
MINUTES OF SYMMES TOWNSHIP REGULAR MEETING

MAY 7, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. Elected officials present were: Mr. Phil Beck, Mr. Ken Bryant, Mrs. Jodie Leis and Ms. Carol Sims.

Also present: Kim Lapensee - Administrator; Kevin McDonough - Law Director; Captain Bruce Hawk - LSF; and Lieutenant Tory Smith - Hamilton County Sheriff's Department.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Beck made a motion to approve the Agenda. Ms. Leis seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Mr. Bryant - 'aye', Ms. Leis - 'aye' and Mr. Beck - 'aye'. Motion passes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Beck made a motion to approve the Minutes of the special meeting from March 26, 2019, the regular meeting from April 2, 2019 and the special meeting from April 17, 2019. Mr. Bryant seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Leis - 'aye', Mr. Beck - 'aye', and Mr. Bryant - 'aye'. Motion passes.

FISCAL OFFICERS REPORT

Ms. Sims stated that we have an ending total balance of \$19,664,985.96 for the month of April. She stated that we have \$4,172,617.83 in the money market account, \$667,158.69 in the checking account, \$25,567.68 in the HRA account, \$824.27 in the credit card account and \$7,913,188.89 in our Huntington Bank investment account as of the end of April.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

PRESENTATIONS

None.

APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS

Mr. Beck made a motion to approve the warrants 74921 to 75136 in the amount of \$477,567.58 for April. Ms. Leis seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was as follows: Mr. Beck - 'aye', Mr. Bryant - 'aye', and Ms. Leis - 'aye'.

REPORTS

KEVIN MCDONOUGH, LAW DIRECTOR stated that he had no report.

LIEUTENANT TORY SMITH, HAMILTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT stated that he had no report.

CAPTAIN BRUCE HAWK stated that everyone should have his written report and that he handed out the reports for April and the annual report for 2018.

BILL PITMAN, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS stated that he had none.

COMMITTEE - None.

OTHER - None.

HEARING OF RESIDENTS

Mr. Joe Grossi, 11982 Paulmeadows Drive stated that he continues to receive information from Ms. Sims through his public records request. He stated that he has been reading through the emails between Mrs. Lapensee and Ms. Sims and stated that there is quite a dysfunctional relationship going on in the township which does not facilitate any good working relationship among the employees. He stated that this affects the tax payers. He stated that we have paid late fees and had lapses of payments for retirement contributions and deferred comp payments. He stated that he is upset that no one was told that Ms. Sims was not going to make those payments any longer. He stated that someone should have been in charge of it and wondered why no one was. He asked Ms. Sims why she stopped making payments. Ms. Sims stated that he should ask the Township Administrator. She stated that she asked repeatedly for her to come to her office and explain reports and it never happened. Mr. Grossi stated that it always seems like its always someone else's fault and never hers. He stated that there was an email concerning a credit card and why the card was cancelled and that there was no response from Ms. Sims on why she did it. He asked why someone else always has to do all the work. Ms. Sims stated that if Mr. Grossi stopped in her office, she could have the paperwork and they can discuss it. Ms. Sims stated that not having the paper work in front of her she cannot answer that. Mr. Grossi stated that Ms. Sims will not answer anything without paperwork in front of her. Mr. Grossi stated that he read an email about a missed bond payment and wonders how that will affect our Moody bond rating. He stated that he feels that this will affect the tax payers. She stated that she did not receive the invoice for that December bond payment. She stated that it would have helped if the Township Administrator told her about the phone call she received a few days prior to that. Mr. Grossi stated that he did read an email that stated that the invoice was from October and was probably always paid around the same time every year. He stated that he read several emails over and over again that was nitpicky toward the employees and no bills were ever paid that aren't perfect and correct. He wondered why she did not pay the bills when they are received. Ms. Sims stated that she pays them when she receives all the paperwork.

Mr. Grossi asked if they were continuing to pay bills late? Ms. Sims stated no and she pays them when she receives them in the next check run. Mr. Grossi asked if the paperwork is not perfectly to her satisfaction does she let it sit there unpaid? Ms. Sims stated that there is a purchasing policy procedure in place. She stated if the bills do not meet that procedure, she then contacts the Township Administrator and asks for the information to be provided. Mr. Grossi asked if they were incurring any late fees. He stated that it stems back to bills from Duke Energy last year. Ms. Sims stated that he was only getting one side of the story and the bills were not signed on time. Mr. Grossi stated that he wants all of these answers documented and they do not get documented in her office. Ms. Sims stated that all the notes are in the file and documented.

Mr. Gary Trick, 9131 Coachtrail Lane, stated that he was speaking for his entire neighborhood that they have serious concerns about everyone's safety about getting to Hopewell Meadows Park. He stated that he would like for the township to install crosswalks with flashing beacons on Hopewell at Humphrey. He stated that he wants us to try and slow down the drivers that go through that area. He stated that everyone is concerned about safety and wants us to allocate any of our leftover 2019 funds to this project. He stated that Hopewell Meadows Park offers good amenities and because of this, it increases the use of the park and increases the need for a safe walking area across the street. He stated that the flashing beacons won't solve everything, but most people do not know they have to stop when a pedestrian is in the crosswalk.

Mr. Beck stated that he appreciates Gary's comments and concerns. The Board echo's those concerns and this is item number two under new business. They are going to have a discussion specifically looking at six locations for crosswalks.

Ms. Leis stated that she has been getting requests to put a pickle ball court on the tennis courts and that the neighbors want to organize leagues. She asked Mr. Trick if he saw any value in that. Mr. Trick stated that he has never played pickle but would at least try it.

CJ Carr, Symmes Historical Society, stated that the Historical Society has always tried to promote events for the township and wants everyone to enjoy them. He stated that they participated in the Easter Egg Hunt last month and were disappointed that they were tucked away and not visible to the public. He asked if the township does not want the Historical Society to be involved. He stated that the tent is not always communicated and unknown if it will be there when they get there. Ms. Leis stated that if they were unhappy with their location during the event, then they should speak up and asked to be moved to another location. She asked if they communicated that to anyone. Mr. Carr stated no. Ms. Sims stated that no one came over and asked us if we were okay. Ms. Leis stated that she should have asked someone herself if they were unhappy. Ms. Leis stated that communication is 50/50. She stated that she is happy to partner with them on events, but it can't always be where the township gives and the Historical Society takes what they want. She stated that if they are unhappy, they should make an appointment with the coordinator and ask for another location. Mr. Carr stated that he is happy with Fall Fest but nothing was communicated to him about food trucks being at the event. He stated that he wants to be closer to the egg hunt itself, front and center. He stated that they could have offered lunch time food if that is what everyone wants.

Mr. Carr asked what the plans were concerning the Meade House. He stated that they were here the night the architects presented the plans for the township building and the Meade House. He stated that there was a question about how many people could safely be in the building at one time. Ms. Leis stated that a study was done and that the architect or structural engineer could not put a number on what was safe. She stated that it would irresponsible for the trustees to put people in an unsafe structure. Ms. Leis stated that she would love to use that building because it is so beautiful. She stated that they will need to make some decisions and talk about capital expenditures in the future. Mr. Carr stated that he couldn't believe that we would show the building to Choice One Engineering to rent if the building was unsafe. Ms. Leis stated that once we get something figured out for the building, maybe that would be a good location for them. Mr. Carr stated that he does not understand how the building could deteriorate from an inspection done in early 2000 that was used to get the building on the state registry. He wondered how it could fall in during that 19-year period. Mr. Bryant stated that the original report done in 2000 was done by a historic restoration expert and not a structural engineer. He stated that the architect and structural engineer who reviewed the house has stated that it is their opinion that the floor structure is not sound and that is why they do not want to put a number on anything. Ms. Leis stated that we needed to pay more attention to this property. Mr. Carr asked if we would be talking about financing for this property in the future. Mr. Beck stated yes; we will need to talk more about it. Mr. Carr asked about their furniture and if or how they should retrieve it from the house. Mr. Beck stated that they could continue to store it there or remove now or later. He stated that they could make an appointment with Bill or Kim to come move it out. Mr. Beck asked if we could call the insurance company to ask if we should remove it from the property or if the Historical Society is permitted to do so by signing waivers.

CORRESPONDENCE

See Attached.

EVENTS/MEETINGS

- Clean Up Day – Saturday, May 18, 2019 from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at Hopewell Meadows Park.
- Moon Walk/Yoga/Meditation – Saturday, May 18, 2019 at 8:30 p.m. at Meade Park.
- Symmes Honors Veterans – Friday, May 24, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at Home of the Brave Park.
- Offices Closed for Memorial Day – Monday, May 27, 2019.
- Yoga in the Park begins – Saturdays beginning June 1 at 9:00 a.m. and Wednesdays, June 5, 2019 at Hopewell Meadows Park at 6:30 p.m.
- Board of Zoning Appeals – Monday, June 3, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

- Regular Trustees Meeting – Tuesday, June 4, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.
- Yappy Hour – Symmes Park, June 6, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.
- Hazardous Household Waste Drop-off – Saturday, June 8, 2019 from 8 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Loveland High School.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Beck made a motion to approve Resolution G2019-37 - Resolution Authorizing the Township Administrator to Enter into an Agreement with JK Meurer Corporation to Pave the Meade Trail in the amount of \$44,880.00. Ms. Leis seconded the motion. Discussion continued.

Mr. Bryant stated that he wanted to see more people use the park. Ms. Leis stated that no one who had voiced concerns over the trail are here tonight. Mr. Beck stated that he had received input about the trail. He stated that we received a grant for the Storywalk and the trail is for the Storywalk. He stated that he would also like to see the use of the park increase and appeal to everyone. He stated that he wants to keep the grant so they would like to install an alternate trail around the property and keep it gravel. He stated that we would have to find another location in the park perhaps around the perimeter. Ms. Leis stated that she would like to see this park have a dog run where residents could let their dogs off leash. She would like to see a nature area fenced off for the dogs inside the paved trail area. Ms. Leis stated that she would like to see the path accessible to everyone as well.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Beck asked for a motion to acknowledge the receipt of notification and its contents from the Hamilton County Storm Water District concerning storm water assessments for 2020. Mr. Bryant seconded the motion. Discussion continued.

Mrs. Lapensee stated that the storm water district sends out notifications for storm water fees to all the townships and Symmes Township passes those fees onto the residents to pay; therefore, the district sends out the notice that assessments will be filed in September with the County Auditor's office. She stated that they charge \$8.13 for the storm water phase 2 permit services to the storm water district and \$7.01 to the HC Planning and Development Services for their storm water division for a total of \$15.14 per each parcel.

The roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Leis - 'aye', Mr. Beck - 'aye', and Mr. Bryant - 'aye'. Motion passes.

Mr. Beck asked for a discussion concerning safety crossings throughout the township.

Mr. Beck stated that he received multiple comments from residents in the township concerning safety in the area of Hopewell and Humphrey Roads. He stated that he was saddened by the passing of his neighbor on Humphrey that was killed in a crosswalk on Humphrey. He stated that flashing lights will not be 100% safety proof, but he feels that it will reduce accidents if they are installed on Humphrey and Hopewell Roads. He stated that he feels it will create safer conditions to walk. He stated that we would like to commit to studying 6 areas in the township that have higher traffic counts and can be dangerous to walk across – Humphrey at Hopewell, Hopewell at Gateway, Humphrey at Pinto, Humphrey at Misty Morn, Union Cemetery at Royal Field and State Route 126 at Lincoln Road.

Mrs. Lapensee stated that Bill Pitman contacted Choice One Engineering to get an estimate on studying those 6 areas. In order to get a permit for these safety crossings on county roads is that part of their permitting process requires that a study been done by a certified traffic engineer. They may or may not meet the requirements that Hamilton County puts forward, so they have to have so much of a traffic count and have a high number for pedestrians. The first step is to hire an engineer to study the areas and give us the data we need, submit that to the county and see which areas we can install the safety crossings.

Mr. Beck made a motion to have the Township Administrator to hire Choice One Engineering to coordinate with the County and do the traffic study to get the necessary permits for the project not to exceed \$5,800.00. Mr. Bryant seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Leis - 'aye', Mr. Beck - 'aye', and Mr. Bryant - 'aye'. Motion passes.

Mr. Beck asked for a discussion concerning sidewalks in Hearthstone Estates. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we had received an email from the HOA in Hearthstone stating that they are ready to have the township install sidewalks on the lots that are not finished or do not have houses built on them. She stated that it was conveyed to Bill Pitman that the vacant lots are owned by residents in that subdivision and have no intention of building on them at this time. Mrs. Lapensee stated that we do have a bond left over for the sidewalks in this neighborhood in the amount of \$44,861.00 that can be used to pay for the remaining sidewalks. The Board asked Mr. Pitman if he could get some estimates and bring them back at the next meeting for discussion.

Mr. Beck asked for a discussion concerning naming the Meade Property. Mrs. Lapensee stated that she would like for the board to decide what to name the park so they can order a sign that is part of the grant they are receiving for the trail, storybook walk and signage. The Board made no decision, but asked if Mrs. Lapensee could put that out on Facebook to get name suggestions and on the website. Mr. Trick suggested that we contact the schools and have the kids participate in the naming of the park.

Mr. Beck made a motion to schedule a work session to discuss the sidewalk plan for Tuesday, June 11th at 6:00 p.m. Ms. Leis seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Leis - 'aye', Mr. Beck - 'aye', and Mr. Bryant - 'aye'. Motion passes.

Mr. Beck made a motion to accept the resignation of Harry Maddali from the Finance and Audit Committee. Mr. Bryant seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Leis - 'aye', Mr. Beck - 'aye', and Mr. Bryant - 'aye'. Motion passes.

Mr. Beck made a motion to table the appointment of a replacement to the finance and audit committee. Ms. Leis seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Leis - 'aye', Mr. Beck - 'aye', and Mr. Bryant - 'aye'. Motion passes.

Mr. Beck made a motion to accept \$3,950.00 in donations in the amounts of \$2,500.00 from the Loveland Firemen's Association, \$500.00 Knights of the Golden Trail, \$500.00 Union Savings Bank, \$250.00 Choice One Engineering, \$100.00 Weil Funeral Home, and \$100.00 Slye Accounting for the mural project in Home of the Brave. Ms. Leis seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Leis - 'aye', Mr. Beck - 'aye', and Mr. Bryant - 'aye'. Motion passes.

Mr. Beck made a motion to approve the following expenditures and authorization for the Township Administrator to sign any necessary contracts/agreement or paperwork:

- a. Amend: 5-A-12 from \$3,500.00 to \$6,000.00.
- b. Amend: 3-A-10 from \$3,000.00 to \$6,000.00.
- c. Amend: 7-A-2 from \$3,000.00 to \$3,500.00.
- d. Amend: 10-A-15 from \$8,000.00 to \$10,000.00.
- e. Amend: 14-A-8 from \$10,000.00 to \$12,000.00.
- f. Expenditure: \$4,000.00 Sherman Williams for wall prep, paint, primer and clear coat for the mural project.
- g. Expenditure/then and now \$2,500.00 Burrowes Consulting for cemetery data.
- h. Expenditure/then and now \$225.00 Advantage Sign for truck lettering.

Ms. Leis seconded the motion. Discussion follows.

Mr. Bryant stated he had a question about Sherman Williams for wall prep. Mrs. Lapensee stated that would be the materials needed to prep the building for the mural project in Home of the Brave Park. Mr. Beck stated that if possibly he would like to see the clear coat actually be a vandal resistant anti-graffiti type of coat.

The roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Leis - 'aye', Mr. Bryant - 'aye', and Mr. Beck - 'aye'.
Motion passes.

HEARING FROM RESIDENTS

Ms. Carol Sims, Symmes Historical Society, asked if the Board could direct the Law Director to consult with the township's insurance company on whether the Historical Society can enter the building to retrieve their furniture from the Meade House before May 16th. She stated that is when their next meeting is.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Approved:

Philip J. Beck, President

Jodie L. Leis, Vice-President

Kenneth N. Bryant, Trustee