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**MINUTES OF SYMMES TOWNSHIP WORK SESSION**

**APRIL 9, 2018**

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The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Elected officials present were: Mr. Phil Beck, Mr. Ken Bryant, Ms. Jodie Leis, and Ms. Carol Sims

Also present: Kim Lapensee - Administrator; and Chief Otto Huber – LSF.D.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Communications Agreement – Mrs. Lapensee stated that we had questions concerning the communications expenses that are not included in the Fire Agreement with LSF.D which we tabled from the last meeting. She stated that there is a list of their expenses at the bottom of the report. Chief Huber stated that the expenses for the dispatch center (personnel) are currently billed to each community (Loveland and Symmes) based on the run volume. He stated that Loveland has a higher run volume than Symmes does. Chief Huber stated that after the fire contract was renewed, we did not do anything with the communications agreement because of the change in staffing at the township and city. Mrs. Lapensee asked what else is included in the costs that are not listed on the sheet. He stated that there are three items that are a direct bill (1/2) and are not included in the pricing for the number of calls. He stated that those three items are Digital Data Tech \$4,607, Locutions \$7,046 (auto call feature EMS/Fire), and Alerts \$13,241 (Total of \$12,447 for Symmes share). He stated that those numbers increase each year as well. He stated that we have been fortunate over the years because the county generally pays for 90% of the infrastructure costs if things need to be replaced. Chief Huber stated that the information for the budget for the next three years is included in the packet. They are as follows: 2018 – \$469,030, 2019 - \$488,874, and 2020 - \$509,528. Chief Huber suggested that we could do this part of the agreement as an addendum to the original contract because they are providing all the services.

Mr. Beck asked if the communications center was the same as the PSAP. Chief Huber stated yes. Mr. Beck asked how many communities have one. Chief Huber stated that there are 4 – Norwood, Amberly Village, St. Bernard and Cincinnati. He stated that we are known as an associate PSAP. Ms. Leis asked what the difference is. Chief Huber stated that the 4 PSAP’s all take their 911 calls directly; ours does not. He stated that our calls come to us routed through either Hamilton, Warren or Clermont Counties. Mrs. Lapensee asked if we were going to be able to keep our PSAP designation. Chief Huber stated yes. He explained that each county is allowed to have 4 PSAPs and we are one of the 3 from Clermont County (their backup and that is why they pay for everything). Chief Huber stated that Amberly Village may drop their PSAP. He stated that they have had conversations with Amberly Village and Indian Hill about combining services and sharing personnel. Mr. Beck asked what would be the down side to not having their own PSAP. Chief Huber stated that the only downside is the personal service that is now provided in their community would not be. Mr. Beck asked if the response time would be affected. Chief Huber stated that it could be. He stated that our call response is within 20 seconds due to the Locutions program we run. He stated that once a call is placed, the tones are dropped and the run is sent while the dispatchers are still on the phone with the resident. He stated that if no one at the dispatch center can answer the call (due to call volume, then it auto answers at the county and vice-versa).

Mr. Beck asked when the dispatch center was created. Chief Huber stated that it was created in 1999 after the tornado hit the area. He stated that at that time, the county's dispatch fees were going up and the Board came to them at the time and asked them to set up a dispatch center to save costs. He stated that the county has tried to put on a levy for communications and it has not passed. Chief Huber stated that it was going to cost the Symmes Township/Indian Hill area approximately \$1,000,000.00 and they could start their own for half the cost. Mr. Beck stated that we are paying roughly half a million for this service in this area. Chief Huber stated that we also pay Hamilton County approximately \$23,000 a year for their role in dispatching some of our calls ( $\$234,515 + \$12,447 = \$246,962.00 + \$23,076.00 = \$270,038.00$  Symmes cost for dispatching each year). Mr. Beck asked if other communities who do not have their own PSAP are paying these same fees to Hamilton County. Chief Huber stated yes and our costs are cheaper too. Ms. Sims asked how much use the 677 number gets each year. Chief Huber stated that we bill out the emergency calls, but the amount of telephone calls they get are tremendous (48,000 non-emergency).

Chief Huber stated that we are unique in the fact that we operate in a 3-county area and rely heavily on our neighbors and they rely on us. Chief Huber stated that there is an auto dispatch where the fire is located and that determines what equipment goes out and which jurisdiction gets dispatched along with ours (Deerfield, Mason, Miami Township, Sycamore Township, Montgomery and Indian Hill/Madeira). He stated that the CAD system is built to know how many engines, ambulances, etc. to dispatch based on the number people needed at the scene. There was a discussion over active 911 and how that operates.

Ms. Leis asked what our next move is. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she will work with Chief Huber to write an addendum that will list all the costs and who is responsible for paying them. He stated that in 2019 they will renegotiate the fees for personnel that begins in 2020. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we will also need to look at the levy and how that all plays into personnel costs. There was a discussion over the safety services levy and the millage we currently have. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we have a 1.7 mill continuous levy and two other levies that were approved in 2015 that run for 5 years – 1.5 mill and .5 mill that will end in 2020. Chief Huber stated that he would like to start those conversations earlier than later. Mr. Bryant asked if we should consider removing all smaller levies and combining them into one levy. Chief Huber stated that if you do that, we would lose the Homestead Rollback (where the state pays the 12.5%). He stated that we probably need to look into how much our effective millage is. He stated that he would like the communities to run the levies at the same time.

Solid Waste Pick-up – Mrs. Lapensee asked the Board what they wanted to do with the solid waste pickup. She stated that we could either bid out the entire township to see what prices we could get or accept Rumpke's letter where they have agreed to give everyone in the township free recycling every-other-week. Mr. Bryant asked if this included anyone other jurisdictions. Mrs. Lapensee stated that Sycamore Township is not going to bid out their trash; they are going to accept Rumpke's lower rate of \$18.55 per month which would include recycling. Ms. Leis asked if we could talk them into every week recycling. Mrs. Lapensee stated that they did ask Rumpke to do every week and they said no, that they could not afford to run that truck every week. She stated that the residents currently pay \$18.55 plus an additional \$3.50 per month for weekly recycling. She stated that the price would only be good for two years and there is also a senior rate which is two dollars less. Mr. Beck stated that he would gladly pay the extra amount so there is no smell and flies. He stated that he also needs two large containers due to their volume. Ms. Leis stated that if we go out to bid for trash, what would hurt us. Mrs. Lapensee stated nothing. Mr. Beck stated that if we went out to bid, then we would have to include all residents in the township. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we would have to include the residents who currently have Loveland water and receive trash pickup from Loveland through Rumpke. Mr. Beck stated that the safest way to do something about trash is to put it as a question on the ballot (just like we do aggregation). Mrs. Lapensee stated that there is no opt out option. Ms. Leis stated that she walked door to door last year during her campaign and that is the one big thing she kept hearing over and over again was that the Township did not have garbage pickup. Ms. Leis stated that we checked around and we aren't getting any better deals so she believes we should just bid it out to see what rates we get. Ms. Leis stated that we should also have a public meeting to discuss it. Ms. Sims asked if we discussed it before. Mr. Bryant said yes and it was

mixed responses. Mr. Beck stated that if we can save money, have recycling every week and control the hours they come into the community, it would be a good thing.

Mrs. Lapensee stated that there are multiple ways to pay for it. She stated that it can be put on the ballot in the form of a levy which can be written off on your tax bill, we can hire a staff person to collect the money and run the program, it can be assessed or Rumpke can bill and collect the money. If we pay the bill and collect the money, the rate will be cheaper. Mrs. Lapensee stated that if we bid out the program, we would actually get all the other services with it – yard waste, leaf, Christmas tree and recycling. Ms. Leis stated that she thinks we should bid it out and see what we get. Mr. Bryant asked how many companies provide solid waste pickup and recycling. Mrs. Lapensee stated that there is only CSI, Rumpke and Allied (?). Mr. Beck suggested that we take bids for multiple different ways. Mrs. Lapensee suggested that we include low volume and we do not know those numbers at this time. Mr. Bryant asked about Colerain Township and what they are doing. Mrs. Lapensee stated that Springfield, Ross and Colerain Township bid out their trash. She stated that Loveland is part of the CLG consortium and they pay \$16.50 per month which includes recycling. Mr. Bryant stated that we would have to exclude those Loveland water users and Mrs. Lapensee stated that we could not exclude them. We would have to include them and they would have to delete that service from their water bill which is a separate line item.

Mrs. Lapensee stated that she will check with CLG on when they will bid out their next program. The Board agreed that we should bid out the trash for the entire township to see what rates we can get.

Hopewell Sidewalks – Mr. Bryant stated that the sidewalks are related to the road levy. Mrs. Lapensee asked the Board if they wanted to move forward with installing sidewalks on Hopewell Road this year. She stated that the cost will be around \$188,000.00 and we could pay for them using Road Levy funds which include sidewalk construction. Ms. Sims stated that we have a balance of \$86,314.00 that was budgeted for sidewalks this year. She stated that we could move up the money set aside each year for 2019 and 2020 (\$50,000.00) and add it to the \$86,314.00 (\$136,314.00). She stated that we would still need to allocate that additional \$52,000.00 from fund 11.

There was a discussion over whether or not to put aside the money this year for the project or wait. Mr. Bryant stated that he was concerned about getting all the paving done before the 7-year cycle ended. Mrs. Lapensee stated that the paving will be done with money to spare and she handed out a spreadsheet that shows that we will have around \$500,000.00 dollars left over at the end of 2020 which is equal to almost one year of carryover. She stated that she included all the paving, collection fees, setting aside \$50,000 for sidewalks, insurance, Pemmican Run concrete work, and sidewalk maintenance for 2018, 2019 and 2020 into the numbers. Mr. Bryant stated that the thoughts behind these numbers was to always have one year of float. Mrs. Lapensee stated yes, it would be there at the end of 2020. Ms. Sims stated that if we do all the paving and the concrete work (which was budgeted for \$634,700), then there would be no more money left this year (that was budgeted). Mr. Bryant asked if we could split up the sidewalk project or the concrete work for Pemmican. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we could, but Mr. Pitman's thought was that we go ahead and replace all the concrete work now (2018, curbs, gutters, ADA ramps, etc.) and then we could pave in 2019. She stated that if we did it this way, the concrete work could be done this year in a couple of weeks and the paving contractor would not have to wait on the concrete people to be finished or help up due to the weather. Mr. Bryant asked if this concrete work was already budgeted for next year. Mrs. Lapensee stated yes. Mr. Bryant asked if we were just going to move up the \$285,000 from 2019 to 2018. Mrs. Lapensee stated yes, and Mr. Pitman has consistently done this over the last 4 years. She stated that if you look at the road chart, you will see streets that were listed in one year but moved up the list to get them finished if we got a better price on asphalt. Mr. Bryant asked what the schedule called for in 2019. Mrs. Lapensee stated that the cost is estimated at \$592,500.00 for all the streets and concrete work in Pemmican Run which includes Totempole, Pemmican Run Drive, Birchbark, Pomo and Apalachee. Mrs. Lapensee stated that this year's cost for paving includes Seven Gables (which the county will pay for) and the end of Tanagerhills Drive (which Montgomery will be paying for). She stated that we will receive approximately \$94,000.00 from the County and Montgomery to pay for paving, which would drop our cost down to approximately \$347,000.00. Mr. Bryant stated that if we are going to pay for the concrete work this year, then we will have \$285,000.00 available for next year and we might not use that for paving, but instead use it for sidewalks.

Mrs. Lapensee stated that we generally move up other streets from the list in 2020 up to 2019. Ms. Leis stated that we might not do that next year then. Mrs. Lapensee stated okay, if that is how you all want to do it.

Ms. Sims asked if all the streets for 2018 are completed and there are no streets for 2018 that will be moved back to 2019. Mrs. Lapensee stated yes, all streets that are listed in 2018 and some for 2019 will be completed in 2018. None will be moved back. Ms. Sims asked what the status of Blong Road bridge. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we did not get the grant funding to replace that bridge. She asked what the cost will be. She stated that our match for the grant was \$57,000.00. Mrs. Lapensee asked the board if they wanted to hold off on the sidewalks until next year or not do some scheduled paving to get the sidewalks done. Mr. Beck stated that he would like to do the sidewalks as soon as possible because it's a safety issue. Mr. Bryant asked where the sidewalks would be placed again – Humphrey down to Hopewellhills Drive on the south side. Mrs. Lapensee stated yes. Mr. Beck stated that we should ask our Law Director if we have any liability if we pay for sidewalks, install them up to the bridge and have people cross at their own risk. Ms. Leis stated that she thinks we should put up delineators. Mrs. Lapensee stated that the bridge is not wide enough for any of that.

Mrs. Lapensee asked the board if they wanted to trim \$188,000.00 dollars in paving from the 2019 budget of \$592,400.00 which would leave \$404,400.00. Ms. Leis stated that we could always just do half of the sidewalks this year. Mr. Bryant stated that we have to be careful with that because we want to finish all the roads we promised by 2020. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we should be okay because Mr. Pitman has been moving up multiple streets earlier than the schedule states and we will be fine by 2020. Ms. Leis stated that we will just have to clarify that with him. Mr. Beck stated that he will be in District 8 for a meeting this week and he will clarify the bridge safety issues with them. Mr. Bryant stated that if we can find an additional \$50,000.00 without pushing any streets off, then we should put the sidewalks in. Ms. Leis and Mr. Beck agreed.

Ms. Sims stated that Mrs. Lapensee did not show the \$35,000 that was approved for the Oak Street storm pipe replacement project. Mrs. Lapensee asked what fund this would be paid from. Ms. Sims stated that it will be taken from Fund 11. Ms. Sims asked what we were going to do with the Blong project since we lost the match. Mrs. Lapensee asked what the total cost for Blong was going to be. Ms. Sims stated that our match is \$57,000.00 and we would have to do the entire project now. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she would go back to Mr. Pitman and come up with a list showing the costs and how we can make all these projects work.

New Road Levy – Mrs. Lapensee asked the Board what they wanted to include in the new road levy that we need to put on to cover expenses for the Service Department. Mr. Bryant stated that this whole thing is complicated because we already have one levy and we are talking about putting on a second one. He stated that we will need to review all the ingredients in the first one before deciding on the second one. Mr. Bryant stated that there are also residents who are asking for more sidewalks. He stated he thinks we should update our sidewalks plan and possibly increase the amount we set aside each year for new sidewalks. Ms. Leis stated that we don't put enough money into our sidewalks plan.

Ms. Leis stated that back when we were having the discussion over the levy, we were talking about either putting on a .7 mill or 1.0 mill levy. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we had all agreed at the last meeting that the Board would meet again to decide what exactly they wanted to include in the levy and that would drive what the millage needed to be. Mr. Bryant stated that we should roll in sidewalks. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we will need to add in salaries/benefits and insurance. Ms. Leis asked if there was a way to roll some of these levies together. Mr. Beck stated that if we roll them together, we will lose the homestead rollback. Ms. Leis asked what we would tell people if they asked why the levies can't be combined. Mr. Bryant stated that it would be because we would lose the rollback of 12.5% that the state pays from income taxes.

Mr. Bryant asked if we need to generate a list of items we want to include. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we need to do the list because we will need to send down two resolutions to the county and the last one needs to be passed in July to submit in August prior to the 90-day deadline before the election. She stated that she would like to do the first resolution in May. Ms. Sims stated that we went over preliminary numbers a couple of months ago, but really need to get input from the Board on what they would like to see included in the levy. Ms. Sims stated that the finance

committee has always talked that this levy should include money for salaries for the Service Department. She stated that she believes all the other improvements should come from Fund 11. She stated that the Board needs to decide whether or not they want Fund 11 (Road Levy) to be a huge levy just for improvements or include improvements in the second levy as well. She stated that it might not pass if it gets too large. She stated salaries only currently come out of our Road and Bridge Fund (Fund 4). She asked if they wanted to just increase Fund 11 instead in two years or eliminate Fund 11 if we pass a new levy. Ms. Sims stated that we do not need a 1.0 mill levy to provide for just salaries. Mr. Beck stated that right now we are just talking about adding salaries/benefits, insurance and a boost for sidewalks. He stated that he does not think we should shoot for a new building at this point. Ms. Sims stated that she was not going to include it anyway. Ms. Lapensee stated that she feels that we need to build some kind of building to put all the equipment in that sits out at night to protect our investments. Ms. Leis stated that we should plan for that but not as this time. Ms. Sims stated that the finance committee stated that there was no equipment parked outside. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she feels that we should have someone come in and look at all of our buildings and assess their needs, locations, etc. Mr. Beck and Ms. Leis stated that they agreed. Ms. Sims asked the Board whether we would keep Fund 11 if we put this new levy on. Mr. Bryant stated that timing will be everything. Mrs. Lapensee stated that is why she wanted to put the levy on in the spring due to the other levies we have coming up and that the school is going to put one on in 2019. Ms. Sims stated that if we are going to keep Fund 11, then we do not need a huge levy amount. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she does not want us to sell our needs short just in case. Mr. Bryant stated that we don't want to overtax either. Ms. Leis stated that we do need some wiggle room. Mr. Bryant asked what fund salt would come from. Ms. Sims stated that she takes that from other road funds. She stated that if we are saying to the residents that we need to have this additional levy to pay for personnel and benefits... Ms. Leis stated and sidewalks. Ms. Sims stated then she believes we should increase the Road Levy Fund (Fund 11) if the board wants to increase the amount of money used for sidewalks. Mr. Bryant stated that we probably just need an operating levy. Ms. Leis stated that she thinks the operating levy would be tough sell. She believes that people want to pick and choose what they want to fund. Ms. Sims stated that she believes that sidewalks belong in Fund 11 (Road Levy). She believes that they should increase the millage for Fund 11 in 2020 if they want to fund sidewalks. Ms. Leis stated that she thinks we should just renew the levy in 2020 for the .9 mill amount. Ms. Sims stated that if we spend all the money we are talking about (sidewalks, storm drains, etc.) then we will lose the wiggle room we have now (one-year carryover). Mr. Bryant asked if we do combine everything into one levy and we chose to renew the existing .9 and increase that amount, what amount does it need to be to cover all we need to do. Ms. Sims stated that all the finance committee ever talked about is just covering salaries. Mr. Bryant asked how much we will need to cover salaries/benefits and insurance. Ms. Sims stated that we would only need about .5 mills. Mr. Bryant stated that if we then take that .5 mills and add it to the .9 plus add in .1 for additional sidewalk money, then we are at 1.5 mills. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we cannot wait until 2020 to put on this additional money. She stated that we will be out of money in the road and bridge fund (Fund 4) to pay for salaries at the end of 2019. Ms. Sims stated that there is a projected shortage of fund for fund 4 in the amount of \$28,000 by the end of 2019. Ms. Sims said the salaries for 2019 will be at \$210,000.00. Mr. Bryant stated that by the end of 2020, we will be at \$225,000.00. Mrs. Lapensee stated that keep in mind that Loveland schools will be asking for a levy in 2019 and we will be asking to renew the safety services levy and the road levy in 2020. Mr. Bryant asked if we would have enough money in the general fund to get us through to 2020.

Mrs. Lapensee asked if the .9 mills covers the storm drain projects that we have had to pay for lately. Ms. Sims stated that she does not know the schedule so she can't answer that question. Mrs. Lapensee stated that these items have not been on a schedule, they have been emergency replacements and she believes we should account for emergencies in the budget and be proactive at the same time. Mr. Bryant asked if there is anything we can defer in the budget for the future to save money. Ms. Sims stated that we could push out our rotation for dump trucks. She stated that we currently replace our dump trucks every three years so each truck is on a twelve-year cycle. She stated that there are 5 smaller trucks and a bobcat. Mrs. Lapensee stated that the TIF goes away in 2021, so we should also account for that in the safety service levy money.

Ms. Sims asked for direction. Ms. Leis stated that she thinks we should provide the information in two different ways – Renew Fund 11 in 2 years and what we should do to bridge the gap (renewal plus increase) and new levy in 2018 plus renew in 2020. Mr. Beck asked if Mr. Pitman

has an inventory of all the culverts in the township. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she would ask. Ms. Leis stated that she thinks that Mrs. Lapensee should move forward with hiring someone to look at all the buildings and do a facilities plan.

Master Plan Update – Mr. Bryant asked why would have to pay someone to update the Land Use Plan. He stated that we have always had it done in house. Mrs. Lapensee stated that the bids we took in are for the master plan. Mr. Beck stated that this plan outlines the sidewalks. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we should also do a Parks Master Plan.

Property Maintenance Code – Mrs. Lapensee stated that she is going to go ahead and get a copy of the newest international property maintenance code and we can adopt the sections of the code that we want. She stated that under the ORC we are bound by law to adopt any model codes that have already been adopted.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Bryant made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Leis seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Leis - ‘aye’; Mr. Bryant - “aye”, and Mr. Beck - ‘aye’.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Approved:

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Kenneth Bryant, Board President

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Carol Sims, Fiscal Officer