



Bethel Township Board of Trustees
January 2, 2024
Workshop Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER: Time: 9:00 AM Presiding: Assistant to Twp Admin Arnold
Roll call: Zoning Director Arnold: Present Fiscal Officer Ross: Present
Trustee vanHaaren: Present Trustee Reese: Present Trustee Dick: Present

PUBLIC COMMENTS on items on the Agenda: NONE.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS:

1. Swearing in ceremony for Trustee Kama Dick
 - a. Trustee Reese performed the oath of office.
2. Traveling Fiscal Officer, neighboring Fiscal Officer, assistant Fiscal Officer
 - a. Trustee Reese consulted the Ohio Township Association (OTA) for advice regarding the situation of our Fiscal Officer unexpectedly resigning 3 months prior to the end of her term. The recommendation was that we appoint our Fiscal Officer elect to fill the remainder of the resigning Fiscal Officer's term.
 - b. She then suggested some other resources available to us to help. The Board and Fiscal Officer elect discussed the options to ensure financial services continue uninterrupted:
 - i. Hiring a traveling fiscal officer. The OTA mentioned this option to Trustee Reese as being offered via the auditor office. Trustee Reese tried to contact the auditor office to gather more information, but did not receive a return call as of this meeting, likely due to holidays.
 - ii. Hiring a neighboring fiscal officer. Trustee Reese called the Miami County Township Association (MCTA) president to ask for recommendations of possible former fiscal officers. She followed up with them and based on their input, recommended Pat Quillen as a good match for our situation. Pat was a long-time fiscal officer of Concord Twp and was recently elected to the office with a start date of 4/1/2024. She is within Miami County and has experience training other fiscal officers. Trustee vanHaaren raised the concern that Pat likes to start on paper, then move items into the computer systems.
 - iii. Hiring an assistant fiscal officer. Fiscal Officer elect Ross stated she would like to have an assistant.
 - c. The consensus of the group was that Fiscal Officer elect Ross should be appointed to finish the unexpired term left open by the resignation of Fiscal Officer Watson and Pat Quillen was a good match for our situation.

3. Resolution to appoint Fiscal Officer Elect Rhonda Ross to finish out vacant Fiscal Officer term

RESOLUTION #24-01-001: A RESOLUTION APPOINTING RHONDA ROSS TO THE FILL THE REMAINING TERM OF FISCAL OFFICER DEBORAH WATSON LASTING UNTIL 3-31-2024

Motioned by Trustee Reese

Seconded by Trustee Dick

Vote: Trustee vanHaaren YES

Trustee Reese YES

Trustee Dick YES

4. Swearing in ceremony for Fiscal Officer Rhonda Ross
 - a. Trustee Reese performed the oath of office.
5. Resolution to approve contract with Pat Quillen to perform financial services and provide training on required financial computer systems

RESOLUTION #24-01-002: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TRUSTEES TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH PAT QUILLEN FOR THE PURPOSES OF PREPARING FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS AND PROVIDING TRAINING FOR BETHEL TOWNSHIP AT AN HOURLY RATE OF \$25/HR PLUS STANDARD MILEAGE NOT TO EXCEED AN OVERALL COST OF \$15,000

Motioned by Trustee Dick

Seconded by Trustee Reese

Vote: Trustee vanHaaren YES

Trustee Reese YES

Trustee Dick YES

6. Open Zoning positions/process to apply
 - a. Zoning Director Arnold stated there is one seat expiring on the BZA. Trustee Reese also mentioned that there is one alternate seat unfilled on the Zoning Commission.
 - b. Trustee Reese stated she would like to see a process followed similar to what was done for last year's openings: advertise the openings, have applicants submit a letter of interest to the Zoning Director, interview the candidates, select candidates to fill the openings.
7. Fire Chief position/process to apply
 - a. Trustee Reese stated she would like to see a process created for the applicants to follow.
 - b. Trustee vanHaaren proposed delaying this due to the fact that we have a lot of challenges facing us currently. Trustee Dick and Trustee Reese agreed.
8. Twp Administrator position/process to apply
 - a. Trustee Reese stated she would like to see a process created for the applicants to follow.
 - b. The Board discussed delaying this also. Trustee vanHaaren raised concerns about covering the duties of the Administrator. The search for a new Twp Admin will be postponed temporarily. Short-term, the duties will be divvied up between Assistant to the Twp Administrator Arnold and the Trustees.
9. OTA Winter Conference reminder Feb 7-9
 - a. Trustee vanHaaren suggested to those interested to sign up now – do not wait.

TRUSTEE ITEMS:

1. Discuss yearly appointments and duties – discussion led to the following assignments:

General Board Duties

Board Appointing BZA and Zoning Commission Members

<u>Board</u>	Promoting the Township within Miami County, the Miami Valley Region, and the State of Ohio
<u>Board</u>	Annexation- leading the conversations, meetings, research needed to fight annexation and protect Township borders
<u>Board</u>	Levy's: New, replacement, and renewals
<u>Board</u>	Determine need and compensation of Township employees
<u>Board</u>	Approve expenditures over \$5,000
<u>Board</u>	Hear testimony and vote on Zoning Classification changes
<u>Board</u>	Work with staff and Zoning Commission on changes to the Zoning Resolution
<u>Board</u>	Review and approve the annual budget as presented by the Fiscal Officer
<u>Board</u>	Review and approve the annual appropriations as presented by the Fiscal Officer

Individual Duty Resolutions

<u>Reese</u>	President of the Board
<u>Dick</u>	Vice President of the Board
<u>Reese</u>	Representative to Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission; <u>Dick</u> Alternate
<u>Arnold</u>	Representative to the Technical Advisory Committee of the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission
<u>Dick</u>	Representative to Miami County Council; <u>Reese</u> Alternate
<u>vanHaaren</u>	and <u>Dick</u> Representatives to Bethel Twp Volunteer Fire Fighters Dependents Fund
<u>Arnold</u>	Debris Manager for Bethel Twp as required by the Miami County Debris Management Plan

Setting Various Duties

<u>Dick</u>	and <u>Reese</u> Facilitating ditch petitions with the county, drainage issues brought by residents
<u>Dick</u>	Miami County Engineer liaison
<u>Dick</u>	ODOT liaison
<u>Reese</u>	Writing quarterly Newsletter, which includes meeting info, current issues, changes in operations/rules, recent zoning activity, and various tips and reminders; <u>Dick</u> Alternate
<u>Dick</u>	Maintain Township social media sites (Facebook and Instagram); <u>Arnold</u> Alternate
<u>Reese</u>	Maintain Township website; <u>Arnold</u> Alternate
	E-Mail tree – this will be discontinued at this time
<u>Reese</u>	TextMyGov (send alerts and monitor community requests); <u>Arnold</u>

Reese Liaison to Bethel Local School Board

Dick Roadway Issues (complaints, maintenance, plowing etc.)

vanHaaren Sheriff Contract (negotiations, meetings, etc)

2. Meeting Schedule for 2024 – Discussion included:

- a. Suggestions to reduce the number of meetings, move the workshop meetings to an evening time so that residents have more opportunity to attend, do not schedule meetings in conflict with Bethel School Board meetings, hold the workshop meetings directly in front of the regular meetings (same evening).
- b. The school Board is having their meeting Monday, January 8th to decide their meeting schedule. The Trustees will wait until their schedule is decided to propose a schedule for Trustee meetings.

3. Trustee Goals and Objectives for 2024

Define goals/projects to be completed in 2024 and beyond

a. Meeting related

- i. Purchase new audio and/or video recorder for meetings – Trustee Reese will research
- ii. Video/live stream meetings? YouTube?
- iii. Post agenda packet rather than summary for regular meetings
- iv. Post meeting recordings in a timely manner
- v. Post agenda at least 2 business days prior the meeting
- vi. Follow Board Meeting Procedure/Rules approved in 2023 (review/update?) – will be reviewed at the next workshop to see if updates are needed

b. Review Assistant to the Fire Chief position

- i. Trustee Reese is still concerned that it may be illegal for a Fiscal Officer to have more than one job in the Township.
- ii. Discussion centered on the list of duties this position includes, which are mostly financial-related. Fiscal Officer Ross stated she would help with any financial needs, but does not want to have a second job. Also, the Assistant to the Fiscal officer can help where needed.
- iii. Trustee vanHaaren suggested Interim Fire Chief Schiebrel be consulted before eliminating the position, to which everyone agreed.

c. Research cost of having a full-time Fire/EMS staff

- i. Trustee Dick proposed possibly having a full-time staff to include benefits and potentially improve retention.
- ii. Zoning Director Arnold stated that this has been considered in the past, but the analysis showed it was overly expensive compared to the available funds. He will do some additional research to see if this is still the case.

d. Consider a position dedicated to fighting annexation

- i. Trustee Reese stated that this had been proposed by a citizen Jeff Morford and she would like to see some research done as to duties, qualifications, costs, etc.
- ii. Trustee vanHaaren suggested Mr. Morford come to a meeting to tell us his vision.

e. Prioritize drainage issues in the township

- i. Trustee Reese would like to see a list of drainage issues in the Township and take a look into what it would take to fix them.

- ii. Trustee vanHaaren stated that the Township is responsible only for the drainage under the roads.
- f. Request Zoning Boards to review and update the Zoning Resolution where appropriate
 - i. Trustee Reese would like to request the Zoning Boards to recommend any changes they would like to see to our Zoning Resolution since last year we only focused on lot size and road frontage requirements.
 - ii. Trustee vanHaaren stated that we must wait 1 year before we can request a review by the Zoning Boards.
- g. Gather job descriptions into a central location (post to website?) and create missing descriptions
 - i. Trustee Reese would like to see all job descriptions together in a folder that is easily accessible. She suggested also considering posting them on the website.
- h. Gather resolutions into a central location (post to website?)
 - i. Trustee Reese would like to see all resolutions together in a folder that is easily accessible. She suggested also considering posting them on the website.
- i. Gather policies into a central location (post to website?)
 - i. Trustee Reese would like to see all policies together in a folder that is easily accessible. She suggested also considering posting them on the website.
 - ii. Create policy to hire for vacant positions (employees, BZA, Zoning Commission).
 - iii. Follow hiring policy to fill Fire Chief position, Township Administrator position, and open seats on the BZA and Zoning Commission.
 - iv. Create policy for full-time and part-time bonuses, vacation pay, holiday pay, and healthcare for Township and Fire/EMS staff
 - v. Create policy for employee review process (frequency, deadlines, meaning of review, etc) and merit pay guidelines
 - vi. Create policy for no media interviews or public statements w/o discussion and a board agreed-to response
- j. Review and update inventory list
 - i. Trustee Reese noted the ORC requires this yearly.
 - ii. Trustee vanHaaren stated the insurance company is involved.
- k. Review and update contact book
 - i. Trustee Reese mentioned she received a book when she started that contained a lot of valuable contact info for the Township, the County, and the State. She is willing to update the book providing the source documents can be located.
- l. Physical office for Trustees to hold office hours
 - i. Trustee Dick and Trustee Reese would like to have an office available in order to hold office hours. One idea would be for all elected officials to share the former Fiscal Officer's office. It is large enough to have 2 desks and/or 2 computers.
 - ii. Discussion then shifted to some moves that have already taken place: Zoning Director Arnold switched offices with the Fiscal Officer and Interim Fire Chief Schiebrel moved into the Township Administrator's office. The Township Admin's computer was moved to the open area (receptionist) desk.

m. Update web site

Trustee Reese said there are several categories of updates that she would like to work on:

- i. Corrections to pages that have broken links, out-of-date information, and missing information.
- ii. Changes to some of page designs to help eliminate page refreshing requirements and to consolidate some of the information that we offer.
- iii. Add a financial page for the new Fiscal Officer to provide financial info to the township.

n. Social Media ideas

- i. Seek resident input
- ii. Promote farmers and farmland facts, local businesses, and resident projects such as a family garden
- iii. Provide township zoning, policy, or other info
- iv. Feature township departments

o. Invite community volunteers to help w/social media, newsletter, website, or other township items

p. Trustee Reese would like to do a TextMyGov cost-benefit analysis before we consider renewing the service at the end of the two-year period when our current contract expires.

q. Use official township email for all township business. Trustee Reese asked about sending a copy of the emails to Trustee vanHaaren's personal account. Trustee vanHaaren stated this was due to an issue early on, but now it is not necessary.

r. Trustee Reese would like to see the township phone recording be updated to reflect new staff – recording still provides options to reach Mr. Caskey and Ms. Stinson who have not been with us since 2020-2021.

s. Trustee Reese would like to see monthly admin information reports to the Trustees

- i. Residents' inquiries/calls/concerns and a brief status of each
- ii. Goals and accomplishments of the administrator since the last report

t. Healthcare updates to ensure fairness and equitability across the staff

- i. Trustee Reese would like to see the employee contribution be based on the type of plan selected by the employee. Currently, the Fiscal Officer contributes \$10/month while all other employees contribute \$100. She stated that typically the employee's contribution is a percentage of the total cost of the premium. She also mentioned having a contribution based on the type of plan chosen (single plan of \$100 contribution and a family plan of \$200, for instance).
- ii. She would also like to change the HSA payment schedule, making the following remarks: Currently, the HSA payment is made as a lump sum payment for June-May. This allows an employee to receive the entire HSA payment, then drop out of the Healthcare Plan. Payments should be done quarterly, be prorated according to employment dates, and should be tied to remaining in the healthcare plan.

- iii. Trustee Reese would also like to look into the Township policy regarding Healthcare benefits for those over 65. She was told verbally that in the past the Township contributed to Medicare costs, but has not been provided a copy of the resolution or policy that discusses which costs.
- u. Ohio Checkbook updated monthly
- v. Meeting minutes caught up
 - i. Trustee Reese stated that Fiscal Officer Watson did not finish around 30 sets of outstanding minutes before she resigned. Trustee Reese volunteered to help write some of the minutes, as time permitted. She also asked Trustee vanHaaren if she could help.
- w. Land Use Plan
 - i. Trustee Reese asked where the Land Use Plan stood, if we had everything from Joe Tuss, and if it was complete. Zoning Director Arnold will research the status and location of documents.
- x. Unappoint Trustee liaison for annexation
- y. Friendship Park potential upgrades
 - i. Trustee Reese mentioned goals of getting a shelter built at the park, looking into Pickle Ball courts, and asked about the status of the playground equipment Bethel Schools had offered us. Zoning Director Arnold will research status of playground equipment.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Huber Heights annexation
 - a. No updates.
2. Massage Parlor regulations
 - a. Waiting on prosecutor for review.
3. Trees on Singer
 - a. Pick up in the spring.
4. Archive Social
 - a. Placeholder for future consideration.
5. Playground equipment move
 - a. Zoning Director will research and report at the next workshop meeting.
6. Friendship Park mapping
 - a. Zoning Director will research and report at the next workshop meeting.
7. ARPA purchase update
 - a. Mini Dump – delivered after the first of the year
 - b. RIT packs and Fans - ordered
 - c. Radios – ordered
 - d. Boots - ordered
 - e. Recliners - ordered

OTHER DISCUSSION TOPICS:

1. Annual housekeeping resolutions will be on the agenda for the next meeting.
2. Trustee Reese asked about Trimbach road concerns in Wiley Industrial Park. Zoning Director Arnold will research and report at the next meeting.
3. Trustee Reese asked if there was a list of Township Admin responsibilities that we could divvy up to be sure all were covered. No one knew of a list, per se.
 - a. Zoning Director Arnold will order business cards and dais name plates for Trustee Dick and Fiscal Officer Ross.
 - b. Trustee Reese asked if Fiscal Officer's and the Township Administrator's emails would be forwarded so that nothing gets overlooked. Answer was that Twp Admin was already forwarded to Zoning Director Arnold and Fiscal Officer Watson's to new Fiscal Officer Ross.

ADJOURNMENT motioned by Trustee Dick seconded by Trustee Reese

Vote: Trustee vanHaaren YES

Trustee Reese YES

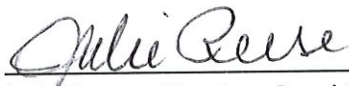
Trustee Dick YES

Time: 11:35 AM

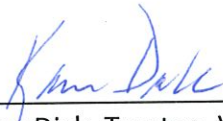
ATTACHMENTS:

1. Signed resolutions.
2. Digital audio recording of the meeting containing discussion and public comments, if any.

Minutes prepared by Trustee Reese



Julie Reese, Trustee, President



Kama Dick, Trustee, Vice President



Beth van Haaren, Trustee



Rhonda Ross, Fiscal Officer