

Franklin Township Trustees  
Tuesday, November 12, 2024  
Regular Meeting Minutes

At 7:00pm Chairman Glenn Russell called the meeting to order. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2<sup>nd</sup> Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

- PCSO Detective Nick DeSerio reported the following statistics for Franklin Township during the month of October: a total of 294 calls for service were answered in the township, including but not limited to, call for disorderly conduct, hit skip accidents, assists to the rescue squad and other agencies, larceny/theft, premise checks, suspicious events, and traffic stops. Trick or Treat was successful without any negative incidents (two patrol cars were assigned to Franklin Township and candy was passed out as well). The department is averaging about four blitzes per month on traffic control.
- Hal Lehman – 2218 Leonard Street – asked about a status update on the property at 6426 Lakeview that has been in violation of multiple zoning regulations. Mr. Ciccozzi responded that he is waiting for communication from Brett Bencze at the prosecutor's office. He then asked if a traffic study has been done yet for the new development going in at the old Kent State golf course. Mr. Ciccozzi replied that yes, one has been completed and the county deems the area adequate to handle the anticipated traffic.
- Jon Freeman – 2221 Leonard Street – presented a petition sign by residents in his area asking for an increase in traffic control. Speeding continues to be an issue there and the topic has been addressed at different times in the past. The petition suggests stop signs, speed bumps, a constable if possible and increased patrols. Mr. Russell pointed out that the topic has been addressed and the county has determined additional stop signs are not a possibility, the current speed posted of 25mph is adequate and speed bumps pose both a hazard to motorists and to service vehicles plowing, salting, and maintaining roads. He also stated that patrols have been increased since the beginning of 2023 when the new contract was signed with the sheriff's department. Detective DeSerio responded that the township is currently paying for an additional 24 patrols per month on average – four of those designated to traffic control only. One in Brady Lake, one in Twin Lakes, one in the Hudson/Judson area, and one on SR59. This is in addition to jurisdictional coverage already provided by the sheriff and OSP offices. He urges all concerned Brady Lake area residents to speak to their neighbors about speeding and driving safely. Scott Swan also spoke to thank Mr. Freeman for his input and for taking the time to gather signatures and sharing his concerns. He assured Mr. Freeman that feedback would come – even if not immediately. Detective DeSerio then stated that constables that are not certified peace officers in Ohio are not in existence.
- Jill Grimm – 1509 Merrill – noted for the record that the Twin Lakes area previously discussed putting in speed bumps but the idea was dropped when they were told by the county that they are not a safe solution. Det. DeSerio reiterated that even gated communities are being told to remove them if they exist due to the hazards posed to safety/first responder vehicles and other motorists. Ms. Grimm then thanked Lisé Russell for attending the Twin Lakes Association meeting at Fairways to speak briefly about the fire levy on the ballot and answer any questions their residents might have.

#### ROAD REPORT

Submitted as written by Dave Akerley and is on file at the township office as part of the official record. He mentioned the collapse of old field tiles and piping the crew has been replacing throughout the township. Mr. Swan asked if they were seeking consistency in size as these get repaired or replaced and Mr. Akerley assured him they are indeed as possible.

## ZONING REPORT

Submitted as written by Joe Ciccozzi and is on file at the township office as part of the official record. No additional discussion was needed.

## FIRE REPORT

Submitted as written by Richard Smith and is on file at the township office as part of the official record. Additionally, replacement of the emergency warning siren located at Phillips Park was discussed again and how to pay for it, approximately \$37,000. A motion was made by Glenn Russell to use NOPEC grant money to pay for it now and then next year use NOPEC grant money for security lighting at township parks; 2<sup>nd</sup> Scott Swan. All three trustees voted yes.

- **OLD BUSINESS**

Kellie Kapusta gave a status update on the alleged fish dumping into Brady Lake. After speaking with ODNR Wildlife Officer Curtis Wagner, she was told there is a permit that could be issued by ODNR after investigation and approval. Mrs. Kapusta shared that information with Brady Lake residents alleged to have dumped fish into the lake. No admission of any kind was made and the residents were happy to receive the information shared.

- Glenn Russell addressed again the possibility of common keys to be used by the sheriff's department and the fire department at Franklin Township parks. We could share copies of the road department's keys with dispatch and share codes to unlock realtor type lock boxes.

## NEW BUSINESS

- City of Kent Fire Chief Jamie Samels addressed the trustees to share information about budgeting for the pending purchase of a new hook and ladder truck. The one currently used by the city is old (1994) and needs replaced, at an estimated cost of \$2-\$2.3 million dollars. Though Franklin Township has no high-rise, buildings the ladder truck is useful in other ways – it has the ability to drastically increase water flow to help put out fires more quickly and the bucket allows heavy equipment to be carried (like the saws needed to cut through metal roofs) which are not able to be carried on the smaller pumper trucks. The City has been seeking funding opportunities through grant applications but has been denied. They will apply again. Chief Samels has also reached out to Senator Brown's office for state help and has also begun communication with Kent State University. He wanted all residents to be aware of what the department is facing in terms of having nearly \$4 million dollars in equipment replacements over the next five years. He hopes to have subsequent discussions with both Kent State and Franklin Township about this topic. All three trustees thanked Chief Samels for his time and for the important information he shared. It was noted that when the subject first came up that Jenny August did reach out to Brett Bencze for an opinion on whether or not public tax money could be spent on a ladder truck that might not directly benefit Franklin Township without any tall buildings and he responded that it would not be an authorized expense. It was important to hear other ways in which the ladder truck might benefit our residents.
- Resolution 2024-32 appointing Scott Swan as the Kent/Franklin JEDD board representative to the term commencing January 1, 2025 and ends December 31, 2028 was approved by a motion made by Glenn Russell; 2<sup>nd</sup> Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes.

## CORRESPONDENCE

- Mr. Swan noted a social media post regarding a metal grate that is broken and raised, posing a hazard at the end of First Ave. He shared that with Dave Akerley who will follow up on it.
- Mrs. Kapusta noted that she had communication from Mr. Freeman regarding the traffic concerns in the Leonard/Lakeview area of Brady Lake.

- Mr. Russell noted that he received communication from resident Ryan Woofter asking for a status update on the gravel/water runoff issue he is experiencing. Mr. Russell explained to him that we are waiting to hear back from the Portage County Engineer's office on clarification on who actually has jurisdiction on that stretch of Rootstown Road.
- Mr. Ciccozzi noted that he received a phone call from resident Kevin Wingard complaining about the excess gravel along Spell Road from the chip and seal maintenance performed this summer.

**FINANCE REPORT**

- Submitted as written by Lisé Russell and is on file at the township office as part of the official record. As of the end of October, 67% of the funds appropriated for expenditure in all major funds combined has been spent. It was noted that fire bills to the City of Kent have only been submitted through September and money that was appropriated for the completion of Hudson Road this year was not spent. Of the estimated revenue for 2023, Franklin Township has received 98% of it.
- Additionally, Mrs. Russell stated for the record that Franklin Township representatives are all very grateful for the passage of the fire replacement with an increase levy that voters passed last week. This levy will now generate a significant portion of the money needed to provide fire and ems services.
- Payment of bills, warrants #26440 through 26459, including payment vouchers and totaling \$282,408.58 was approved by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2<sup>nd</sup> Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes.

At 8:22pm a motion to suspend regular session and enter executive session for the purpose of discussing the compensation of a public employee (ORC section 121.22 (G) (1) was made by Scott Swan; 2<sup>nd</sup> Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes. At 8:47pm a motion to resume regular session was made by Kellie Kapusta; 2<sup>nd</sup> Glenn Russell. All three trustees voted yes. A motion was made by Glenn Russell to issue bonuses to the following employees in such amounts:

Jenny August	\$2500
Dave Akerley	\$2500 and one week of vacation to be taken following the plow season and before 11/1/25
Joe Ciccozzi	\$2000
Richard Smith	\$2000

These employees have gone far above and beyond their duties this past year accommodating residents, grant research and writing, establish road maintenance plans, issuing zoning permits and pursuing legal recourse for violations, answering late night calls for overcrowding at township businesses and a list of other extra tasks. The trustees are very grateful for their hard work and their dedication to Franklin Township residents.

At 8:48pm the meeting was adjourned by a motion made by Scott Swan; 2<sup>nd</sup> Kellie Kapusta. All three trustees voted yes.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Fiscal Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

