

# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

WALNUT TOWNSHIP, FAIRFIELD COUNTY, OH - BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
11420 Millersport Rd., Millersport, OH 43067

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

January 2, 2024 – 7:00 PM

### **Township Officials present:**

Trustees Terry W. Horn, William R. Yates, Douglas G. Leith, Fiscal Officer (FO) Pam Underwood.

### **Department Heads/Staff present:**

Roads & Parks Supervisor - Nate Wagner; Fire Chief - Robert Price; Zoning Inspector - Mike Berry; Recording Secretary; Fiscal Accounting Clerk - Tammy Oliver; Property Maintenance Inspector - Kelly Smith; and Regional Planning Commission Representative - Robert W. Slater II were present.

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Trustee Chairman Yates.

**Invited guest(s) present:** Fairfield County Sheriff's Office – Sgt. Sean Burke.

Nicholas Ellas Toy Drive organizers - Rick Ellas, Maria Fox, Crista Grover, Evan Martin, Chief Farmer (Basil Fire Department).

**Number of members of the public present:** 10 as recorded on Sign-in sheets.

### **MEETING PROCEEDINGS**

**Fairfield County Sheriff's Office** – Sgt. Sean Burke;

Sgt. Burke shared that the Fairfield County Sheriff's Office will be investigating the theft of one of the Township's Stop signs.

### **Walnut Township Fire Department Toy Drive -**

Trustee Leith made a motion recognizing Resolution 04-2024 – Walnut Township's appreciation for the Nicholas Ellas Toy Drive. The Township recognized citizens, Rick Ellas, Maria Fox, Crista Grover and Basil Assistant Fire Chief Farmer for their essential position to the success of The Walnut Township Fire Department Toy Drive. The Walnut Township Fire Department, represented by Evan Martin, presented a plaque to them in gratitude for their continuous support. The resolution was seconded by Trustee Horn. The motion passed with 3 yes votes.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Trustee Leith made a motion to approve the meeting minutes with corrections for the Regular Meeting on December 5, 2023. Trustee Horn seconded the motion. The motion passed with 3 yes votes.

Trustee Leith made a motion to approve the minutes of the special meeting on December 19, 2023 with corrections. Trustee Horn seconded the motion. The motion passed with 3 yes votes.

### **Financial Report – Fiscal Officer, Pam Underwood:**

#### **Approval of Checks and Electronic Fund Transfers (EFT's):**

Trustee Horn made a motion to approve checks # 29188 through # 29269 and Electronic Fund Transfers #595-2023 through #626-2023, after being certified that funds are available and appropriations have been made by Fiscal Officer Underwood. Trustee Leith seconded the motion. The motion passed with 3 yes votes.

The November 2023 Reconciliation will be presented at the February 2024 Board Meeting.

The Fiscal Officer, Pam Underwood, expressed her concern with the 2020-2021 Audit that is being conducted by Julian and Grube for the Ohio Auditor of State. The Fiscal Officer stated that Julian and Grube are threatening her that because of the manner the prior fiscal Officers handled the Township's

finances, the auditors are threatening to make the Township “un-auditable.” If the Township is made “un-auditable” the Township will not be eligible for grants or loans in the future. The Trustees expressed their desire to support the Fiscal Officer, Pam Underwood. The Trustees asked that the Fiscal Officer follow-up with the Prosecutors office and County Auditors to help request that Julian and Grube provide a list asking for everything that the Auditors may still need from the Fiscal Office so that we can address any further questions that they may need clarification on and supply any documentation needed. The Trustees would like to address any and all concerns prior to Julian and Grube completing the 2020-2021 audit and presenting their final audit report with its findings and recommendations. The Trustees directed the Fiscal Officer to communicate that the Trustees support Julian and Grube delaying their final report so that we can address any other issues that Julian and Grube may have with our 2020-2021 Audit. The Fiscal Officer showed concern that prior year’s audit recommendations were never corrected.

The Fiscal Officer stated that Julian and Grube has increased the audit fee from the original estimate of \$7,800.00 to \$15,000.00 because of the number of hours their firm has engaged with the Township’s finances for 2020-2021. Trustee Leith made the motion and Trustee Horn seconded the motion to approve the increase in the IPA contract for the 2020-2021 Audit. The motion passed with 3 yes votes.

**Property Inspector** - Property Inspector, Kelly Smith, 41 new violations were addressed in 2023, 10 were sent to court, and 31 violations that have been cleaned up or are being addressed with the residents. Trustee Horn stated that Kelly had done a great job this past year.

**Comments from the public:**

Residents discussed the mobile home park on Fairfield beach and where it stood with the tenants and their vacating the property.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Township Fire Department** - Chief Robert Price;

Chief Price stated there were 119 Total Runs in December 2023.

The new used engine is in service. OTARMA will pay \$10,000.00 to the Township towards the repair of the Rescue. The Insurance Adjuster felt part of the damage was just normal wear and tear and would not completely cover the damages.

**Regional Planning Commission Representative** – Robert Slater II; T

There was no Regional Planning Commission meeting because there was a lack of topics to discuss.

**Zoning** – Mike Berry

Mike Berry reported to the Trustees that 9 permits were issued in December: 5 home, 1 accessory building, 3 sheds, 1 variance. No outstanding fees. 9 letters were issued: 6 violations and 3 variances.

65 phone calls were returned.

Trustee Horn made the motion to approve Resolution #05-2024 Semi-trailer resolution to request help from the Fairfield County Prosecutors office to assist with removal of the semi-trailer that is Illegally parked on the property located at 13516 Newark Drive, Millersport, Ohio 43046, parcel #0460108600 by owner, April Lyn Doss and Eddie Neil. Trustee Leith seconded the motion. The motion passed with 3 yes votes.

BZA Reorganizational Meeting on January 11, 2024.

Zoning Committee Hearing for Rezone and Reorganizational Meeting on January 18, 2024.

There were 150 Permits issued in 2023 with \$86,423.00 collected in fees.

Trustee Leith made the motion to approve an AEP Easement but directed Mike Berry to have the Prosecuting Attorneys' office to review the document drafted by AEP and make any changes they feel necessary. The motion was seconded by Trustee Horn. The motion passed with 3 yes votes.

**Parks and Roads Supervisor** – Nate Wagner;

**Parks and Roads:**

Nate stated he really had nothing new to report. Nate said that they had been working on cleaning out culverts.

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. **Salt Storage Building Rebid Schedule** - Trustee Horn informed the Trustees that there will be a Pre-bid meeting on February 28, 2024 and that there will be a Special Board Meeting on March 13, 2024 for the Salt Barn Bid Opening at 11:00 am.
2. **BLRC/Walnut Township Logo/Identity** – Trustee Horn showed the final proposed logos to the Trustees. The Trustees decided to have the logos edited to include the words “Walnut Township” in the Fairfield Beach logos.
3. **New Phone System Update** – Tammy Oliver, Fiscal Accounting Clerk, updated the Trustees on the status of the New Phone system installed by Innovative Technology Solutions. The hard wiring of the phone system was completed. The Trustees were given information on downloading an application onto their cell phones, so that they can access their voicemails and return phone calls from their cell phones. Each Trustee can set up their individual phone messages on the phone system and Nate Wagner will also assist any Trustees that need guidance with setting up the application on their cell phones.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Regional Planning Commission** – Mike informed the Trustees that there will be a combined special meeting of the Zoning Commission and the Trustees on February 15, 2024. Holly Matei from the Regional Planning Commission would like to have an informational meeting about reworking the entire Zoning Resolution Book.
2. **Minutes on Website** – The Trustee's Recording Secretary and the Zoning Commission and BZA Recording Secretary are currently working with ITS to get the current Meeting Minutes uploaded to the website.
3. **Meeting January 9, 2024 - County Commissioners Hearing Room** - There will be a special Board meeting on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 1:00 pm at the Fairfield County Commissioners Hearing Room – 210 East Main St., Lancaster, OH to discuss regulating fill within the north Walnut Township Floodplain with the County Commissioners.
4. **OTA Conference is February 6<sup>th</sup> – February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

**Additional Comments from the public:**

There were no comments.

**Adjournment:** At 09:46 PM, Trustee Leith made a motion to adjourn. Trustee Horn seconded the motion. The motion passed with 3 yes votes.

Minutes Recorded By: Tammy Oliver

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Pam Underwood, Fiscal Officer

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William R. Yates, Chairman

Terry W. Horn, Vice Chairman

Douglas W. Leith