about the timeline and Ms. Beckett-Hill is hopeful we will have another update in two weeks.

Ms. Mollard inquired about the Request for Qualifications for the architect. Mr. Collins reached out to legal counsel for a template and said there are a lot of ways to do this. Mr. Collins recommends the township request a traditional type of architectural service and a traditional lump sum construction bid process. Mr. Collins advised this makes sense with the price point of the project being \$8 million. Mr. Collins advised the RFQ usually includes a location, and we need a two-week window for architectural firms to submit qualifications. Ms. Mollard asked about employing the same architect as the school for cost-saving purposes, also noting that the architect has already been vetted. Mr. Collins explained they were designing for the school, and the township may want an architect that has experience with fire stations. Ms. Beckett-Hill advised the Township must go through the RFQ process, and Mr. Collins confirmed state statute requires it.

The timeline of the project was discussed and Mr. Collins advised rezoning would be necessary. Ms. Mollard inquired about the status of the bond paperwork. Mr. Collins reported that he has completed many of the Township components and sent them to the Fiscal office for review. Ms. Rogers is currently on vacation, but Mr. Collins will follow up with her next week regarding status. The bond issuance timeline entails the bids going out by October 1st, having the bids returned by October 15th, the Board selecting a contract and using that as a basis for our bond issuance. The township will then go to sale, which takes two weeks. Mr. Collins would like this to take place ahead of the November ballot. Ms. Beckett-Hill requested that the Fiscal office provide an update on the bond paperwork and Ms. Mollard requested that the minutes reflect this request. Mr. Collins will start securing time on various schedules to keep things moving forward.

Mr. Collins also noted that the governor vetoed 67 measures within the state budget. One of those was the restrictions on carry-over for school districts. Mr. Collins is curious about whether the statehouse will try to override it.

Ms. Mollard stated she sent a clean-up version of the Annual Report Narrative to Chief Connor. Mr. Collins also made a few edits.

FISCAL OFFICE

Ms. Mollard requested that the minutes reflect that she has asked for a fiscal office investment policy and has not yet received a draft.

Ms. Beckett-Hill made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 250702B1. Be it resolved, to authorize and pay BHM CPA GROUP, Inc. an amount up to \$7,000 for the Ohio Auditor of State 2023 and 2024 Financial Audit out of fund 1000-110-53010 (General -- Auditor's and Treasurer's Fees). Ms. Mollard seconded the Motion. Vote: All Aye.

Ms. Mollard requested a review of the audit if the auditor provides one.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2025 TAX BUDGET

Ms. Mollard made a motion to open the public hearing for the review of the 2026 Tax Budget. Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye.

Ms. Mollard reported that the tax budget has been reviewed in previous meetings. She understands that the general philosophy to estimate conservatively on revenue while overestimating expenses. All current year expenses related to the fire substation will be paid through the bond. The low balance in the Roads fund is to show the need for additional available millage. Ms. Mollard asked about the township responsibility for the roundabout construction. Mr. Collins reported that the Plain Township trustees have committed to funding a portion of the net cost of the State Route 605 and Walnut Street roundabout. The state has committed \$5M which leaves a residual of approximately \$1M+. The township's portion is around 10%. The roundabout at Bevelhymer Road and Walnut Street is being planned by the City of New Albany. They have not requested a contribution. The expectation is that Bevelhymer Road will be widened north of Walnut Street up to the Fieldhouse entrance. Property owners on Bevelhymer Road have voiced opposition to granting additional right-of-way.

Ms. Mollard made a motion to close the public hearing on the 2026 Tax Budget. Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye.

Ms. Beckett-Hill made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 250702B2. Be it Resolved: To accept the attached 2026 Tax Budget and submit it to the Franklin County Auditor's Office. Ms. Mollard seconded the Motion. Roll Call Vote: All Aye.

Ms. Beckett-Hill made a Motion to pass Resolution No. 250702B3. Be it Resolved: That the Plain Township Board of Trustees requests all available inside millage for the unincorporated part of the Township and allocate it to our Road District Fund (2141-000-00000). The funds will be used for necessary road improvements. Ms. Mollard seconded the Motion. Roll Call Vote: All Aye.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Mollard reminded the Board that she will miss the 2nd meeting in July.

Ms. Mollard also reminded the Board that the 2nd meeting in September was moved to an evening meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Beckett-Hill will be attending the New Albany Community Foundation meeting in Ms. Mollard's absence.

Ms. Beckett-Hill met with Chandra Panley, the McCoy Board chair. Ms. Panley will coordinate with Mr. Collins about scheduling a township meeting to attend.

Ms. Mollard reported that she has a client commitment for the first meeting in September, so she will not be in attendance.

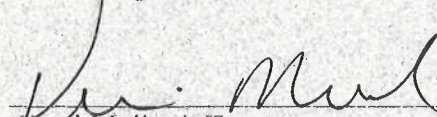
Ms. Mollard would like a recommendation from the Fiscal office on a dollar amount that the township could donate to the Gold Star Memorial Project. Mr. Collins reported that the maximum amount that the township could contribute is \$50,000. Ms. Mollard stated that at the last meeting, Mr. Durik said that he would be happy to talk to New Albany City Council about a possible donation. Ms. Mollard suggested the township and city each give \$25,000. Ms. Mollard also asked Assistant Chief Ecleberry to share the fundraising effort with the firefighters. Ms. Beckett-Hill would like to continue the discussion at the August 6th meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Mollard made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 p.m. Ms. Beckett-Hill seconded the motion. Vote: All Aye

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

David Ferguson, Trustee


Kerri Mollard, Trustee


Bud Zappacelli, Fiscal Officer


Jill Beckett-Hill, Trustee