

Record of Proceedings – February 12, 2024
Washington Township Trustees, Warren County, Ohio

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Scott Hagemeyer.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The minutes of January 22, 2024 were mailed to the Trustees prior to the meeting for review. Warrants 12214 through 12223 totaling \$7,686.48 were presented for approval.

A motion was made by Mr. Fisher to approve the minutes for the January 22, 2024 regular meeting, Mr. Settlemyre seconded.

Hagemeyer, aye; Fisher, aye; Settlemyre, aye. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Mr. Fisher and seconded by Mr. Settlemyre to pay the bills as presented.

Hagemeyer, aye; Fisher, aye; Settlemyre, aye. Motion passed.

Present for the meeting were: Tim Books, Sheriff Larry Sims, Ray Dratt (Warren County Rural Zoning), and Chief William Harrison (Salem-Morrow Fire Department).

Ms. Coffman stated that Major Arrasmith will attend the April 8, 2024 Trustee Meeting.

FROM THE FLOOR:

- Sheriff Sims was present to present the Warren County Sheriff's Office 2023 Year in Review. The numbers have not changed a lot in the past year. He said that one of the highlights of 2023 was replacing the in-car camera's in the cruisers. The next project is to get body cams for the personnel.

The Department has started to establish a fleet of drones. The drones are being used to do search warrants, find bad or endangered persons, such as missing children or the elderly. They have been able to locate bodies in ravines.

The new jail building has been working out well and has given the department the ability to host a lot of trainings. This past year they held two state-wide corrections academies.

The office is part of a joint tactical team that assists deputies with high risk operations. This year the team was recognized by the Ohio Tactical Officers Association as Team of the Year. Partly due to actions the team took to end a hostage situation in 2022 at the Baymont Inn in Mason.

Sheriff Sims said that countywide support of the department is incredible.

The Trustees stated how much the Township appreciates their services to our community.

- Chief Harrison from Salem-Morrow Fire Department presented annual numbers for the department. Total alarms numbered 1128 for the year. 349 Fire/Rescue, 779 Emergency Medical Services, and 49 Motor Vehicle Crashes. Lots of runs have been called to 5778 SR 350, Cedar Oaks.

He reported that the tanker they had ordered in 2021 will be arriving in May of this year and will be in service as soon as training is completed.

He is working with Adam Nice at the Warren County Prosecutor's Office for the new Washington Township Contract that is coming up at the end of the year. Mr. Hagemeyer stated that if they need to look at the contract earlier to let us know. Their service is highly important to the community.

- Mr. Hagemeyer introduced Ray Dratt, from The Warren County Rural Zoning, who was present by invitation to answer questions about the Vesper Energy Company from Texas, whom is interested in possibly installing a utility grade Solar Energy Farm down Wilmington Road from Interstate 71 to almost the Hagemeyer Horse Farm. Mr. Hagemeyer stated that he attended a meeting on January 23rd at the Warren County Rural Zoning, where Vesper Energy introduced themselves, and stated they were interested in leasing 4500 acres in Washington Township for 30 years with the option to increase the lease by two more 5 year terms. They are looking for flat farmland. In attendance of that meeting were Stan Williams (Regional Planning Commission), Matt Nolan (Warren County Auditor), Ray Dratt and Michelle Tegtmeier (Warren County Rural Zoning) and representatives from Vesper Energy.

Mr. Settlemyre stated that he had been approached by the company and the offer was for a 30-year lease with the option of two 10-year renewals. Mr. Settlemyre stated that the Settlemyre family is not interested in this at all. The farms here in the Township feed thousands of families.

Mr. Dratt stated that there are two types of power generation levels. One is for 49.9 mega watts and under, which is subject to local zoning, and 50 mega watts and higher, which is subject to the Ohio Power Sighting Board which is a state ran program. Once an application is initiated to the board, public meetings and public hearings are held. House Bill 52 does give the Board of County Commissioners oversight of 50 mega watts and up. The Vesper Energy Company is interested in installing 150 mega watts through Washington Township.

Mr. Hagemeyer said that Vesper Energy had contacted both Representative Scott Lipps and Senator Steve Wilson. Mr. Hagemeyer spoke with Representative Lipps and neither of these gentlemen are interested in this project happening in Washington Township.

Mr. Hagemeyer said he would be willing to contact the Board of County Commissioners Office and ask to be placed on their agenda to discuss this project. The Trustees agreed.

ROADS REPORT:

- Mr. Stanforth stated that the Warren County Engineer's Office came back with an updated projected amount for Hopewell Meadows resurfacing project since the last meeting. The quote discussed at the last meeting was for \$524,000.00, the updated quote from the Engineer's Office is for \$539,000.00 which is still under what the Township had budgeted of \$542,000.00 for this project. The Township will be using money from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Program (SLFRF) in the amount of \$322,752.48 toward this project. Jeff Jones from the Warren County Engineer's Office would like to add an extra allowance to the quote in case a problem comes up so the project would not be put on hold. The Trustees agreed to add \$30,000.00 to the quote in case of a problem. The chip seal project came in almost \$30,00.00 under budget so that money can be allocated to the Hopewell Meadows project.

A motion was made by Mr. Settlemyre and seconded by Mr. Fisher to reallocate \$30,000.00 to the Hopewell Meadows project from the chip seal project for use at Allen Stanforth's discretion. Hagemeyer, aye; Fisher, aye; and Settlemyre, aye. Motion passed.

- Mr. Stanforth stated that he would not need to purchase anymore salt for the 2023/2024 season.

- Resolution No. 2024-03 Authorizing Contract with Warren County Engineer's Office for Purchase of Road Salt was presented for the 2024/2025 salt program for 250 tons of salt. A motion was made by Mr. Fisher and seconded by Mr. Settlemyre to approve the resolution. Hagemeyer, aye; Fisher, aye; and Settlemyre, aye. Motion passed.
- Mr. Stanforth said the cost of the swivel bucket for the backhoe had come back at \$16,455.00 instead of the original amount of \$15,000.00 that was budgeted for. Mr. Settlemyre motioned to add the additional amount of \$1455.00 to the purchase order for the swivel bucket. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fisher. Hagemeyer, aye; Fisher, aye; Settlemyre, aye. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Resolution No. 2024-02 to appoint Jason Fisher to serve as the Warren County 911 Program Review Committee was presented. A motion was made by Mr. Settlemyre and seconded by Mr. Hagemeyer to approve Resolution No. 2024-02. Hagemeyer, aye; Fisher, aye; Settlemyre, aye. Motion passed.
- Mr. Fisher stated that the speed study on Middleboro Road is still pending but, due to the average speed and the number of accidents the Warren County Engineer's Office is making a recommendation to ODOT to support a speed limit of 45 mph along the stretch on Middleboro from SR 350 and SR 22/3.
- Mr. Hagemeyer reported that the CWJFD has held two meetings since the last Trustee meeting. One was a special meeting held on January 24, 2024 at 7:00 PM. Which was to discuss hiring a new Chief and the annual salary for the position. Mr. Andrew Wysong was recognized as the new Chief of the department at a salary of \$85,000.00 annually retro to January 1, 2024, as he has been serving in this capacity during this time. He will receive 2 weeks paid vacation for 1 year, 3 weeks for 2 years, 4 weeks for 4 years, not to exceed 4 weeks. A 24% contribution will be paid to the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund, and 80 % of health, dental, and vision premiums will be paid.

Brad Burton was recognized as Assistant EMS Chief, with a salary of \$20.00 per hour retro to January 1, 2024. 14% will be paid into OPERS.

The regular meeting that was held on February 8, 2024 at 7:00 PM was a swearing in ceremony for Chief Wysong and Assistant EMS Chief Burton. There was a large turnout for the ceremony.

The Burn tower is required to have its 5-year recertification. The cost will be approximately \$14,000.00 for a 2-hour inspection and will be conducted on February 13, 2024.

Chief Wysong and Assistant EMS Chief Burton are trying to find a consistent rate at which to offer that facility to be used by other departments.

The District will be contracting with Carman Nelson and Associates to update the employee handbook.

Since the last meeting the department had 75 EMS Runs and 51 Fire Runs. Chief Wysong is now offering a monthly breakdown of runs by community. Mr. Hagemeyer shared the breakdown with the Trustees and guests. 17 of the calls were to Washington Township.

Last year there was discussion of putting another fire/EMS levy on in May of 2024. This is no longer

an option for the May ballot due to Clinton County re-evaluating property values. Values went up so tax bills will go up. Warren County will re-evaluate next year. The current millage rate for the CWJFD is at 6.5 mill, a discussion is still on the table to add 2 mills, 2.5 mills, or 3 mills to the current 6.5 mills. These funds would go toward paying salaries and for equipment.

The largest challenge to the department is that the past Chief Bob Wysong would only accept \$25,000.00 annual salary. The new Chief and Assistant EMS Chief cannot make a living at this salary. The new salary for the Chief with all included costs will be in the amount of \$113,000.00. Eventually they would like to make the Assistant EMS Chief a full-time position also which would incur close to the same amount.

- Ms. Coffman reported that the Township had received the entire amount of \$500.00 from the OTARMA safety rebate.
- Mr. Settlemyre stated he will not be in attendance at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Mr. Hagemeyer said we received information on a rezoning request from 4609 SR 22/3 to rezone 8.09 acres from B1 to Residential. The Trustees have no objections to this rezoning. Ms. Coffman will let Jackie Hankins at Warren County Rural Zoning know.
- A motion was made by Mr. Settlemyre and seconded by Mr. Fisher to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM.

Scott Hagemeyer
Trustee President

Sharon Coffman
Fiscal Officer