

Liberty Township, Licking County, Ohio

Regular Trustee Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024 at 6:30 pm

Opening

- Bill Bogantz called the meeting to order at 6:30pm
- Bill announced that the meeting is being recorded and will be a public record
- Bill introduced Pastor Dan Scarberry and Pastor Dan led the invocation
- Bill Bogantz led the Pledge of Allegiance
- Melodie took the Roll Call with the following answering present: Bill Bogantz, Ed Wasem & Doug Strait
- Bill Bogantz stated that the minutes from January 8, 2024 Regular Meeting are available for inspection.
- **Doug Strait made a motion to approve the Minutes for the January 8, 2024 Meeting. Ed Wasem seconded the motion. The motion passed with all YES votes.**
- Bill Bogantz stated that the minutes from January 9, 2024 Special Meeting are available for inspection.
- **Doug Strait made a motion to approve the Minutes for the January 9, 2024 Meeting. Ed Wasem seconded the motion. The motion passed with all YES votes.**

Resident/Public Input

- Mike Theisen, the St Albans fire chief, presented his 2023 report to the trustees. He also stated that St Albans township will have a fire levy on the upcoming ballot.

Bid Opening

- Bill Bogantz stated that the trustees are opening 2024 Mowing Bids as advertised. The township received three bids.
 - T3's - \$11,000
 - Licking County Landscape - \$12,000
 - Brandon Daubemire Property Services - \$18,720
- The trustees discussed the bids and some issues/concerns with T3's work for 2023.
- **Doug Strait made a motion to accept the \$12,000 bid from Licking County Landscape for the 2024 mowing season. Ed Wasem seconded the motion. The motion passed with all YES votes.**

Zoning

- Woody Fox read the Monthly Zoning Report
 - 2024-P-001 Wayne & Jackie Howard \$150.00
8948 Northridge Rd.
Garage
- Woody gave his report on current zoning issues

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- He will be issuing a violation for 3634 Sportsman Club Road
- There is a PUD in the works for 6912 Nichols Lane
- Woody has checked on 7010 Sportsman Club Road and doesn't see any evidence that anyone is living in the "garage."
- The Hamiltons are working on applying for a Conditional Use permit for 6252 Sportsman Club Road, but we don't have a complete application yet.
- Woody pointed out that the township's commercial zoning fees need to be reviewed
- Bill Bogantz stated that any zoning fee changes would need to be discussed in an executive session without him since Melodie, his wife, is the zoning clerk, and her pay is a percentage of the fees charged.
- Melodie presented the updated zoning map which showed the rezoning of 6252 Sportsman Club Road to Local Business.
- **Doug Strait made a motion to approve the zoning map. Ed Wasem seconded the motion. The motion passed with all YES votes.**

Old Business

- Bill Bogantz will look into getting Health Insurance for elected officials and full-time employees of the township
- Bill Bogantz gave an updated on the Four Corners area. There is a question whether a small section of Liberty Township was included in the area given to- the Southwest Licking Water & Sewer District. Liberty Township is not mentioned in the text of the area, but is included on the map. Bill is working with our legal counsel to get this cleared up.
- There is no update on the MOU with Johnstown, Alexandria and Granville
- Bill Bogantz stated that the Miles Estate Update is still pending litigation. There is a trial date of March 9th, which is a Saturday, so not sure if that is correct. This is for the four acres that Licking Rural Electric wants to take by eminent domain.
- Doug informed the trustees that the rental property at 7111 Northridge Road had some furnace work done this past month. It was handled quickly.
- Doug gave an update on the new administration building saying that the poured walls are done. He requested a quote from Slabaugh Builders to change the metal roof to a standing seam roof.
- **Bill Bogantz made a motion to approve the change order for a standing seam roof that would cost an additional \$18,900. Doug Strait seconded the motion. The motion passed with all YES votes.**
- The trustees discussed the metal colors for the building and window types. The trustees verbally agreed to the following: light gray siding, black roof and windows, premier rib profile for the roof, and grids in the windows. Doug will pass the information on to the builder
- Roads

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- Ed stated that he and Jeff had driven the township roads and suggested that three roads be worked on this summer: Smaller Road, “short” Cooper and the west end of Harmony Church Road. Ed will follow up with Smalls.
- It was mentioned that both trucks are currently up and working.
- Doug stated that we are still waiting on state bids for trucks
- Ed said that he visited all the township cemeteries. He agreed to get price comparison to see how our cemetery fees compare to similar local cemeteries.
- Bill gave an update on the Comprehensive Plan. Stakeholder interviews are complete and everyone who signed up showed up for their interview! The next meeting of the steering committee is Feb 15th. There is a township wide Community Workshop on February 27th. The plan is still that the Comprehensive Plan will be complete in July.
- Bill Bogantz stated that the website conversion is in progress.
- There was some discussion on a Cannabis Resolution but no action was taken. Doug would like to prohibit only dispensaries. Ed would like more information. The clarification was made that growing cannabis is not considered agricultural.
- Melodie stated that she has not made any progress on calculating the back pay for FO and Trustees.

New Business

- Bill and Melodie attended the Ohio Township Association (OTA) Conference and gave a summary of some of the things that they learned.
 - Because of Records Retention requirements, the township might want to consider providing laptops, phones and emails to the trustees and fiscal officer. Bill is looking into providing emails that will be “owned” by the township so that the township can retain those records.
 - Bill stressed the importance of Tracking Public Records Requests and informed the trustees that we have a google sheet for tracking requests
 - Bill and Melodie both took the Certified Public Records Training and reminded Ed that he needs to take the 3-hour class during his term.
 - Bill and Melodie learned a little about possible ways to prevent annexation. One was by setting aside Open Spaces, but weren’t sure how effective it is. The other was by setting up a township Water & Sewer District. This could be costly and Bill is doing research to see if it is a possibility.
 - There is a legislation update that there is a Senate Housing Committee which is considering doing away with township zoning. Bill will pass along information about this as it becomes available.
 - Melodie learned that we should update our Records Retention Schedule if it is over 10 years old, which ours is.
- Melodie has closed fiscal year 2023 and the Unaudited Annual Financial Report for 2023 will be available by appointment.

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- We have a Road & Bridge Levy that is expiring soon. Melodie is preparing the paperwork to get it on the ballot in November 2024.
- Melodie presented some updates to our appropriations. The trustees agree to add \$7000 for the Comprehensive Plan, \$1200 for postage and \$5300 for other expenses in the fire fund to cover rental property repairs, with the total additional appropriations of \$13,500.
- **Bill Bogantz made a motion to approve the proposed Annual Appropriations Resolution 2024-02 for 2024 as presented. Doug Strait seconded the motion. The motion passed with all YES votes.**
- Melodie presented the Road Mileage Certification for 2023 from Ohio Department of Transportation as 28.122 miles of road being maintained by Liberty Township.
- **Bill Bogantz made a motion to certify the 2023 Road Mileage. Doug Strait seconded the motion. The motion passed with all YES votes.**
- Melodie presented Resolution 2024-03 a Resolution Authorizing Expenditure from American Rescue Plan Act Funds. This resolution allow will allow the township to spend the ARPA money for the new administration building.
- **Bill Bogantz made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-03 a Resolution Authorizing Expenditure from American Rescue Plan Act Funds. Doug Strait seconded the motion. The motion passed with all YES votes.**
- **Doug and Ed decided to discuss updating zoning fees and compensation at the next meeting.**

Correspondence & Financials

- Melodie read Credit Card Charges which totaled \$1,032.67
- Melodie forgot to bring the Correspondence list to the meeting to read.
- Melodie read the Warrants which totaled \$30,064.02
- Melodie read the receipts which totaled \$26,062.14
- The recording was paused at 8:05 pm to sign Credit Card Summary, Bank Reconciliation, Minutes, Permits, Reports, Warrants, etc.
- The recording was resumed at 8:22 pm.

Closing

- Next monthly meeting is March 11, 2024 @ 6:30 pm.
- **Doug Strait made a motion to adjourn meeting. Bill Bogantz seconded the motion. The motion passed with all YES votes.**

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Approval

Approval of the minutes for meeting February 12, 2024:

Trustee: William J. Scott Jr Date: 3/11/2024

Trustee: Ernie Watson Date: 3-11-2024

Trustee: John Sklar Date: 3-11-24

Fiscal Officer: Melinda Bergant Date: 3/11/2024