

Williamsburg Township Board of Trustees Minutes

July 10, 2023

The Williamsburg Township Board of Trustees met on Monday, July 10, 2023 to transact business. Mr. Henning called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and all joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Bari Henning, Guy Bainum 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, Corporal Howard Glancy, Bobby Feimster, Dylan Arnett, Greg Hoover, Yvonne Malott, Dick Malott, Charlie Maklem, Drew Pierson, Eddie Barry, and Ed Boll.

Mr. Jordan motioned to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2023 meeting. Mr. Bainum second. All yeas, Mr. Henning abstained.

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. Henning second. All yeas.

Mr. Henning asked if anyone was here specifically for the tax budget. Those present indicated they were not. Mr. Henning stated that given that, they would proceed with some other presentations prior to reviewing the tax budget if there were no objections. There were none.

Corporal Glancy of the Sheriff's Office presented a report. There were 32 incident/offense reports in June a decrease of 4 from May. There were 5 adult arrests and no juvenile arrests in June. The calls for the month ranged from thefts to assaults. There were no critical incidents resulting in major felony arrests. Three of the arrests were for drug possession from traffic stops. No overdoses were reported in Williamsburg Township for the month of June. There were three calls this month for noise control in the area of Half Acre Road and Old State Route 32 and two criminal citations for noise control were issued. Mr. Henning thanked Corporal Glancy for his service and report.

Mr. Hoover inquired about the status of zoning violations on Clover Road, stating it was his understanding that the property owners were dodging service of certified mail notifications. Mr. Tatman responded that a violation letter sent registered mail had been returned. Mr. Tatman stated that the assistant prosecuting attorney working with him was unavailable for two weeks, but that he would follow up with her. Mr. Hoover said more pallets and portable toilets had been moved into the property, likely in support of the air soft gun activities. Mr. Henning asked Mr. Hoover about what activity he had seen. Mr. Hoover responded you can hear the activity and that he has video indicated trespassing on other property. Mr. Hoover has involved the Sheriff's Department. Mr. Henning asked Corporal Glancy if he was aware of the situation. Corporal Glancy stated he was not aware but that he would review it.

Eddie Barry, Director of Development and Drew Pierson, Senior Development Manager of Clear Mountain Energy Center presented an update on the solar farm planned for primarily Jackson Township, but with a portion in Williamsburg and Batavia Townships. Clear Mountain Energy Center is owned by Savion, a Shell Group portfolio company. The PowerPoint presentation covered the following topics:

- About Savion
- Projects Portfolio
- How Solar Energy Works
- Why Solar Power
- Project Overview (100 megawatt)
- Proposed Project Schedule
 - Project Construction (first quarter 2025 through second quarter 2026)
 - Commercial Operation Date - first quarter 2026
- Permitting Requirements & Studies
- Ohio Power Siting Board Process
- Project Siting and Design
- Local Solar Economic Benefits
- Qualified Energy Project Tax Abatement
 - Real and personal property tax abatement with Payment In Lieu Of Tax (PILOT) payments
- Solar Panel Safety
- Decommissioning

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Mr. Barry stated these type projects create an opportunity for certainty in energy pricing. He discussed the project footprint. Mr. Jordan asked if it encompassed 210 acres in Williamsburg Township. Mr. Barry said yes. Mr. Barry discussed the proposed project schedule. Mr. Maklem asked with construction in 2025 when do payments start. Mr. Barry estimated 2027. Mr. Boll stated that the project will provide revenues that exceed value as agricultural land. Mr. Hoover asked if the government revenues would be a flat rate over the life of the project. Mr. Barry indicated there is no inflation adjustment. Mr. Hoover asked if there was any requirement to use small/disadvantaged businesses in the construction work. Mr. Barry indicated not that he was aware of. Mrs. Malott asked if there are emissions into the land. Mr. Barry stated that the short answer was no. Mr. Hoover inquired about the water retention plan. Mr. Barry stated that the project would protect and improve the existing drainage system and that there would be no uptick in water runoff. Mrs. Malott asked about any usage of below tier one suppliers. Mr. Barry indicated they were using the best suppliers. Mrs. Malott asked if the solar equipment was produced in the United States. Mr. Barry said the goal is to use domestic products and that they receive extra tax credits for doing that. Mr. Jordan asked if purchasing domestic products was the trend in past projects or were items purchased from China. Mr. Barry replied that a lot of the equipment has been Canadian, but he would have to look into it. Current government rules make it more practical to purchase domestic. Mr. Jordan said one of his concerns in regard to issues such as decommissioning is that the business owners of solar farms seem to change. Mr. Barry replied that contractually any new owners would have to assume the same responsibilities. Mr. Jordan asked if they have decommissioned any solar farms yet. Mr. Barry stated they have not. Mr. Arnett asked where can you see the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) approved decommissioning plan for this project. Mr. Barry said it is public record and you can view it on the OPSB web site. Mr. Hoover asked if the bond posted to cover decommissioning costs was inflation adjusted. Mr. Barry said it was required to be re-evaluated every five years. Mr. Boll asked if material in the solar modules is considered hazardous waste. Mr. Barry replied no. Mr. Boll indicated an overall concern for issues with the surrounding East Fork Water Shed. Mr. Barry indicated that studies have been done and assessments will be public record. Mr. Jordan said the Trustees appreciated the update, but for the record it was the first time they had officially met on the project. Mr. Jordan said that it was the Township's desire to keep land on both sides of State Route 32 for business. Our intentions are to have the land used for manufacturing not solar farms. Mr. Jordan went on to state that the Clermont County Commissioners recently approved the resolution for no large solar farms in Williamsburg Township and that it is the Trustee's position that the portion of the Clear Mountain Energy Center in Williamsburg Township is not grandfathered. Mr. Jordan said in his opinion he does not believe savings will trickle down to Township residents. Mr. Barry said his earlier reference was to predictions that solar energy will be a lower cost overall providing a levelized cost of energy overall, but not referring to individual costs locally. Mr. Jordan stated that after the initial construction build there would be no or little employees ongoing at these solar farms. Manufacturing jobs are more perpetual for this community. Mr. Henning stated the Trustee's biggest thing is this land will be more valuable with industry on it, PILOT payments are better than agricultural or vacant land but not better than manufacturing. Mr. Boll asked that without Williamsburg Township land included does the project still work. Mr. Barry said no and that they do not have any plans to scrap the project. Mr. Henning thanked the Clear Mountain Energy Center representatives again for the update.

Emergency Services Report

Chief McCarthy provided a report. There were 51 fire calls and 132 EMS calls for the month of June. The Chief gave a vehicle update. All vehicles were waxed. The 2020 ambulance is at Beechmont Ford for an issue with the motor, earliest date given for service availability was July 19th. The ladder truck is out of service with a broken gear box assembly with unknown timeframe for repair. The cost for repair is estimated at around \$15,000. Both engines need new front tires, tires have been ordered. The 2006 Engine had bad batteries from 2018, four batteries were replaced. The 1977 Jeep had a valve cover replaced. The new ambulance process is progressing forward, working on the design with Horton. The Chief recommended hiring the following people part-time contingent on the results of the background checks:

- Leanna Cluxton – Firefighter II/EMT Basic
- Danielle Plummer – EMT Basic
- John Buttrick – Firefighter II/Paramedic
- Clayton Morgan and Dakota Day to the Cadet Program

Mr. Henning motioned to hire Leanna Cluxton, Firefighter II/EMT Basic, Danielle Plummer, EMT Basic, John Buttrick, Firefighter II/Paramedic for part-time positions contingent on the background checks and to add Clayton Morgan and Dakota Day to the Cadet Program. Mr. Bainum second. All yeas. Jason Pollitt was recognized by the Ohio State Firefighters Association with the Myron George Award. An award given for distinguished service. Chief McCarthy stated that we have been notified by the Clermont County Economic and Development Department that we are the recipient of the Community Block Grant for an amount of \$147,000 to make essential updates to the station. The improvements include updates to the electrical and HVAC systems and a kitchen remodel.

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Zoning Report

Mr. Tatman provided a report. He indicated four zoning certificates have been issued since last report for a new house, pools, and porches. The Zoning Commission's next meeting will be August 1st at the Emergency Services Building. The Zoning Board of Appeals has two upcoming meetings. An attorney group has contacted the Township for a variance, not aware of the project yet. Mr. Bainum asked if any more letters have been sent on high grass. Mr. Tatman indicated they were up to date, but he would continue to review properties. Mr. Jordan reminded Mr. Tatman to outsource mowing where necessary for properties in violation. Mr. Tatman said they would discuss with Travis Pope.

Cemetery and Maintenance Report

Mr. Tatman provided a report. They are currently boom mowing along the roads. Mr. Tatman stated the one-ton dump truck has rust holes in the bed, replacement might be \$20 to \$30,000. He is still researching. Mr. Jordan asked for an update on the french drain on Musgrove Road. Mr. Tatman responded they continue working on it.

At 8:30 p.m. public discussion on the 2024 Tax Budget was opened up. Mr. Lefferson provided an overview of the 2024 Tax Budget financial reports. There were no public comments. Mr. Henning motioned to approve the 2024 Tax Budget. Mr. Bainum second. All yeas.

Mr. Feimster asked how vendors are chosen to service the Township vehicles. Mr. Henning indicated they try to source locally. Chief McCarthy added that there are certain requirements for those servicing emergency vehicles. Mr. Feimster indicated he would like his business considered for some work. Chief McCarthy indicated he would follow up and visit the business.

Mr. Bainum motioned to adjourn at approximately 8:39 p.m. Mr. Henning second. All yeas.

Fiscal Officer

Chairperson