

**BRUNSWICK HILLS TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**September 12, 2023**

The Brunswick Hills Township Board of Trustees met in regular session on Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at Brunswick Hills Township Town Hall.

Board of Trustees Chair John Witthuhn, Trustee Patrica Murphy, Zoning Inspector Evelyn Czyz, Police Chief Tim Sopkovich, Fire Chief Anthony Strazzo and Service Department Foreman Cory Schultz present.

Witthuhn called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and noted the meeting was properly advertised.

**PRESENTATION:**

None.

**MINUTES:**

No minutes to approve.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**Zoning Department:**

Zoning Inspector Evelyn Czyz presented the August, 2023 report. Monies collected for the month were \$3,612.47. Czyz expressed her gratitude to the Board for the new computer that was installed in the Zoning Office as the old one stopped working the previous week.

Trustee Murphy motioned for the Zoning Commission to hold a workshop on September 20, 2023 at 7:00 PM. Witthuhn seconded. Witthuhn – yes. Murphy – yes. Motion carried.

**Police Department:**

Chief Sopkovich congratulated Sergeant Piekut and Patrolman Getto for receiving the Safe Communities Award. Patrolman Getto received the award for the most OVI arrests in the Township and Sergeant Piekut received the award for the most traffic enforcement citations issued.

Sopkovich shared that around 2013, Brunswick Hills Township Police Department joined the Ohio Collaboration, which is a State governed group that monitors the best policies and procedures in law enforcement throughout the State of Ohio. Every two years, BHPD gets audited to ensure they are in compliance, and Sopkovich was pleased to report that they just received a compliance certification for 2023.

Chief Sopkovich announced that the Brunswick Hills Police Association is holding the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Barktoberfest on Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup> from 10 AM to 1 PM at the FOP Lodge located on W.130<sup>th</sup> Street.

Sopkovich requested to send Patrolman Fairhurst to attend training for the Reid Technique of Investigative Interviewing and Advanced Interrogation Techniques from October 10-13 at the Marion

County Sheriff's Office. Cost of the training is \$630.00 and will be paid from item 2191-210-318-0000, Training. Officer Fairhurst will be staying with friends while attending the training and will not need hotel accommodations. Sopkovich requested a purchase order be issued to Reid and that Officer Fairhurst be reimbursed for mileage. Trustee Chair Witthuhn strongly opposed the reimbursement of mileage since the Township's policy states that employees are required to use departmental vehicles, when available, but stated that he would approve the training request. Trustee Murphy made a motion to approve both the training and mileage reimbursement, but because there was not a second, the motion failed. Witthuhn motioned to approve the training as requested along with the use of a Township vehicle. Murphy seconded. Witthuhn – yes. Murphy – yes. Motion carried.

Sopkovich also requested to utilize ARPA funds to purchase a new 2023 Dodge Durango Pursuit vehicle fully equipped with emergency equipment from John Johns Pursuit Vehicles in the amount of \$65,071.00. Witthuhn said he had no problem approving the requested vehicle; however, at the previous Trustees meeting, department heads were asked to submit their wish lists to the Board for use of the ARPA funds rather than directly submitting items for approval. The Board will need to discuss requests made by all departments prior to any of them being approved.

An additional request was made by Sopkovich to construct a 30 x 40 enclosed heated parking/storage building on the southeast corner of the property utilizing ARPA funds. He would like a new driveway connecting to Grafton Road from the building addition. Zoning Inspector Czyz interjected that a new driveway onto Grafton Road would need to be approved by the Highway Engineers' Office. Sopkovich stated that he would like the Police Department's road access to mirror that of the Fire Department's located across the street. Czyz said that she believes the Fire Department is grandfathered in, but would discuss it further with Sopkovich. This request will be considered with all other ARPA fund-use requests.

Sopkovich then requested to attend the Ohio Attorney General's 2023 Law Enforcement Conference on October 24 and 25 in Columbus. There will be no cost for the training as Sopkovich is a recipient of the Ohio Distinguished Law Enforcement Mark Losey Service Award. He was also requesting approval for a one-night hotel stay. Witthuhn made a motion to approve the request. Murphy seconded. Murphy – yes. Witthuhn – yes. Motion carried. Murphy also congratulated Chief Sopkovich on receiving the award as well as Patrolman Getto and Sergeant Piekut on their awards. Witthuhn also congratulated the award recipients.

Chief Sopkovich requested approval for allocations to the following line items to cover expenses through the end of 2023:

Repairs & Maintenance, Vehicles	Line Item 2191-210-323-0323	\$10,000
Uniform, Tool & Equipment Reimbursement	Line Item 2191-210-251-0000	\$2,500
Machinery, Equipment & Furniture	Line Item 2191-760-740-0000	\$2,000
Repairs & Maintenance, Facility	Line Item 2191-210-323-1323	\$5,000
Coverall Cleaners	Purchase Order	\$1,500

Murphy moved to approve all of the PO and BC requests as read. Witthuhn seconded. Witthuhn – yes. Murphy – yes. Motion approved.

Lastly, Sopkovich stated that he received a complaint from a resident questioning whether the stop signs at Brittany Blvd. and Castleton as well as Brittany Blvd. and Keats were legal. Sopkovich stated that these stop signs have been an issue in the past and therefore, he contacted Pat Crouch at the Medina County Engineers' Office just as he had done previously. A traffic study was not completed years ago when the issue arose, and Pat could not explain why the stop signs had been erected. Sopkovich contacted Trustee Murphy to ask if any resolutions had been passed and Zoning Inspector Czyz is also checking into the matter. In closing, Sopkovich is asking the Board to research if a resolution was passed to erect the stop signs, and if not, to consider removing them.

**Fire Department:**

Chief Strazzo provided the August Run Review and reported that \$21,667.85 was collected through EMS billing for the month of August and \$151,200.74 year-to-date.

Strazzo requested approval from the Board to begin planning the annual Township Bon Fire & Haunted Hay Ride, to be held on Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at Plum Creek Park. Strazzo is also requesting the assistance of the Police Department to handle traffic, the Service Department to provide straw and wood, and the Trustees to run the Pumpkin Carving Contest. Witthuhn and Murphy agreed that Chief Strazzo should continue planning the event, and both Chief Sopkovich and Foreman Schultz agreed to assist with the event. More details will be announced as they are finalized.

Strazzo requested to close BC #65 and requested a new BC in the amount of \$1,000 from Line Item 2192-220-360-0000, Contracted Services. Strazzo also requested to close PO #33 for Guardian Alarm and issue a new PO to Guardian Alarm in the amount of \$180 from Line Item 2192-220-360-0000, Contracted Services. Witthuhn motioned to approve both requests. Murphy seconded. Murphy – yes. Witthuhn – yes. Motion carried.

Chief Strazzo congratulated Firefighter Nick DiSalvo, Firefighter Jim Morelli and Firefighter Braden Crider for receiving the Medina County Safe Communities Award, as well as the Brunswick Hills Police Officers that received the award. All three firefighters were recognized for their response to an accident on I-71. The call was a very serious motor vehicle accident and was a collaborative response with the Brunswick Division of Fire.

Strazzo shared that the EMS Grant Award that the Fire Department will be receiving has been increased from \$750 to \$2,975.04.

Strazzo reminded everyone of the Fire Department's Open House, which will be on Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup> from 12 PM to 3 PM at Station #2. Additional information will be posted on social media as well as digital flyers will be distributed through the school's notification system.

Chief Strazzo read multiple thank you notes and letters that Firefighters in the Department had received from residents and organizations. Strazzo mentioned that in supporting the Brunswick School District, the fire station was selected as one of the stops on a scavenger hunt called "Journey through Brunswick". Participants were school administrators and principals, and Strazzo received a thank you note from

Superintendent Niedermeyer. In addition, Strazzo also mentioned that the Cuyahoga Valley Church and the Brunswick United Methodist Church dropped off cards, baskets and goodie boxes to the Fire Station as a thank you and in recognition of 9/11. Strazzo and the firefighters were very appreciative of the thoughtfulness extended to them in remembrance of a day that our Country suffered so greatly.

Lastly, Strazzo recognized Service Department Foreman Schultz and his crew for getting the Town Hall parking lot paved.

**Service Department:**

Service Department Foreman Cory Schultz read the Monthly Road Report for August.

Schultz reported that additional work was required when paving the Town Hall parking lot as well as the associated expense. It was discovered that the ground on the north side of the parking lot was soft and unstable. Initially, Perrin Asphalt was going to charge an additional \$5,500 to address this issue and Schultz received email approval from the Trustees on 8/31/23 to pay the additional amount. After some negotiation, Schultz was able to reduce the additional expense to \$3,780, which was the actual cost of the 126 ton of gravel needed to properly repair the parking lot prior to paving. This made the final cost to pave the parking lot \$67,780.00. Trustee Chair Witthuhn thanked Schultz on overseeing the project as well as negotiating a lower cost in the best interests of the Township residents. Witthuhn offered **Resolution #32-2023** to utilize ARPA funds to pay for the approximately \$4,000 of additional cost of the parking lot to be paid to Perrin Asphalt. Murphy seconded. Witthuhn – yes. Murphy – yes. Resolution adopted.

Additionally, Witthuhn moved to approve payment of the invoice to Perrin Paving in the amount of \$67,780.00. Murphy seconded. Witthuhn – yes. Murphy – yes. Motion carried.

Schultz requested to purchase a 2 ton asphalt hot box from Southeastern Equipment in the amount of \$29,795.00. \$7,000 is to be paid from line item 1000-330-390-0000, Other – Purchased Services and \$22,795.00 to be paid from line item 2031-330-360-0000 – Contracted Services. Schultz also reported that the 1ton dump truck is not running. The Board of Trustees had given approval in August for the dump truck to be repaired, but it will be 6-10 months before that will be completed because of the availability of parts. Due to not only the dump truck situation, but also because the hot box would enable the Service Department to more efficiently patch the roads year-round, is why Schultz is requesting to purchase the equipment. Witthuhn clarified for residents that the hot box is typically a standard piece of equipment for service departments in communities the size of Brunswick Hills Township and larger. Schultz reported to the Board that he had obtained three quotes, including a state bid, for the purchase and Southeastern was the least expensive. Witthuhn motioned to approve the purchase from Southeastern as requested in the amount of \$29,795.00. Murphy seconded. Murphy – yes. Witthuhn – yes. Motion carried.

Lastly, Schultz is requesting a 24x48 addition off of the current Service Department building that would contain indoor restrooms, an employee locker room, separate office, and a lunchroom. Schultz would also like to add a breezeway in the front of the building to accommodate residents visiting with a safe entry into the building. In addition, Schultz would like to construct a 64x50 pole barn to house the equipment that is currently being stored outdoors. This would help to extend the life and value of the Service Department's assets. Both the addition and building would be paid for by funds from ARPA.

Schultz reported that the first step in the process of adding an addition to the existing building would be to begin with the engineering for the E-Sewage Pump System, and he has a quote for approximately \$25,000 from the Davey Resource Group. From that point, an architect would need to be brought in to design the addition in order to get an actual estimate for the total project.

Witthuhn asked Fire Chief Strazzo if he had any recommendations for use of the ARPA funds pertaining to the Fire Department, and Strazzo replied that he had emailed his request to the Board, but it was mostly centered around replacing Fire Station 1. Witthuhn had Strazzo's email and read his requests, which included a roof over the bay area at Station 2, concrete work at Fire Station 2, as well as his main request to replace Fire Station 1.

#### **TRUSTEE REPORTS:**

**Christina Kusnerak:**

None.

**Trica Murphy:**

None.

**John Witthuhn:**

None.

#### **FISCAL OFFICER:**

Witthuhn thanked Zoning Secretary, Linda Kuenzer, for stepping in to assist the Fiscal Officer, Katherine Esber, as she was working remotely for a few weeks.

Witthuhn moved to approve a purchase order to Brownell's on behalf of the Police Department in the amount of \$58.06. Murphy seconded. Witthuhn – yes. Murphy – yes. Motion carried.

Witthuhn motioned to approve warrants dated 9/12/23 in the amount of \$9,943.29 – payment listing (\$31,024.11) less an invoice to the City of Brunswick in the amount of \$21,080.82, which he abstained from approving. Murphy seconded. Witthuhn abstained from the City of Brunswick invoice, but otherwise – yes. Murphy – yes. Motion carried.

Witthuhn made a motion to approve payroll dated 9/19/23 in the amount of \$85,424.74. Murphy seconded. Murphy – yes. Witthuhn – yes. Motion carried.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

Witthuhn began discussion with Zoning Inspector Czyz and Fire Chief Strazzo regarding the property located at 991 Marks Road. Chief Strazzo read through documentation of communications with the property owner as the structure is a safety hazard. Strazzo and Czyz will work together on accessing the situation and action to be taken.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Witthuhn announced that Trick or Treat will be held within the Township on October 31<sup>st</sup> from 6 PM to 8 PM.

**MISCELLANEOUS & CORRESPONDENCE:**

None.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:**

ZC Workshop:	September 20 at 7 PM
Trustees:	September 26 at 7 PM
BZA:	October 4 at 7 PM
Zoning Commission:	October 5 at 7 PM

**PUBLIC INPUT:**

Dave Goodyear, 691 Pearl Road, Brunswick, OH 44212 addressed the Board and wanted everyone to know that one of the Township’s founders, Mr. Gilbert E. Fuller, had recently passed away.

**OFF CAMERA:**

Witthuhn motioned to go off camera at 8:03 PM for the signing of Warrants & Purchase Orders and any other business brought before the Board. Murphy seconded. Witthuhn – yes. Murphy – yes. Motion carried.

Murphy moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 PM. Witthuhn seconded. Murphy – yes. Witthuhn – yes. Motion carried.

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Witthuhn, Chair Trustee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patrica Murphy, Trustee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Katherine Esber, Fiscal Officer