
MINUTES OF SYMMES TOWNSHIP REGULAR MEETING

September 1, 2020

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 Mr. Joe Grossi.

Also, present: Kimberly Lapensee - Administrator; Jeff Forbes - Law Director; Lieutenant Mike Tarr – HCSO, and Chief Ott Huber – LSFD.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Leis made a motion to approve the regular minutes for July 7, 2020 and August 4, 2020. Mr. Beck 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

Mr. Grossi stated that the financial reports for August were included in the packet. He stated that we have \$647,976.05 in our checking account, \$1,193,627.79 in our money market account, \$2,763.62 in our credit card account and \$6,161.73 in our HRA account. He stated that we have not yet gotten our statement of investments with Meeder for the month of August.

Mr. Grossi reported that we did receive additional CARES ACT money this month in the amount of \$99,612.94 from the County Auditor’s Office. He stated that there is a comparison in the packet for Fifth Third vs PNC for our banking needs. He stated that Fifth Third is an Ohio bank, the earnings on our money will be larger which reduces our banking fees, we can combine our accounts, we can do deposits from our desk and no longer will need to go to the bank to deposit checks and they have many bank benefits available to our employees. He stated that PNC was not willing to do a recorded presentation at the last finance committee meeting.

Mr. Grossi stated that relative to public document requests, he continues to receive e-mails from Carol Sims insisting that she has not received what she requested. The vast majority of what she requested is publicly available on the Township’s website. The only situations that she thinks should not be applicable to her are two-fold. One, the State of Ohio’s definition of ‘overly broad requests’ and two, the State of Ohio’s stipulation that the request must be for existing records. Symmes Township is not in possession of any other records responsive to her request. A public office is not required to create new records to respond to a public records request even if it is only a matter of compiling information from existing records. Mr. Grossi stated that his opinion of overly broad does not supersede the State of Ohio’s definition of overly broad and it is spelled out on page 12 of the Ohio Public Records Act.

Mr. Grossi stated that in response to his statement in an e-mail correspondence with Ms. Sims referencing her disregard of her duty to the citizens of Symmes Township and not supplying any information to the operations of the antiquated software system she used, nor supplying any passwords for bank accounts, credit cards accounts, etc. No notification of bills being e-mailed to Ms. Sims e-mail account or Ms. Willis e-mail account causing bills to be unpaid for months and incurring late charges again. Then she questioned why he did not contact her as to what his actual responsibilities might be and how to accomplish them, he asks why would he want to be tutored

by someone who found a way to create \$30,000.00 in late fees in the public lighting district, defaulted on the due date for a bond payment that could affect Symmes Township's Moody's Bond rating and therefore increase interest rates on future bonds, created the situation where having gas credit cards declined due to non-payment so the Sheriff's deputies could not gas up on a holiday weekend, incurred penalties and late fees for missed OPERS payments. He asked why would he want to be taught how not to respond to public document request, such as the last two request he made which remained unfulfilled for an entire year up until the time she left office. Why would he want to learn how to ignore directives from the State Auditor? Mr. Grossi stated that they get the idea of why he has no confidence in getting any direction from Ms. Sims. He stated that her asking him why he did not ask her for assistance, he could turn that around and ask why did she not see to it that the citizens of Symmes Township were protected by providing basic information that would facilitate a transition.

PRESENTATIONS

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS

Ms. Leis made a motion to approve the warrants from 78147 – 78307 in the amount of \$1,003,292.94 from August. Mr. Bryant seconded the motion.

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

REPORTS

JEFF FORBES, LAW DIRECTOR – Mr. Forbes stated that he had no report.

LIEUTENANT MIKE TARR, HAMILTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT – Mr. Tarr stated that he had nothing new to report. He stated that the Sheriff's Office is continuing with the limited COVID response and that they are still doing active traffic enforcement.

CHIEF OTT HUBER, LSFD - Chief Huber reported that the board has his written reports and that the EMS runs have started to get larger than Loveland's just because the nursing homes are not transporting like they used to. Ms. Leis wanted to know what the township's COVID numbers are so far. Chief Huber stated that we only have 12 reported cases which were all stable and no emergencies.

BILL PITMAN, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS - None.

COMMITTEE - None.

OTHER – Ms. Leis stated that we are working on a pollinator garden at Meade Historic Preserve park. She stated that Mr. Beck's daughter is working on her Girl Scout Gold Award and has picked this as her project to complete. She stated that they met with Great Parks of Hamilton County and they talked about what plants would work best in the area that we have cleared (at the corner of the trails where they meet). Mr. Beck stated that we did receive a follow-up email from them with a listing of all the seeds that they have available for us to buy.

CORRESPONDENCE

Attached to the packet.

EVENTS/MEETINGS

- Loveland Schools Invitational Cross-Country Race – Saturday, September 5, 2020 at Home of the Brave Park.
- Labor Day Observed – Offices Closed on Monday, September 7, 2020.
- LSFD 9-11 Event – Friday, September 11, 2020 at 8:00 p.m. at the Police and Firefighters Memorial.
- Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting – Monday, September 14, 2020 via zoom at 7:00 p.m.
- Zoning Commission Meeting – Wednesday, September 16, 2020 via zoom at 7:00 p.m.
- Clean-up Day – Saturday, September 26, 2020 from 9 until 3 pm. at HOB.
- Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting – Monday, October 5, 2020 via zoom at 7:00 p.m.
- Storytime at Meade Historic Preserve – Tuesday, October 6, 2020 from 10:00 until 12:00 p.m.
- Regular Trustees Meeting – Tuesday, October 6, 2020 via zoom at 7:00 p.m.
- Finance Committee Meeting – Wednesday, October 14, 2020 via zoom at 6:00 p.m.

HEARING OF RESIDENTS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Leis made a motion to schedule a public hearing for the Land Use Plan Update for Tuesday, October 6, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at the safety center. Mr. Beck seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Leis - 'aye', Mr. Bryant - 'aye' and Mr. Beck - 'aye'. Motion passes.

Ms. Leis made a motion to schedule a works session to discuss field usage fees and changes to the finance policy for September 21, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Bryant seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Leis - 'aye', Mr. Bryant - 'aye' and Mr. Beck - 'aye'. Motion passes.

Ms. Leis made a motion to reappoint Greg Kessler to the Zoning Commission for an additional 5-year term from 9/5/20 to 12/31/20. Mr. Beck seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Mr. Bryant - 'aye', Mr. Beck - 'aye' and Ms. Leis - 'aye'. Motion passes.

Ms. Leis made a motion to approve Resolution G2020-74, a Resolution Authorizing the purchase of pre-emption devices and various other equipment from Capital Electric in an amount not to exceed \$67,405.00. Mr. Bryant seconded the motion. Discussion continued.

Mr. Bryant asked the Chief if we can make it a siren-based light instead of the new style so that Montgomery can participate in the cost. Chief Huber stated that it was not worth investing in the old technology. He stated that it does not recognize which way the traffic is coming from with the old system. He stated that the new technology is a smart system and knows if you need to turn at the light or not. Ms. Leis wanted to know how much time it is going to save by buying this equipment for the lights. Chief Huber stated that it would save us about 25 seconds for each light or 1 to 2 minutes by the time you get down through all the lights.

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

Ms. Leis made a motion to approve Resolution G2020-75, a Resolution approving expenditure in the amount not to exceed \$26,792.50 for a new video recording and streaming system for the meeting room through ICS and Dispensing with the Second Reading. Mr. Beck seconded the motion. Discussion continued.

Mr. Beck asked if this was with Cares Funding? Mrs. Lapensee stated yes, this will give them the ability to live stream and record at the same time. Mr. Grossi asked saving them how much per year? Ms. Lapensee stated that it would save about \$80,000 a year.

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

Ms. Leis made a motion to approve Resolution G2020-76, a Resolution approving the 2020 Street Lighting Assessments. Mr. Bryant seconded the motion. Discussion continued.

Mr. Bryant stated they basically put a spread sheet together to track how much it costed them to pay Lighting District bills for the 42 districts. Based on that they are now going to assess correctly the neighborhoods that have lighting system on a pretty accurate basis. Mr. Beck stated that this is a huge improvement.

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

Ms. Leis made a motion to approve Resolution G2020-77, a Resolution authorizing the township administrator to enter into an agreement with Fifth Third Bank and Authorizing the Fiscal Officer and the Township Administrator as Signers on the account. Mr. Beck seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Leis made a motion to approve Resolution G2020-78, a Resolution authorizing the township administrator to purchase security cameras and accessories from PCS Cincinnati for the Police Department at the Safety Services Center in the amount of \$21,301.15. Mr. Bryant seconded the motion. Discussion continued.

Mrs. Lapensee stated right now there are only cameras on the fire side of the outside of the building. The system can handle up to 25 cameras, so what they are proposing is to buy 8 cameras now and over time they can add cameras to the inside of the building.

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

Ms. Leis made a motion to approve Resolution G2020-79, a Resolution authorizing the township administrator to enter into an agreement with Brian Christian Landscaping and Lawn Care to fertilize trees in the parks, safety center, Waldschmidt Cemetery, and the cannon area in the amount of \$14,365.00. Mr. Beck seconded the motion. Discussion continued.

Mr. Grossi asked how successful was the treatment for the emerald ash borer? Mrs. Lapensee stated that Mr. Pitman believes in it completely and he thinks the treatment has prolonged the life of the ash trees.

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

Ms. Leis made a motion to approve Resolution G2020-80, a Resolution authorizing the purchase of rescue equipment from Howell Rescue Systems in an amount not to exceed \$45,214.00. Mr. Bryant seconded the motion. Discussion continued.

Chief Huber stated that the rescue equipment was in this year's budget and they cannot use the Cares Act because this is not related actual patient care.

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

Ms. Leis made a motion to approve the following amendments, expenditures, and authorization for the Township Administrator to sign any necessary contracts/agreement or paperwork:

- a. Amend: Fund 14-A-04L from \$50,000 to \$149,612.94 Tools and Equipment.
- b. Expenditure: \$5,119.20 Mutt Mitts (CARES ACT).
- c. Expenditure: \$8,000.00 NTE Clean-Up Day.
- d. Expenditure: \$8,961.65 PCS for cameras for Hopewell Meadows Park.
- e. Expenditure: \$4,500.00 Cantrell Fence Company to install fence on Blong Road on both sides of the bridge.
- f. Expenditure: \$10,000 NTE Environmental Design for painting at Hopewell (shelter/RR).

Mr. Beck seconded the motion. Mr. Bryant stated that he would like to see us find funding for the fence through the grant first.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Approved:

Jodie L. Leis, President

Kenneth N. Bryant, Vice-President

Philip J. Beck, Trustee