

The Williamsburg Township Board of Trustees

July 10, 2006

The Williamsburg Township Board of Trustees met on Monday July 10, 2006 to transact business. Chairman Henning called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM, and all joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. James Danbury, Bari Henning and Jim Taylor answered the roll call. Also present were Fiscal Officer, Gregory W. Carson, Yvonne Malott, Robin Wiley, Larry Wiley, Susan Burgess, David Burgess, Lucy Snell, Nancy Sullivan, Gary Sullivan, Betty Parr, Bob Parr, Betty Lange, Patty Hines, Traci Schueler-Hurst, Earl Whiteman, Virgil Burroughs, Kathy Burroughs, Jayne Lawrence, Margaret Lawrence, Donna Scott, Richard Malott, Mary Ann Lefker, Mark Thatcher, Carla Press, Greg Press, Sherri Newberry, Brett Newberry, Paul Jurgens, Nate Powers, Terry Zinser, Angela Shafer, Jeff Reed, Lisa Reed, James Haas, Wallace Wainscott, Mary Lou Stephens, J. B. Ruehle, Dan Tarvin, Joyce Taggart, T. J. Wolfe, Ann More, Mark More, Tracy Zinser-Bourne, Daniel Day, Dan Westendorf, Kathy Westendorf, Paul Bourne, Marcia Mountain, W. S. Mountain, Dana Kissinger, Joan Bouchy, Jean Bouchy, Jeff Luther, Kevin Thanas, Scott Wilhelm, Joan Burke, Kathy Burke, Don Wilson, Mark Malott, Janice Robertson, Jim Robertson, Greg Wolfe, Karen Wolfe, Gary Scheidler, Jeanine Scheidler, Iva Bailey, Marlene Bailey, Rick Graham, James Horel, Michelle Horel, Lisa Kende, Chad Wainscott, Pam Whittymore, John Pertusey, Diana Pertusey, Ralph Murphey, Bill Miller, Sarah Sackrider, Chad Sackrider, Wayne Turkelson, Dee Turkelson, Al Schweig, Pam Schweig, Roger Thatberry, Paul Jurgens and five people whose names couldn't be determined from signatures.

Mr. Taylor motioned to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Mr. Danbury second. All yeas. Mr. Carson presented a financial report, including a comprehensive account of expenditures and receipts and the trustees accepted it.

Receipts of the meeting:

Total Receipts: \$3,708.30

Mr. Danbury motioned to pay the following bills. Mr. Taylor second. All yeas.

Total Bills: \$49,691.84

Mr. Henning thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He said that a few weeks ago, he started hearing that the trustees were in favor of closing the intersection and he said that as a point of clarification that the trustees were not in favor of closing this intersection. He said that in October of last year, we was carbon copied on a letter from ODOT addressed to the Clermont County Engineer stating that they were thinking about closing the intersection of McKeever Pike and State Route 32 due to concerns from several citizens in Eastern Clermont County. He said that the trustees sent a letter in response to ODOT that we couldn't argue with safety concerns, but the trustees were very concerned about increased emergency response time if the intersection was closed. He said that we notified the township residents via the fall newsletter and only had responses from two residents about this. He said that ODOT did not respond to the trustee's letter. The trustees found out that they were going to close the intersection when the sign went up stating that it was going to be closed. He said that State Rep Danny Bulp and State Senator Niehaus called a meeting with ODOT and the township trustees and village council. ODOT agreed to postponing closure, but wanted proposals as to what to do. Lisa Kirk said that she spoke with Bill Vorst from ODOT, who said that they received one complaint letter about the intersection, so ODOT needed to do something. She said that he stated that the township was notified about the closure, but the village was not notified and they had no reason to notify the village. This guy told her that the intersection was postponed for closure, but it would be closed by September if a viable solution is not proposed. Mr. Henning said that this is the first that he had heard about the September due date, but he said that hopefully we can come up with a solution amongst all of us. Terry Zinser gave a copy of a petition for opposing the closure. He thanked everyone for attending and thanked the trustees for being in agreement with the resident's concerns. Larry Wiley said that the ODOT engineer told him that if we could come up with at least one or two ideas it would give them some time to re-evaluate the situation up to a year. He suggested possible flashing lights. He suggested a longer turn lane to the left and suggested a turn lane on the right where none exists. He said that the speed limit could be reduced at the intersection. He said that lines should be painted in the median to show which side of the road the traffic should flow. He suggested a stop line in the median so that traffic is forced to stop in the median rather than crossing both east and west bound traffic without stopping in the median. He said that rumble strips could be placed on McKeever Pike. He suggested a possible road from Dela Palma down to McKeever. He said that an overpass would be great, but he doubts it's a viable option. He said that a traffic light would be a good solution, but he thinks ODOT will think it's too costly. Diana Pertusey said that a stop light would be perfect. She said that her son has had an accident at the intersection. She said that it is a bad intersection, because it is in the dip, plus even though the speed limit is 60, the traffic goes 70-80 mph. Jeff Reed said that he doesn't have a solution, but he is fearful that traffic will be diverted to Greenbush or Jackson Pike and those are two very dangerous roads also. Mr. Henning said that the trustees agree with all of the concerns and have expressed them to ODOT, but we need solutions. Lisa Born said that she liked Mr. Wiley's suggestions. Mary Ann Lefker said that Jay Hamilton from ODOT had a lot of the same options. She said that she had asked for a study, but ODOT said that most of the accidents were in the

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intersection and not from the sides. She said that she is very concerned about the village's interest if the intersection is closed. She said that she is concerned about safety, but she isn't convinced that an overpass isn't out of the question if everyone works collaboratively. Mr. Henning said that Jay Hamilton from ODOT stated that if we could come up with a viable solution, they might try it and give it some time to see if it works. Mark More said that he has offered some of the same suggestions to ODOT. He said that a traffic light would be great, but he also suggested limiting traffic in the median, because it backs up in the median at times. Dan Tarvin said that the on a grade crossing, traffic should flow to the left. He said that ODOT is putting everyone's lives in jeopardy by causing increased travel time by emergency response time to the residents. Lucy Snell said that ODOT bought the farm years ago and own enough land to put in an overpass and she said that was ODOT's intention many years ago when they purchased the land. She said that she thanked Mr. Zinser for getting a meeting together with the State Rep and ODOT. Mr. Henning said that ODOT tells him that they don't have the money for an overpass. Mark Thatcher suggested that the township spend the millions of dollars involved in correcting the road situation. Jeff Luther said that not closing the intersection is a solution. He agrees that the intersection is horrible, because the median doesn't line up with the roads. He suggested improving the median to line up and he thinks it would solve a lot of the problems. He said that if this happens, then he will vote everyone out of office. Mr. Henning said that our State Rep and State Senator is working for us and they fight ODOT's power all of the time. Paul Jurgens said that it's tough to judge the speed of the traffic on State Route 32. He asked if there could be a machine that shows how fast the traffic is traveling on State Route 32. Jeanine Scheidler asked if everyone should send a letter to ODOT. Mr. Danbury said that the more letters that a lot of letters would be great. Mr. Danbury said that he would like to have the trustees carbon copied on any letters sent to ODOT. Mr. Danbury said that he wished there would have been this uproar in October when the residents were notified in the township newsletter. Virgil Burroughs pointed out that a lot of the people in the room tonight are from Jackson Township and they didn't receive the newsletter. Mr. Bouchy said that ODOT wants a recommendation and it burns him up that ODOT wants this and then they'll tell us if it worked. Nancy Sullivan said that she assumes ODOT has alternatives already in mind and has dismissed some of them, so how do we know what they have already thought of. Mr. Henning said that Jay Hamilton from ODOT told him at the meeting that they would try to think of alternatives and they would get suggestions from the county engineer. Mr. Henning said that he thinks after that meeting that he feels that ODOT is on the same page and doesn't want it closed, but that is the easiest solution. Mr. Taylor said that he thinks ODOT changed their mind after the meeting a couple of weeks ago, because there were so many people at the meeting against the closure. Ann More asked where to go from here. She thinks a traffic light would promote growth in the township and help with safety concerns. Mr. Henning said that the only thing that everyone in this room agrees with is that they don't want the median closed, but everyone doesn't agree on the solution. Pam Whittymore said that she was at the meeting with ODOT and she thinks we should suggest option 1, 2 and 3. She said that Jay Hamilton said that no matter how much we kick and scream, we aren't getting a traffic light, because he wants a short term, low cost fix to this problem. She said that he said that Herold Road is getting a light, because a developer is paying for it. David Burgess said that it looks like we are playing with a stacked deck and he thinks we should hire a traffic engineer to study the flow so that we can level the playing field, because none of us in this room are experts on traffic flow. He thinks that would be relatively in-expensive and we could have an expert on our side. Gary Sullivan asked if we knew how many accidents were at this intersection. Mr. Danbury said that according to ODOT over the course of three years, there were 22 accidents. Gary Sullivan asked how many vehicles travel that road and 22 accidents are minimal and he thinks that those 22 people don't know how to drive. Mr. Danbury said that according to the letter in October, ODOT said that several citizens have complained, but when he asked Jay Hamilton how many are several and Jay Hamilton said that only one citizen complained. Gary Sullivan agrees that ODOT isn't going to put in a traffic light or an overpass. Kathy Burroughs said that she thinks traffic should flow over McKeever instead of McKeever flowing over State Route 32. Meredith Stevens said that if you drive a vehicle with a horse trailer or another trailer, you are a sitting duck. She asked how we can come up with a solution if we don't know how much ODOT is going to spend. Mr. Henning said that ODOT told him that it will cost \$15,000 to close it, so we should offer suggestions that cost that or less. Someone suggested a court injunction to stop this. Dan Day said that he suggested a left hand turn from State Route 32, but not a left hand turn from McKeever. Mr. Henning said that would satisfy some of the people, but not all. Kathy Burke asked if we could set up a meeting with ODOT so they know our concerns and we get their feedback. Chad Wainscott said that he feels that ODOT is going to make the final decision. He wants to know if a civil engineer could offer suggestions to ODOT instead of us. Wayne Turkelson said that signs and painting the roads would be low cost. He wants to see ODOT notified of a headcount of the number of people for and against the closure. Mr. Taylor said that ODOT will pay for the closure out of a force account, because they are using their own people to do the work and it only costs material. Joyce Taggert said that a longer turn lane would help, because trailers have a hard time. She said she thinks there are blind spots in the median because of sign locations are obstructing the view. Jim Robertson said that they could put posts in the intersection to divide the median to direct traffic flow might help. Mark Malott said that we should have had a representative from the Media here

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to show this on the news how mad the citizens are about the closure. Robin Wiley asked the name and address of the person to send the letter to so that everyone can send a letter. Tracy Bourne said that they have 130 on a petition already and she wants to see everyone sign the petition who hasn't signed it already. Someone said that the squeaky wheel gets the oil, so everyone needs to send letters. Mr. Danbury said that the suggestions offered tonight were very good and the trustees will review them. Mary Ann Lefker said that any letters sent should be carbon copied to State Rep Danny Bubp and State Senator Niehaus also. Lucy Snell said that she called the County Engineer's office and he told her that there was nothing that he could do about the problem and it wasn't his problem. Mark More said that we shouldn't worry about the \$15,000 limitation, because it's ODOT's problem to fix the problem. Danny Kissinger asked what the school buses are going to do, because they cross the intersection. Terry Zinser suggested that we send letters to Gordon Proctor in Columbus instead of sending it to Jay Hamilton in Lebanon, because he doesn't think that Jay Hamilton is interested in fixing the problem other than closing it. Mr. Henning suggested sending letters to Michael Flynn, who is the director of District 8 and also sending a copy to Gordon Proctor who is in Columbus. Mr. Danbury read the address to the crowd. Kathy Burroughs said that it only takes a split second to have an accident. Virgil Burroughs asked if there are any plans to improve the surrounding roads if the intersection is closed. Mr. Henning said that the goal is to not close the road at this point. Virgil Burroughs said that two cars can barely pass on roads such as Glancy Greenbush Road. Wayne Turkelson said that he wants to make sure we re-iterate the ramifications of closing this intersection. Someone asked if everyone could be notified by mail if the recommendations aren't approved by ODOT, because they want to be able to do a media blitz. Someone said that if they don't take our ideas, then what do we do.

Cemetery & Maintenance Report

Mr. Whiteman said that it will cost \$252/day plus \$160 for delivery of a backhoe from Arts Rental Equipment. Mr. Whiteman said that he feels that the job can be done in four hours and this will cost a lot less than hiring a contractor to do the job. The trustees agree. Mr. Whiteman said that it has to be paid for on a credit card otherwise a deposit is required, so Mr. Danbury said that he will pay for it on his credit card. Mr. Whiteman said that he has some price lists of surrounding cemeteries, but we should discuss this at a future meeting. Mr. Whiteman said that he will be gone around the first week of August on vacation. He said that they will start mowing roads ago and cutting back brush along the roads in the next few days so it is done before school starts again. He said that he is going to check on material for crack sealer for a few roads that need to have cracks patched. He said that he gave a copy of the number of graves left in the cemeteries.

Zoning Report

Mrs. Malott presented a zoning report. Mrs. Malott said that when McKeever Pike first opened up, there were accidents all the time. She said that she was on life squad at that point. She said that she wrote ODOT and told them that there is a sign that obstructs view and it should be moved or there should be reflective tape put on it. She said that she complained to ODOT and they did nothing many years ago and it is still the same today. Mrs. Malott said that ZC3-06 and ZC4-06 have been approved by the zoning commission and the trustees need to have a public hearing. Mr. Henning motioned to have the hearing for ZC3-06 and ZC4-06 on August 7 at 7:00. Mr. Danbury second. All yeas. Mrs. Malott said that she will be out of town from July 26 to August 3.

Mr. Carson said that the township laptop's hard drive died last week and he had to purchase a new one as an emergency, because the cost to get it fixed probably wouldn't have been worth it. He said that he researched prices and found the best deal at Best Buy for \$999.99 and he purchased it on the township credit card.

Mr. Taylor said that he will write a letter to ODOT with the suggestions and he will send it to the other trustees to review before the next meeting. Mr. Henning said that he will try to contact State Senator Niehaus to coordinate a meeting with ODOT.

Mr. Taylor motioned to adjourn at approximately 10:25 p.m. Mr. Henning second. All yeas.

Fiscal Officer

Chairman