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**MINUTES OF SYMMES TOWNSHIP WORK SESSION**

**APRIL 11, 2017**

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The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Elected officials present were: Mr. Kenneth Bryant, Ms. Jodie Leis, Mr. Phil Beck and Ms. Carol Sims.

Also present: Kim Lapensee, Administrator and Bill Pitman, Director of Public Works.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Leis made a motion to approve the Agenda, Mr. Beck seconded the motion. Motion passes.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

**Blong Memorial Park** – Ms. Lapensee indicated that Ms. Leis would like to improve this park because it is an entrance to the community. She would like to put a statue there and enhance that statue with some landscaping. Mr. Beck indicated that he would like to do updates there as well, but it is a memorial park. He stated that there are plaques there and would like to incorporate some panels to provide more history of the community. He suggested that we put the statue that Ms. Leis likes near the pond at Home of the Brave Park. Mr. Bryant agrees with Mr. Beck on the placement of the statue at Home of the Brave Park. Ms. Leis stated that she would like the statue to be more noticeable and that it needs to be decorated at Christmas. Ms. Lapensee suggested that maybe a statue of a police officer or firefighter be placed there since it is a memorial park. She stated that we could work with a landscaping company to get some ideas on how to make that park pop. Ms. Sims suggested we include the parks in geocaching so that it would encourage all the residents to visit the parks and possibly get a prize for answering all of the questions. Ms. Lapensee will work on getting a quote for police and fire statues as well as landscaping.

**Property Maintenance Code** – Ms. Lapensee went through major highlights to the code which included definitions and the whole administrative process (which involves the violations, ticketing, who is writing the tickets, the appeals process, the abatement process and how to collect on the abatement once it’s been cleaned up). Mr. Bryant stated that he wanted to see more consistency in the code that a step by step process be added on how violations will be handled (which would include how much time we would give them for clean-up, how many notices we will send, etc.). Ms. Sims asked if there is lighting spillover included in the new code. Ms. Lapensee stated that we can certainly add that for residential to residential. Mr. Beck asked about the complaint area and how the complaints will be handled. Will we allow for anonymous complaints and how far away can the complaint come from? Ms. Lapensee stated that it is her opinion based on her experience that all complaints should be allowed to be anonymous (if they want) and should be allowed to come from all over the community. She stated that it would be too difficult to police where the complaint is coming from and she does not want neighbors to fight over property nuisances. She stated that she has seen that happen too many times in other communities. She stated that she also wants the right to be able to ticket someone that is in violation if she is on her way to another violation and she notices the property nuisance. Mr. Beck asked that we check with our legal counsel on this. Ms. Leis asked if we could put together a list of organizations that would be willing to help out residents in need if they don’t have the means to clean up their properties. Ms. Lapensee stated that she will have staff work on that. Ms. Lapensee asked if everyone would take the time to read what she has proposed and we could

schedule another meeting to discuss this in more detail at a later date. Everyone agreed to hold a special meeting on May 11, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

***Home of the Brave Park*** – Ms. Lapensee stated that we had just received the new updated costs for the improvements suggested for Phase 2 of Home of the Brave park. The Board discussed the suggested improvements and that we should apply for grant money through the state capital budget through Tom Brinkman. We just need to figure out how much the budget is, what our pledge will be for and what improvements we will want to make. Mr. Bryant stated that he would like to see the concession stand get built but we will need an organization to run it. He suggested that if we look at adding improvements to the ballfields that we should have tournaments there down the road which would help the business community. These improvements would involve irrigation, speakers, bleachers, lighting, etc. Ms. Leis stated that she would like to see a turf field get installed on Union Cemetery where the Lacrosse box is now located. She stated that she would also like to see an American ninja course. Mr. Bryant suggested a sledding hill. Mr. Pitman said he would like to see an exercise course get installed in stations along with handicapped swings. Ms. Lapensee stated that we also included pricing on adding regular swings (3) to the parks. The total cost would be around \$4,600.00. Ms. Lapensee stated that at the next meeting we should prioritize what improvements they want to see done first. The Board stated that they were fine with purchasing swings for the parks.

***Symmes Park*** – Ms. Lapensee stated that we would like to replace the playground equipment at Symmes Park in the Lemming area due to its age. The original equipment was installed in 1993 and has reached its useful life. She stated that we would like to put the replacement on this next agenda and replace the equipment at the end of the season (sometime in September). She stated that the total cost of the equipment will be \$192,617.00 and will include replacing the equipment for the 5 to 12 year olds and 2 to 5 year olds. It will also include a zoom line and sidewinder for the older kids and sawgrass will be installed underneath the equipment instead of a rubber play surface due to the maintenance issues we have had with the rubber surface in Home of the Brave Park. The Board stated that they were fine with replacing the equipment as presented.

***Park Personnel*** – Mr. Pitman stated that he currently has 2 part-time employees that work 28.5 hours a week (which equates to 3 days a week + 2 weekend days). He stated that we need at least 1 more part-time person but he would rather add a full-time person to fill in the gaps where he lacks coverage. Mr. Bryant asked if we have looked at hiring outside personnel to mow the ROW's. Mr. Pitman stated that he received a cost estimate for mowing HOB park (\$650 a cut X 30 times a year = \$19,500.00 a year). Mr. Pitman stated that there are rose gardens at the Meade House that need to be maintained along with all the medians at 71/ and the exit ramps (\$60 a cut X 30 = \$1,800.00), Loveland Madeira at 75 (\$175 a cut X 30 = \$5,250.00) and Montgomery Road at Cornell (\$150 a cut X 30 = \$4,500.00) or \$31,050 a year or we could pay a full-time person \$15.00 an hour to do the same work. The Board talked briefly where the money would come from to pay for the extra person. Mr. Pitman stated that we have many items in the parks that we clean and maintain on a daily basis. They are: 8 parks (which total 197 acres that need to be mowed and landscaped), 7 shelters, 8 restroom structures (16 bathrooms total), a water park, 3 baseball fields, 10 soccer fields, 2 softball or 3 soccer fields, 2 basketball courts, 2 tennis courts, and 1 sand volleyball court. We also have 6 township buildings (including the Meade House) and 4 yards to manage on top of the parks. He stated that we do all of this with 10 employees (8 full-time and 2 part-time). Mr. Pitman stated that we also eliminated all overtime for the full-time employees in the parks. We went to a rotating schedule where if it your weekend to work, the employee is now off on Fridays and get a three-day weekend off. After much discussion about full-time vs part-time employment, the Board stated the Mr. Pitman should come to the next board meeting with a recommendation and what he would like to do.

There was a also a discussion about eliminating the overtime for the parks and Ms. Leis stated that she met with the public works employees who had concerns over their raises and eliminating the overtime. Mr. Beck stated that they arrived at the raises by starting at 3% for everyone and

then deducted what each employees' classification was increased from which was 12% (just for premiums).

**Updates to the Website** – Ms. Lapensee stated that Ms. Leis would like for us to add Newsletter and list-serve capabilities to the website. Ms. Leis stated that she thought we should transition away from paper newsletters and go with a greener footprint such as emailing or texting. Ms. Lapensee stated that they received a quote from their existing website host which would cost us anywhere from \$5,760.00 to \$8,400.00. We also received a quote from Legends which has agreed to redesign the whole website and add those two functions for around \$5,000.00. Mr. Bryant asked that anything we send out be sent to all the Home Owners Associations and copy the Board on those emails so that they can be reminded of all events.

**Meade House** – Ms. Lapensee asked the Board what they wanted to do with the Meade House and if they had a preference to which non-profit agency that the house would make a good home for. Mr. Bryant stated that he would like to see the master gardeners or Horticultural Society in there along with the Historical Society. He stated that the Farm Bureau may be moving in the future to Gorman Farm because they already had animals there. Ms. Leis stated that she would like to see us use that house for entertainment venues (a party venue that we could rent out to the residents for indoor/outdoor parties). She stated that she understands we would have to think of ways to reduce the noise due to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Ms. Lapensee asked if we could continue the discussion on the rest of the items due to the time. The Board agreed to continue the discussions for the rest of the agenda for May 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. She stated that the items left to discuss are Personnel Manual Updates, Sidewalk Program, EMS Billing Policy, and Technology Upgrades.

Mr. Beck asked if we could hang banners again on Lebanon Road for all of our events. Mr. Pitman stated that we would need to hang the guidewires again to accommodate the banners. He would like to see a banner for every event. Mr. Beck also asked if anyone knew of someone who owned a drone and would be willing to fly it over the Memorial Day Event on Friday, May 26<sup>th</sup>. He would like to have that ceremony on video from overhead.

Ms. Sims stated that there will be a presentation on “Letters from Camp Dennison” by the Historical Society on April 20<sup>th</sup> in the meeting room.

Mr. Bryant stated that we are also overdue for a Land Use Plan update that was supposed to happen in 2014.

#### ADJOURNMENT

MR. BRYANT made motion to adjourn at 9:30 p.m. Mr. Beck seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Mr. Bryant - ‘aye’; Ms. Leis - ‘aye’; and Mr. Beck - ‘aye’.

No further action was taken and the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Approved:

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Board President

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Fiscal Officer