

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
HAMB DEN TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES

Minutes of

Regular Meeting

GOVERNMENT FORMS & SUPPLIES 844-224-3338 FORM NO. 10148

Held February 19, 2025

The Hambden Township Trustees met in Regular Session at the Hambden Town Hall on Wednesday, February 19, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present: Catherine Wolcott, Dave Johnson and Keith McClintock. Also present was Fiscal Officer Mike Romans, and those on the attached sign in sheet.

Mrs. Wolcott called the Regular Meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:30 p.m.

Mrs. Wolcott reported that there was a quorum. All three trustees were present.

Mrs. Wolcott asked if any residents had questions or concerns to bring before the Board.

Ruta Greimer of SEEK Collaboration gave an update on the website. The county does not like that the domain is with Go Daddy, IONIS has the website, and the DNS servers need to be attached to the Go Daddy domain, therefore they shut the website down. There are two options that were given to the township. The county is concerned about security. Domain Guard will protect the domain name and the website.

MOTION 2025-21 Made by Mr. McClintock, seconded by Mr. Johnson to move the domain name to IONIS and add Domain Guard for \$10 per year as an extra security measure. Contingent on Mr. Johnson getting approval from the County Administrator Frank Antenucci. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

MINUTES

No minutes to approve.

ZONING INSPECTOR

Mr. Acquaviva was absent.

ZONING

Mrs. Wolcott reported that the Board of Zoning Appeals are scheduled to meet on February 27th.

Mr. McClintock reported a resident contacted him with concerns about the Terrace Glen well. They were asking the purpose of a soil mound up against the creek along the edge of the property. Terrace Glen is required to drill two wells according to the EPA for them to run the trailer park. Terrace Glen has an EPA permit, and the EPA is overseeing installation of the first well. The mound is for containment to prevent anything from entering the creek. The county health department has no authority, all authority is under EPA jurisdiction.

Mrs. Wolcott stated that the next Zoning Commission meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chief Hildenbrand was absent.

FINANCIAL

Mr. Romans reported that the month-end payroll and taxes totaled \$15,696.02.

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Mr. Romans reported that tonight vendor warrants #14668 through and including #14683, totaling \$23,545.37 were submitted to the Board for approval and signature. Backup was attached to the checks. They will stand as approved. There were no questions from the Board.

Mr. Romans reported that purchase orders #39-2025 through #40-2025 were submitted to the Board for signature and approval.

Mr. Romans reported that no blanket certificates were issued.

Mr. Romans reported that no Re-allocation of Appropriations were made.

Mr. Romans presented to the Board the initial draft of the permanent appropriations for review.

Mr. Romans reported that the township credit card with his name was blocked from usage due to a potential fraudulent charge. When speaking to the credit card company there was a \$3,000 charge made in Indiana which was denied. The card was destroyed, and a replacement card is on order.

ROADS

Mr. McClintock rescinded motion 2025-20, made on February 5, 2025 giving Hunter Knight a 5% pay increase upon obtaining his CDL license and completing his 90-day probation period. Due to a % increase does not divide equally between 26 pay periods.

MOTION 2025-22: Made by Mr. McClintock, seconded by Mr. Johnson to rescind motion 2025-20 giving Hunter Knight a 5% pay. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. McClintock recommend giving Hunter Knight a \$20 per hour pay increase upon obtaining his CDL license and completing his 90-day probation period, effective February 16, 2025.

MOTION 2025-23: Made by Mr. McClintock, seconded by Mr. Johnson to give Hunter Knight a \$20 per hour pay increase, effective February 16, 2025 upon obtaining his CDL license and completing his 90-day probation period. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. McClintock stated that the Geauga County Engineer's Office sent a letter to reduce the weight limit up to 33% on township roads effective February 15, 2025. Mr. McClintock will follow up with the county on the proper procedure to reduce the weight limit.

Mrs. Wolcott reported that Mrs. Dottore contacted Cargill regarding an additional 600 tons of road salt. We have been placed on a waiting list. They could not tell how long the wait would be or the price per ton. Mr. Johnson stated that Morton Salt would not be an option since their salt is wet, and it is clumping.

Mr. McClintock reported that there have been complaints about the snow plowing this season Mr. McClintock stated that his personal thoughts are that we live in the snowbelt and Hambden is the epicenter of the snow belt in Geauga County. We receive on average more snow than any other township in the county. After two years of not having true winters, we are experiencing a good old fashioned Geauga County winter this season. We employ three full time road department employees who are tasked with keeping Hambden Townships 26+ miles of roads open, plowed, salted and maintained. This year we have dealt with mechanical issues on our

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vehicles, experiencing down time and costly repairs. We finally have our third employee with their CDL license. The harsh reality is that with limited equipment, staff and budget we cannot keep roads 100% open, 100% of the time. That has never been the case, nor will it be in the future at our current level of funding and staffing. Another thing that people are not fully aware of is that there are three types of roads in Hambden Township. We have township roads, county roads and state roads with three different entities plowing. There is shared responsibility on all our roads. We as trustees work very hard to stretch our road budget while not requesting increases on road operating levies. We have been operating on straight renewals for many years. In fact, it was a tough decision that we had made just last year in as to whether or not to put on a renewal or to ask for more money. Based on close budgeting and stretching dollars where we can we determined that for the next five years we can get by with a straight renewal. However, overtime eats away at our budget quicker than anything that we have on the books. To date we incurred over \$11,000 in overtime and we still have a couple more months of winter left. I feel that our road superintendent and the trustees must balance our road maintenance plowing and safety with and cost of operating the township. We are not the City of Chardon however nor do we pay the level of taxes that city residents do. Pretty much when you go through the City of Chardon the roads are clear, but they have many more staff members, more trucks and a higher budget. Our road department under the leadership of superintendent Welker is doing a very good job of keeping our roads plowed while judiciously managing overtime. Everyone wants to say that it was never like this under our former superintendents. To that I say you have short memory - the last two years have been easy with no reasons for complaints. Being as a trustee for 17 years there is not a season that has gone by where we have not seen the same level of complaints and the same kind of complaints about road conditions during storm events. The fact of the matter is that with only two trucks out there going through the circuit and you are getting snow at 4 inches per hour our roads are going to be full of snow from certain hours of the day. When living in rural Geauga County and it snows, the roads are going to be icy during short periods of time - it's just a fact based on our number of employees, equipment and budget. It is manageable for everyone as long as you slow down and add more time to your trips. In today's world of instant gratification everyone wants perfectly clear roads all the time. That is not going to happen. I will put up the dedication and hard work of our township road department staff to any of other rural township in Geauga County. As I drive through the county our roads are in much better shape than other places I have seen throughout the county travel during winter storms. The Fire Chief shares with us a summary of emergency calls every month. I have not seen a noticeable uptick in the number of accidents this year which leads me to believe our roads are safe at the level of treatment that is being provided. The Chief would agree that the reason most accidents occur is the result of excessive speed... speed above the safe operating conditions for the weather conditions - and NOT that the roads are plowed or not plowed. And please slow down and respect the snowplows that are out there doing their job to keep our roads open. Do not try to pass plow trucks and give them a safe operating distance. At most, you will be behind a plow truck for less than one mile. Most of our roads are less than a mile. The inconvenience is good for everyone and for the safety of our workers. The safety of our workers trumps the inconvenience. Give our guys some grace, while you are home sleeping and warm they are often out working long hours at all hours of the day to keep our roads safe and open, so you have a safe commute in the morning. Once again this is just my opinion. It bothers me when I see the complaints and do take it to heart, but you also have to realize there are a lot of people out there that just like to complain. If it is that much of an issue for you,

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show up at the meeting and let your thoughts be known. I have heard and seen many complaints recently, yet we do not have anyone that showed up this evening.

Mrs. Wolcott stated that communication between the road crew and the trustees is important. When a resident calls with a complaint about the snow plowing, it would be helpful if they could inform the resident that the road crew is out plowing and will get to their road asap or they are taking a break for safety reasons after plowing for many hours without a break. Mr. Johnson stated that it has been many years since we had a constant snow, we have three new guys learning the snowplow routes and some out sick with the flu. The county and state were having the same issues keeping up with the volume of snow as the township.

TOWNSHIP HALL

Mrs. Wolcott stated that the contractor installing the man doors on the garage did not install the doors on February 7. He will try to get them installed within the next two weeks.

SAFETY

No report.

PARK

Mr. McClintock reported that the park Board met last evening. The park Board came up with a list of capital projects for 2025. Budget figures for projects in the park were submitted to Mr. Romans.

A craft fair is scheduled for August. The charges for participating will go directly to the coordinator who will then pay the township rental fee. The agreement is modeled after a City of Chardon agreement and is being reviewed by Geauga County Prosecutors Office Susan Weiland. The coordinator will be responsible for extra portable restrooms, trash removal and insurance.

CEMETERY

Mr. Johnson provided photos of the Trex section markers in the cemetery showing that they are not legible. He is recommending white aluminum signs with black print and staining the posts black.

Mr. Welker stated that he is training Mr. Hunter to be the cemetery sexton.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mrs. Wolcott stated she is working on the social media policy.

Mr. McClintock stated that the record retention schedule will need to be updated with a 30-day text message retention period.

Mrs. Wolcott stated that a Facebook policy needs to be drafted. Geauga County Prosecutors Office Susan Weiland will be contacted for assistance in creating the policy. Mr. McClintock stated that at the Ohio Township Trustee's Association winter conference it was recommended that you do not allow comments to be posted on Facebook/social media posts. It is strictly for announcements.

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Mrs. Wolcott stated that Mrs. Dottore asked the Board to extend motion 2024-166, made on December 18th for additional 30 hours for year-end closing / filing to be used during the months of January and February. Only three Mondays were available due to vacations and holidays. She is asking to extend the time to be used prior to the end of April.

MOTION 2025-24: Made by Mr. McClintock, seconded by Mr. Johnson to extend the additional hours to be used prior to the end of April. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Wolcott reported that since the last trustee meeting the following correspondence was sent to the Board:

- Snowplow route logs
- 2026-2029 ODOT State Transportation Improvement Program
- Dept. of Community and Economic Development grant workshop
- Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation – Ohio Safety Congress & Expo

There were no questions from the Board. The correspondence will be filed in the office.

Mr. Johnson stated that the building evaluation proposal was received. Mr. Johnson suggested the trustees schedule an upcoming meeting to discuss the township priorities.

Mrs. Wolcott announced the next Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 5, 2025 at 6:30 pm.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

ATTESTED TO:

APPROVED BY:



Mary Ann Dottore, Administrative Assistant



Catherine Wolcott

DATE APPROVED:



Keith McClintock



Dave Johnson

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