
MINUTES OF SYMMES TOWNSHIP WORK SESSION

MARCH 26, 2018

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

Also present: Kim Lapensee – Administrator.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Communications Agreement. Mrs. Lapensee stated that when we discussed fire department expenses back at the January meeting, she learned that we were responsible for half of the expenses for the communications center. She stated that she reviewed the fire contract and did not see anything in writing regarding the communication center. She stated that she talked to Chief Huber about it and he forwarded a contract that LSFd uses for Loveland. She stated that she has not reviewed it yet. Mr. Bryant asked what the timing would be for this. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we could go ahead and move forward with putting an agreement together that outlines our responsibilities or we could wait until 2019 to incorporate it into the overall agreement for personnel with LSFd. There was a discussion over who is paying for expenses (i.e. furniture, computers, etc.). Mr. Bryant suggested that Mrs. Lapensee sit down with Chief Huber and develop a matrix of what is all included in the communication center and who is responsible for what and the costs for 911. The Board agreed to wait on any further discussions until Chief Huber was able to attend the next meeting. Ms. Sims suggested that we do an addendum to the existing agreement for the communications center.

2. Room and Facilities Agreement and Reservation Form Policy. Mr. Beck asked if we could discuss this item again. Mr. Beck stated that he understands that we should be able to control in some way who uses our buildings and control security but not make it so hard for everyone to do so (i.e. insurance or a deposit). Mrs. Lapensee stated that the reason she had suggested a deposit was to make sure that everyone who uses the facilities are keeping it clean. If they don't clean up after themselves, then we have to clean up after them. Mr. Beck stated that it would be the same as the shelters. Ms. Leis stated that we will have a lot of home owners association that will think its too much of a hassle. Mrs. Lapensee stated that they could leave their deposit on file with us just in case for multiple meetings. Mr. Bryant stated that he remembered us being out of compliance with OTARMA on the room policy. Mrs. Lapensee stated yes; during this last audit they commented on how we still need to adopt a policy. Mrs. Lapensee stated that the most important thing for us to do is have everyone fill out a form to use the room stating they agree to our terms and conditions for use and the terms of conditions will be that they have to leave their meetings open to the public and cannot turn anyone away. She stated that we will also put on the form how they have to clean up after themselves. Ms. Leis stated that we should put that statement on there or they won't be able to use the room again. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she will write up a short policy and attach the form so we satisfy our insurance carrier and have contact information on the form with the

stipulations. Ms. Sims stated that there is a policy for the administration building. Mr. Beck suggested that we add check boxes (insurance, non-profit, etc.). Mr. Bryant asked for a sample form to review.

3. Financial Policies. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she took our current policy that we have now and rearranged it. She stated that everything in bold is new. She stated that this lists our what we currently do and somethings that are not written down. Ms. Sims stated that it also lists things that we currently do not follow. Mrs. Lapensee stated she increased the spending authority to \$2,500 from \$1,500 and we discussed this at our January meeting. Ms. Sims stated that the \$1,500 was supposed to be a trial run and that still has yet to begin because she still has not received the exhibit A from the resolution passed in January. Ms. Sims stated that it comes down to how much oversight does the board want to have. She stated that the Board has asked questions about small things but large ticket items just sail through. Ms. Leis stated that if she has questions she just picks up the phone to ask Kim the questions ahead of time. Ms. Leis stated that she does not have a problem with moving the spending authority up because you really can't buy anything for \$750 or \$1,500. Mr. Bryant stated that the ORC states \$2,500.00. Ms. Leis stated that she has talked to other townships and they all have a limit of \$2,500.00. She feels that we are too conservative at this point and we should make some changes. Mr. Bryant stated that whatever the threshold is, the rest lands at the bottom of our agenda. Ms. Leis asked if that is what Ohio Checkbook is for. Ms. Sims stated yes, but if you put it on the agenda, then everyone can see what the employees are spending. Mr. Bryant stated that if the Township Administrator is authorized to spend up to \$2,500.00, then it won't show up on the agenda. He asked what the risk is. Mr. Bryant asked why we were at \$750.00. Ms. Sims stated that was the threshold set by the trustees at one time. Ms. Sims stated that Fire Department threshold was \$500 due some problems and it was increased to \$750.00 at the February meeting. Mr. Bryant asked if the Chief was included. Ms. Sims stated no, he does not have to sign off on the purchase orders. Ms. Sims stated that this is an independent contractor spending our money. Ms. Leis asked if we were up to date for 2017. Ms. Sims stated that we are working on that. She wanted to close out 2017. She stated that Ohio Checkbook shows all checks issued. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she does not understand why we will continue to do then-and-now if we don't have to. She stated that if we increase the spending authority to \$2,500.00 then we will eliminate those items from the agenda. She stated that not all emergencies will be eliminated. Ms. Sims asked if we were talking about the Fire Department or the Administration. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she feels we should treat it all the same. Ms. Sims stated that the Fire Department is an outside contractor. Mrs. Lapensee stated that they are spending our money. Ms. Sims stated that we should have better control over how they spend our money. Mrs. Lapensee stated that they submit a purchase order to her, it gets reviewed and her signature if the purchase goes over \$750.00 up to \$2,500. Mrs. Lapensee stated that it would be just like all the purchases that the Director of Public Works makes. Ms. Sims stated that she disagrees and that the Board needs to have that oversight and not an employee on an outside contractor. Mrs. Lapensee asked what the difference is. She asked why we would not want someone (her) from the inside looking at all the bills and if something goes wrong, then it would be her fault. Ms. Leis stated that if we are processing then-and-now, it's already over and done. Ms. Sims stated that then and now is something the auditor created because the purchase was made then and the money is available now. Ms. Sims stated that there is a procedure available now for emergency procedures up to a certain amount. Ms. Sims stated that her whole concern is there is a procedure in place and its currently not being followed and now we are being asked to change the policy without any discussions. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we are discussing it now. Ms. Sims stated that she would like to see the policy of \$1,500.00 dollars start now and go forward with a trial period like we discussed and decided prior. She suggested that we finish the resolution. Ms. Leis asked by the attachment was not finished. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she made changes to the attachment and Ms. Sims did not agree with the changes and the attachment was never finished. Ms. Sims stated that the action taken in January should not include the Fire Chief. Mr. Bryant asked about the amounts presented – should we allow the Administrator to go to \$2,500 and keep Bill and Carol at \$750.00 and add the Fire Chief in at \$750.00. Ms. Sims stated that the Board approved \$1,500.00 at the last meeting and she does not feel an outside contractor should have the authority to spend

money. Mrs. Lapensee suggested that they take out the Fire Chief and have the Fire Department send all their purchase requests to the Administrator for approval. She stated that anything under \$2,500.00 she will sign off on. Mr. Bryant stated that he agreed. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she would bring Carol and Bill up to \$1,500.00. The Board agreed. Mr. Bryant asked the Board if everyone was okay moving the Administrator up to \$2,500. Ms. Leis stated that she was okay going to \$2,500.00. She stated that she has asked many other Trustees what their limits are and some of them have their own credit cards. Mrs. Lapensee stated that the Board sees all the purchases because the warrant list is handed out at the meetings. Ms. Leis stated that there is a checks and balances system already set into place. The Board agreed to increase the limit to \$2,500.00.

Ms. Sims stated that her concern is that we are not following the policies that are in place. She stated that some of the employees are not turning in the requisitions until they get the invoices. She stated that the procedure they have now worked up until about a year ago. Mrs. Lapensee asked for an example. She asked what we purchased that did not meet the purchase policy. Ms. Sims stated that Luanne had purchased a plaque for a park bench and then two days later she submitted a requisition for the same item on Mastercard. Mrs. Lapensee stated that the woman purchased a second bench and that is why there were two requisitions. Ms. Sims stated no the requisition came over for the same purchase. Mrs. Lapensee stated that maybe she just made a mistake. Ms. Leis suggested that we just need to talk to each other in those cases and resolve the issue over the phone. Ms. Sims stated that purchase policy is very simple – the white copy comes to her when the initial purchase is made, yellow is sent over when you receive the items and pink is kept by the purchaser. She stated that this new policy would change it. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we have been matching up the invoices with the yellow copies when they come in to make it easier for Lawanda to process. She stated that prior to that, we would get the invoice and then get memos from finance stating that we did not turn in any paperwork for that particular invoice. Ms. Leis suggested that we get together every week to go over any missing paperwork. Ms. Sims stated that this fine, but we don't need to change the policy. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she is fine with that too, but she wanted to stop the memos from coming over when they don't have to.

Mrs. Lapensee stated that she added #11 into the policy so that we would pay all of our bills within a 30-day time period. Ms. Sims stated that she pays bills during payroll weeks and again by the end of the month (if there are a lot of invoices) before the next trustee meeting. Mrs. Lapensee stated that there are some bills that have gone beyond 30 days and into not being paid for 60 days. Ms. Sims stated that some bills are not paid because they do not have the proper documentation and they are trying to get it. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she does not think its all that. Ms. Leis stated that now if Ms. Sims does not have the proper documents, she is going to come over and talk to the Administrator to get the right documents during that month and make sure it gets paid. Ms. Sims stated that there might be some checks that go beyond that 30-day mark. Mr. Bryant stated that if Ms. Sims is processing checks every two weeks and again before trustees meeting, he does not understand why the bills can't be paid within 30 days. Ms. Sims stated that if it's a new vendor and we have not received a new W-9 form, then she won't issue a check. Mrs. Lapensee stated that there was an occasion just last week where we found out that a bill had not been paid since November due to a missing W-9 and no one told us that it was missing. Once we found out, we called the company and was able to get it in 5 minutes. She asked that Ms. Sims let us know so we can track those down and the bill does sit there waiting.

Mrs. Lapensee went through the credit card suggested policy. She stated that she wanted to add a line in there that allowed the credit card to be returned later upon arrival in town if the credit card went out of town for travel purposes. She also asked that we set credit card limits. Ms. Sims stated that a \$10,000-dollar limit for the speedway card or any card is excessive. She stated that no card should be over \$5,000.00. She stated that anyone could get that card and charge it. Mrs. Lapensee stated that you have to know the mileage and pin number for each vehicle in order to use the speedway cards. Ms. Sims stated that the speedway card is used by the Police and there is a second account for the Administration. She said the Police card does not need to be more than \$5,000.00. Mrs.

Lapensee stated that there was an incident in February where the card was shut off due to non-payment. Ms. Sims stated that it was a mistake by Speedway and she had included two checks in the envelope that did not get processed. She stated that she was in the process of increasing the limit to \$6,000.00. She stated that the police only use around \$2,200 to \$2,500 a month for gas. Mrs. Lapensee stated that Mr. Pitman said that the limit used to be around \$10,000 and it was decreased. Ms. Sims stated that was the initial give and she had it decreased to \$5,000.00 because we did not need anything more than that. Mrs. Lapensee asked if we go split the amount and go with \$7,500.00. Ms. Sims stated that she did not agree. Ms. Leis asked what the difference was between \$6,000.00 and \$7,500.00 or even \$10,000.00. Ms. Sims stated that \$10,000 is too high and there is a high probability for theft. Mr. Bryant stated that we are already at \$6,000.00. Ms. Sims stated that is just fine and they don't need anything more than that. Ms. Sims stated that her recommendation is \$6,000.00. She stated that she also recommends reducing the Administration account down to \$4,000.00 because the road department no longer uses the card. She stated that they have tanks at the park now that they use to fill up. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she just wants to make sure the police are able to fill up their tanks and get gas when they need it. Mr. Bryant asked if we could move on to other credit cards. Ms. Sims stated that no one uses the Shell card so we can just get rid of it. She stated that we have credit limits of \$2,500.00 for Home Depot and Tractor Supply. Ms. Sims stated that she does not want to see our Mastercard limit change to \$10,000. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we may need to flip the Mastercard and Visa limits because Costco only takes Visa (Visa \$10,000 and Mastercard \$5,000). Ms. Sims stated that we could just make the Mastercard available for special events and the Visa for other items. Ms. Leis stated that a \$10,000 limit is fine with her. Mr. Bryant asked where we landed with the Shell card. Ms. Sims stated that we need to remove all the Shell cards from all the vehicles if we are only using it for emergencies. Mrs. Lapensee stated that the reason she wanted to increase the limit on the Mastercard is because we use it for multiple departments and the costs add up fast. Ms. Sims stated that she did not think that the Fire Department should be charging items to our credit card. She stated that they should charge those items to their credit card and seek reimbursement for those items. Ms. Sims stated that the credit cards should only be used where credit cannot be established. Ms. Leis stated that she would rather us have one card with one account and then divide up the costs between the departments. There was a long discussion over how that would work. Mr. Beck suggested that we eliminate all other cards and just go with one card with a larger balance. Mr. Bryant said he was in favor of having one payment. Ms. Sims stated that she pays by the expense even though there may be multiple expenses on the statement. Mrs. Lapensee asked if we were being charged per warrant (fee each check written). Ms. Sims stated that we pay a flat fee each month for the checking account no matter how many checks she writes (\$3.00 a month service fee). Ms. Leis stated that she feels that having one card would simplify things. Mr. Beck suggested a \$25,000 limit on the Visa and eliminate all other cards. Ms. Sims stated that before we make any changes to the credit cards we should wait to see what is going to happen to the credit card bill in the house/senate. Mr. Bryant asked when this came out. Ms. Sims stated recently. Mr. Beck stated that we are not getting any benefits from the Home Depot or Tractor Supply card so he would cancel those and combine them into one card where we get rewards. Ms. Sims stated that she does not believe we should have such a large limit if we don't have to. Ms. Leis stated that she does not believe \$20,000 is a high limit for a government and we already have all the open credit anyway but its divided over multiple cards. Mr. Bryant added up the credit we have now - \$18,500.00. Ms. Leis stated that we should just have one card with that credit limit on it. Ms. Sims stated that the credit card was breached last year and we should put limits in place. Ms. Leis stated that we are not responsible for those fraudulent charges. Mr. Beck stated that he feels we are pushing the rope up the hill and we are making harder than it should be. The board agreed to keep the Mastercard for special events, increase the Visa limit to \$18,500.00 and eliminate all other cards.

Mrs. Lapensee stated that the pay periods are currently determined by the Fiscal Officer (which is every two weeks). She stated that we already receive direct deposit and she is working on getting the forms from all the volunteers for their payment on the boards. She stated that she would also ask that the employees bonus and longevity checks be issued

separately so that the taxes are lower for everyone. Ms. Sims stated that we have always done separate checks. Mrs. Lapensee stated that there were two employees who received one check this past couple of months. Ms. Sims stated that if it's a small amount, she is going to issue one check because she has to do extra work for a second check (eliminate withholdings, etc.). Mrs. Lapensee stated that she is requesting that those items be on a separate check to make the employees happier. Ms. Sims stated that she does not want to have to be dictated on how to pay everyone. Mr. Beck stated that it is probably a wash at the end of the year. The Board agreed that the checks will be issued how they are currently issued. Ms. Sims stated reimbursements have already been decided with the vendor payments.

Mrs. Lapensee asked if she and Bill can have the authority to sign the Tax-Exempt forms if Ms. Sims is not here. Ms. Sims stated that it is not a big deal for the vendors not to have the forms right away. She stated that they are just kept on file. Mrs. Lapensee stated that last week when Ms. Sims was away we went to Costco to buy stuff for the Easter Egg Hunt and did not have a Tax-Exempt form and we were charged tax. Mr. Bryant asked if we had blanket forms to give to the employees. Ms. Leis stated that we should Xerox the form and make them available to the employees when needed. Mr. Beck suggested that we keep a blank form on file for emergencies. He suggested that we keep one in the safe. Ms. Sims stated that it can be kept with the credit cards. Mr. Bryant stated that we should make the form available to staff because it is available for the benefit of the tax payers. The Board agreed. Ms. Sims stated that she would make the form available. Mr. Bryant moved onto the credit applications. Ms. Sims stated that the township administrator does not have the authority to sign credit applications because they are not listed as a signature on the credit accounts or bank account.

Mrs. Lapensee stated that she was not sure if we had an investment policy or not. She suggested one year of carry-over for each fund. Ms. Sims stated that we are limited by the State in what we can invest in and PNC and Huntington both know what those limitations are. Mrs. Lapensee stated that this would be setting a policy on excess funds and how much we want to keep on hand or invested. Ms. Sims stated that there is a 10M dollar balance and she has 7.5M invested which means there is only 3M in cash available at any time. Mr. Bryant asked if this is something we should have right now. Mrs. Lapensee stated no, we can hold off. Mr. Bryant stated that Mrs. Lapensee and Ms. Sims should work on something together and make a recommendation to the Board.

Mrs. Lapensee stated that the emergency purchasing section is something we already do now. The Board had no objections.

Mr. Bryant stated that we have a lot more items to discuss and he wants everyone to look at their schedules to see when we can meet next to discuss the rest. Ms. Sims stated that we will have to do the road levy discussion soon so she knows how to prepare the budget for it. Mrs. Lapensee stated that if we are going to submit for the road levy, we must be finished before the beginning of August. Mr. Bryant stated that he has been getting a lot of questions about sidewalks. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we have gotten the cost estimate back from the engineer and the cost will be a lot lower than expected and that we could probably do it as one large project instead of two pieces. The Board talked about the balance left in the account (maybe \$75K from last year and \$25K this year). Mrs. Lapensee asked if we wanted to go ahead and allocate additional money to do this project this year. The Board stated that they would like to move forward with this project, but they want to see how much money they are going to have left over from the road paving project.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Approved:

Kenneth Bryant, Board President

Carol Sims, Fiscal Officer