

BRUNSWICK HILLS TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING
September 10, 2024

The Brunswick Hills Township Board of Trustees met in regular session on Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at Brunswick Hills Township Town Hall.

Board of Trustees Chair Patrica Murphy, Trustee Vice-Chair Ryan Nixon, Trustee Christina Kusnerak, Fiscal Officer Linda Kuenzer, Fire Chief Anthony Strazzo, and Police Chief Tim Sopkovich present.

Trustee Chair Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and noted that the meeting was properly advertised.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed for our first responders.

PRESENTATION:

Mark Herwick from Homestead Insurance appeared before the Board of Trustees. Mr. Herwick stated that he previously met with Trustee Murphy and Fiscal Officer Kuenzer to review voluntary employee accidental and disability insurance. Mr. Herwick was made aware that there are billing issues with the current provider. Mr. Herwick continued that his agency would be able to provide comparable insurance at lower rates that are guaranteed to never increase during the lifetime of the policy. The Board members asked Mr. Herwick a few questions regarding cost, participations, etc. Trustee Kusnerak commented that since the policy is 100% employee participation, that the department heads should arrange some type of meeting so that Mr. Herwick and his associates could present the information as well as answer questions.

MINUTES:

No minutes to approve.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Zoning Department:

Murphy reported that the Zoning Department collected \$966.19 in permit fees for the Month of August, 2024.

Police Department:

Police Chief Sopkovich provided an update on the repair work being done at the Police Department, and said that everything is moving along. Sopkovich reported that they were able to sell the old radiant heaters on GovDeals.com so those funds will be given to the Fiscal Officer.

On behalf of the Brunswick Hills Police Association, Sopkovich thanked all of the residents and businesses that donated items for the raffles as well as the individuals that provided help for the event. All of the proceeds from the raffle will be used to support the K-9 program.

Lastly, Sopkovich requested to meet with the Board in Executive Session for a conditional offer of employment interview.

Fire Department:

Fire Chief Strazzo reminded everyone that Wednesday would be 9/11 and asked that all of the lives lost on that fateful day be remembered as well as what the events that unfolded mean to our country. Chief Strazzo stated that 343 firefighters perished that day.

Chief provided the Department's Run Review for August, 2024. EMS collections for the month were \$30,487.86 for a YTD total of \$231,804.68.

Strazzo reported that a student from St. Ambrose spent a day with the Fire Department for career shadowing, as they do annually. The student interacted and participated with the fire department personnel at the station in their daily activities.

On August 6th, the fire department assisted the Police and Service Departments with downed power lines and clearing brush in the aftermath of the severe storms that rolled through the area.

Strazzo requested approval for Trustee Nixon to sign the annual maintenance agreement with Howell Rescue Systems, Inc. for annual preventive maintenance and inspection of extrication tools. The agreement will provide services for 2025, 2026, and 2027. No purchase is required at this time. Kusnerak moved to approve the request. Murphy seconded. Nixon – yes. Kusnerak – yes. Murphy – yes. Motion carried.

Strazzo requested approval for repairs to Engine 21-2 as deficiencies were found during the annual preventative maintenance and pump testing. Repairs will be in the amount of \$4,718.53 and will be paid from PO #20 to Fallsway Equipment Company. Nixon made a motion to approve the request. Kusnerak seconded. Murphy – yes. Nixon – yes. Kusnerak – yes. Motion carried.

Strazzo recently applied for a grant from BWC for firefighting gloves, and already received notification that it was approved in the amount of \$3,375. Each firefighter will receive a new pair of leather firefighting gloves. The Fire Department's match to the grant is \$675.

Chief extended his gratitude to Boston Road Auto for recalibrating the steering module on Car #29 at no charge.

The Fire Department will have their annual Open House on Sunday, October 6th from noon to 3 PM at Fire Station 2. Shuttle service will be provided to and from the fire station for parking from the church on Substation Road; please follow the posted signs. This year, the Service Department will have a dump truck and wheel loader at the station for residents to see. Life Flight will not be participating as they stated it has become too dangerous for them to land in the parking lot at Station 2. Food will be provided for all attending.

Service Department:

Trustee Kusnerak read the Road Report for August, 2024.

Kusnerak reported that the Service Department Foreman had been given phone approval on August 8, 2024 to have the air conditioning condenser on Truck #8 repaired by Ron's Garage for an estimate of \$1,230. The truck was repaired and picked up the next day with a cost of \$1,080, to be paid from BC #30.

Kusnerak motioned to approve the repair. Nixon seconded. Murphy – yes. Kusnerak – yes. Nixon – yes. Motion carried.

TRUSTEE REPORTS:

Christina Kusnerak:

None.

Ryan Nixon:

Nixon stated that per the last special meeting on September 5, 2024, he sent information over to the Prosecutor’s Office for their input on formulating parameters for public comment time.

Nixon sent a resolution draft for medical marijuana to the Prosecutor’s Office for their input, but has not yet received a response.

Trica Murphy:

None.

FISCAL OFFICER:

Murphy motioned to approve warrants dated 9/10/24 in the amount of \$17,227.17. Kusnerak seconded. Nixon – yes. Murphy – yes. Kusnerak – yes. Motion carried.

Nixon moved to approve payroll for 9/17/24 in the amount of \$89,848.23. Kusnerak seconded. Murphy – yes. Nixon – yes. Kusnerak – yes. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

MISCELLANEOUS & CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

UPCOMING MEETINGS: Trustees: September 24 at 7 PM
BZA: October 2 at 7 PM
Zoning Commission: October 3 at 7 PM

PUBLIC INPUT:

Linda Hudson, 314 Pearl Road, Brunswick, OH 44212 addressed the Board of Trustees as a follow-up to the Trustees Special Meeting that was held on September 5, 2024. Mrs. Hudson encouraged the Board to do research on the benefits of allowing a marijuana dispensary to be located in the Township based on the tremendous amount of revenue that would be generated through taxes.

Thomas DeCastr, 358 Topaz Lane, Brunswick, OH 44212 appeared before the Board of Trustees. Mr. DeCastr stated that he also agrees with comments made by Mrs. Hudson in regard to the funds that

would be generated for the Township by allowing a marijuana dispensary to be located in the Township. Mr. DeCastra thanked the Trustees for reversing their decision of removing the Zoning Department and potentially reinstating it.

Mr. DeCastra reviewed the history of the water struggle in Brunswick Hills Township. In 1975, the City of Brunswick sued Medina County because the County refused to open a road for them to install water. In 1977, there was a judgment entry that divided Brunswick Hills Township into three areas – those that received water service from the City; those that received water service from the County; and, those that could receive water service from the City, if they annexed into the City. In 1987, the City of Brunswick codified that annexation process into their city ordinances. Then in 2005, the City of Brunswick sold all of their water infrastructure to the City of Cleveland, and in that contract, codified the annexation process. At that point, the Township initiated various lawsuits to challenge the annexation transfer. Unfortunately, the Township failed with the lawsuits, and officials were told that they could not win through the court system. Mr. DeCastra strongly recommended that Brunswick Hills Township Trustees begin a conversation with officials at Brunswick City to try and work out an agreement so that residents and businesses located in the area currently without access to water are able to receive water services without having to annex into the City. Mr. DeCastra's fear is that if a compromise or resolution isn't worked out, that the entire area of Brunswick Hills will be consumed by the City of Brunswick and that the Township will no longer exist.

Lukas Merkel, 131 Falmouth, Brunswick, OH 44212 addressed the Board of Trustees. Mr. Merkel stated that Brunswick Hills Township Zoning operates under a resolution that was passed in 2007, and is the Township's sole authority to operate in such a manner. Mr. Merkel said that a new resolution must be passed in order to make any changes as it is a legally binding document. He continued to state that a new zoning resolution cannot be passed by the Trustees alone, as it was written into the original document. The Township Zoning Commission must approve in order to change the process. Mr. Merkel said that the Board of Trustees had contacted the Medina County Prosecutor's Office for advice before rescinding the proposed changes to the Zoning Department, but when he requested to review the emails via a public records request, the Board refused to share the documents due to client/attorney privilege. He said that the Board, as the client, could release the documents, and he encouraged them to do so as a gesture of transparency.

Additionally, Mr. Merkel was wondering if the purchase by the Township of property on Substation was connected to the lawsuit involving Cosset Creek Golf Course. Mr. Merkel also asked if the purchase of the property somehow was related to former Zoning Inspector Evelyn Czyz being locked out of her office and computer system.

Trustee Kusnerak responded to Mr. Merkel's questions and comments. Kusnerak reported that the purchase of the Substation property was in no way related to what transpired with Cosset Creek. Kusnerak further stated that all of the negotiations and discussions involving the purchase of the Substation property were conducted in Executive Session, and therefore not for public viewing.

Trustee Nixon addressed Mr. Merkel's comment regarding Mrs. Czyz, and stated that the decision to take those actions was his, and was in no way connected to the purchase of the Substation property.

Trustee Kusnerak clarified that the Township had been in negotiations with the developer of the Cosset

Creek property in regard to the number of lots, what type of structures, etc., would be permitted. The Township and the developer did reach an agreement, which took a very long time. In the end, however, her understanding is that in the end, the owner of Cosset Creek passed away, which made the agreement between him and the developer null and void. There were never any other developers who approached the Township for the Substation property, and so it was available for purchase.

Nixon moved to go into Executive Session at 7:44 PM for the purpose of an employment interview, and invited Police Chief Sopkovich to join them along with the candidate, Michael Pische. Murphy seconded. Kusnerak – yes. Nixon – yes. Murphy – yes. Motion carried.

Murphy made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:00 PM. Kusnerak seconded. Nixon – yes. Murphy – yes. Kusnerak – yes. Motion carried.

Murphy moved to offer Michael Pische a conditional offer of employment for the Police Department, pending successful completion of all pre-employment testing. Nixon seconded. Kusnerak – yes. Murphy – yes. Nixon – yes. Motion carried.

The Board then signed warrants and purchase orders.

Kusnerak motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 PM. Murphy seconded. Nixon – yes. Kusnerak – yes. Murphy – yes. Motion carried.

Patrica Murphy, Trustee Chair

Ryan Nixon, Trustee Vice-Chair

Christina Kusnerak, Trustee

Linda Kuenzer, Fiscal Officer