

Williamsburg Township Board of Trustees Minutes

February 13, 2023

The Williamsburg Township Board of Trustees met on Monday, February 13, 2023 to transact business. Chairperson Henning called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and all joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Guy Bainum, Bari Henning, and Gary Jordan answered the roll call. Also present were Fiscal Officer, Doug Lefferson, Maintenance Supervisor/Zoning Administrator Brian Tatman, Emergency Services Chief Jason McCarthy, Bobby Feimster, Dylan Arnett, Joe Speeg, Ed Boll, and Jason Broyles from Ohio 811.

Mr. Jordan motioned to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2023 meeting. Mr. Bainum second. All yeas with Mr. Henning abstaining because he did not attend the January 9th meeting. Mr. Henning motioned to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2023 meeting. Mr. Bainum second. All yeas with Mr. Jordan abstaining because he did not attend the January 23rd meeting.

Mr. Lefferson presented a financial report, including a comprehensive account of expenditures and receipts and the Trustees accepted it.

Mr. Bainum motioned to pay the attached bills. Mr. Jordan second. All yeas.

Jason Broyles from Ohio 811 (commonly referred to as “Call Before You Dig”) spoke on information about the program. He indicated that with the Township having some storm sewers it is required to register with his group. Mr. Broyles estimated the annual cost of registration was approximately \$450. You can register specific areas or the whole Township. Mr. Broyles cited ORC section 3781.25-26 as the legal requirement. He indicated Ohio 811 was the only protection service in the state of Ohio. Chairperson Henning thanked Mr. Broyles for the update and asked for clarification on the cost to register the entire Township. Mr. Broyles stated the \$450 estimate covered the entire Township. Mr. Tatman asked if this included anything that moves water. Mr. Broyles stated that road pipes were included by state code, but it was not practical to mark open ditch culverts. Mr. Jordan asked what is the difference from what happens currently, you call 811 now they take phone call send it to utility companies. Mr. Broyles indicated there have been some changes since 2016. If there is an issue, a contractor can file a complaint and if the Township is a nonmember the process goes through PUCO and there are fines if there is a violation. Mr. Jordan asked as a private not-for-profit how do you set your prices. Mr. Broyles indicated he would have to research. Mr. Henning asked about any damage to pipes, etc. This would be a civil issue. Mr. Henning asked Mr. Tatman for his thoughts on the need to register the whole Township given our only utility type service provided was storm sewers. Mr. Tatman did not believe we needed to register the whole Township. Mr. Henning reiterated that this was good information and asked Mr. Broyles to contact Mr. Tatman with a cost estimate for registering only effected subdivisions. Mr. Speeg, Jackson Township Trustee, says the system works well, but if you get a ticket you have to handle it. Mr. Henning asked if Mr. Tatman would have to respond to every ticket on activity in the Township. Mr. Broyles indicated this could be done quickly by marking a request in the system with a code indicating no Township utilities in the area, no conflict.

Mr. Speeg, Jackson Township Trustee, addressed the Trustees in regard to current solar farm activity within Clermont County. He referenced notification from Bricker & Eckler, Attorneys at Law, representing Clear Mountain Energy Center, LLC. This project involves 1,220 acres primarily in Jackson Township, but also including some of Williamsburg and Batavia Townships. The letter outlines the approval process and a planned public informational meeting March 2nd at the Clermont County Fairgrounds. Mr. Speeg also discussed a letter being prepared from Jackson Township to the Clermont County Prosecutor’s Office requesting clarification on whether or not additional property added to the original project referenced above was also exempt or grandfathered from State Senate Bill 52, which provides some new solar farm regulations. Mr. Jordan indicated the Trustees were working with the County to outline areas along the SR 32 corridor where solar farms would be prohibited due to better economic use for development. Mr. Speeg stated he believes only the County can outline areas exempt from solar farms. He stated the Jackson Township Trustees are working to present their logic with drawings to County Commissioners. Mr. Jordan said part of our discussions with the County included developing a template to help address. Mr. Speeg also discussed a resolution, prepared by the Prosecutor’s Office, appointing him as an ad hoc member of the Ohio Power Siting Board pursuant to the Clear Mountain Energy Center project. The Trustees acknowledged they had received the draft resolution today. Mr. Jordan asked how soon do you need the resolution. Mr. Speeg indicated that immediate action was probably necessary given the speed of activity. Mr. Jordan expressed some dismay in just hearing about the resolution today and concern that the legislation takes trustees in general out of the decision process by moving it to County Commissioners. Mr. Jordan said the Trustees have considered excluding any new solar farm activity throughout the Township for now until the issue can be more thoroughly vetted, but understands there may be practical and legal issues. Mr. Jordan recommended making the solar farm issue a topic for the Clermont County Township Association Meeting this Thursday. Mr. Boll reiterated the logic for excluding the SR 32 corridor due to a greater economic impact.

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Zoning Report

Mr. Tatman provided a report. There was one zoning certificate for January and two so far in February. Mr. Tatman indicated he, the Trustees, and Fiscal officer had all received the letter regarding the solar farm informational meeting March 2nd. He will be setting up a rezoning meeting of the Old Schumacher Model Homes. The County indicated this rezoning does not need to go back through them even though it is changing just the front parcels not the entire property. Mr. Daly surveyed off a little over 5 acres in the front for the zone change. Mr. Tatman stated he would call Taylor Corbett at the County in regard to forms for solar farms. Mr. Jordan reiterated that he wanted an early process to address grass issues this year. Mr. Jordan also brought up the possibility of a new full-time hire in the maintenance area. Mr. Lefferson said he needed to review the finances in this regard and the Trustees said they needed to discuss further in the future.

Cemetery and Maintenance Report

Mr. Tatman provided a report. There were four funerals in the month of January. The Maintenance Department received two loads of salt. We received a bill from the Public Utilities Commission for \$35. This is the first time we have received it, due to the fact that in years past it has been covered by a grant. The grant has run out for the state so they are charging us now. It has to do with being part of 811 the underground utilities marking service. All equipment is up and running. Waiting on a price for a new pickup truck. It is estimated to be around \$50,000. Mr. Jordan and Mr. Lefferson both indicated they continue to follow up with the County in regard to a demolition grant for the church in disrepair at the Concord Cemetery. We expect to hear something in a couple of months.

Emergency Services Report

Chief McCarthy provided a report. For the month of January there were 26 fire calls and 84 EMS calls. The Department participated in CPR Training with students (freshman through seniors) at the Williamsburg High School. We have applied for a \$240,000 grant for equipment and training through FEMA and the assistance to Firefighters Grant.

Mr. Boll brought up information about the Appalachian Grant. Mr. Jordan stated that the Township had provided the Clermont County Department of Community and Economic Development (local contact for this state grant) a list of preliminary ideas. Mr. Lefferson indicated that he is also staying actively involved with this grant opportunity.

Mr. Lefferson stated that per the Prosecutor's Office our resolution for the agreement with the County to resurface roads requires unanimous Trustee approval. Not all Trustees were present for our original resolution on January 9th so he is requesting a resolution tonight with all Trustees. Mr. Henning motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2023-02 to enter into a road resurfacing agreement with the Board of County Commissioners of Clermont County, Ohio pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Sections 307.15, 5571.15 and 5573.01. Mr. Bainum second. All yeas.

Mr. Lefferson discussed the opportunity to receive a Community Development Block Grant for electrical, heating & air conditioning, and kitchen upgrades at the Emergency Services Building. The application amount is for \$162,997.70 with the Township contributing \$16,299.77 (or 10%) if the grant is received. Mr. Jordan motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2023-03 authorizing Fiscal Officer Doug Lefferson to prepare and submit an application to participate in the Community Development Block Grant Program and to execute contracts as required. Mr. Bainum second. All yeas.

The Trustees discussed appointing Mr. Speeg to the Ohio Power Siting Board for the Clear Mountain Energy Center. The Trustees believe it makes sense for this appointment for this specific project as it predominantly impacts Jackson Township. Mr. Bainum motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2023-04 to appoint Joe Speeg as an ad hoc member of the Ohio Power Siting Board pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Sections 4906.021 and 4906.022 for the Clear Mountain Energy Center. Mr. Henning second. All yeas.

Mr. Jordan motioned to select Julia Hess as the 2023 Clermont County Chamber of Commerce Salute to Leaders Honoree for Williamsburg Township. Mr. Henning second. All yeas. Mrs. Hess, a Williamsburg native, attended Williamsburg Local Schools from K-12, then earned a Bachelor of Music Degree from Miami University. In addition to many years of service as Vocal and General Music Teacher at Williamsburg schools she has many other impressive musical accomplishments. She is past president of the Williamsburg Garden Club and current president of Harmony Hill Association, Inc. Mrs. Hess has also been inducted into Williamsburg High School's Academic Hall of Fame. The Trustees and Fiscal Officer all agree that this Salute to Leaders honor is well deserved.

Mr. Lefferson mentioned that he had received information on new Opioid settlements within the last couple of days and he was researching the Township's participation.

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Mr. Lefferson indicated that he had participated in the Clermont County internet survey from his personal residence which has limited internet providers and very poor speed. Mr. Lefferson indicated it was a good survey and provided access to a speed test the results of which were recorded in the survey.

Mr. Lefferson noted that he would be unable to attend the next regular scheduled trustee meeting and delegated minute taking authority to Mr. Tatman.

The Trustees noted that there was a Liquor License Hearing in regard to Clear Mountain Food Park scheduled for February 22, 2023 and that they would be attending.

Mr. Bainum motioned to adjourn at approximately 8:41 p.m. Mr. Jordan second. All yeas.

Fiscal Officer

Chairperson