

The Board of Liberty Township Trustees met in Regular Session on Friday, February 24, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. with the following members in attendance, Mr. Gregory Cizmar, Mr. Arnold Clebone and Mr. Devon Stanley, presiding.

Motion to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2023 Regular meeting.

Motion: Mr. Cizmar. Second: Mr. Stanley.

Roll Call: Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Motion carried.

23-48 Motion to approve the agreement NOPEC 2023 Energized Community (NEC) Grant(s).

See addendum file for full details. This motion was previously tabled on February 3, 2023.

Motion: Mr. Stanley. Second: Mr. Clebone.

Roll Call: Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Motion carried.

Comment by Fiscal Officer Connelly: This is only for the available funds for the Grant.

23-49 Motion to approve the following resolution AUTHORIZING ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACCEPT NORTHEAST OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL (NOPEC) 2023 ENERGIZED COMMUNITY GRANT.

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Liberty, Trumbull County, Ohio (the “GRANTEE”) is a member of the Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (“NOPEC”) and is eligible for one or more NOPEC Energized Community Grant(s) for 2023 (“NEC Grant(s)”) as provided for in the NEC Grant Program guidelines; and

**WHEREAS**, the GRANTEE wishes to enter into a Grant Agreement with NOPEC, Inc. in substantially the form presented to this Board of Trustees to receive one or more NEC Grant(s); and

**NOW, THEREFORE**, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF LIBERTY TOWNSHIP, COUNTY OF TRUMBULL AND STATE OF OHIO, THAT:

**SECTION 1.** This Board of Trustees of the GRANTEE (the “Board”) finds and determines that it is in the best interest of the GRANTEE to enter into the Grant Agreement to accept the NEC Grant(s) for 2023 and authorizes the President of the Board to execute the Grant Agreement to accept the NEC Grant(s) funds.

**SECTION 2.** This Board finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this Resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board and of any committees that resulted in those formal actions were in meetings open to the public in compliance with the law.

**SECTION 3.** This Resolution is declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health, safety and welfare of the GRANTEE; wherefore, this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption and approval by the President of the Board of Trustees of the GRANTEE.

This motion was previously tabled on February 3, 2023.

Motion: Mr. Stanley. Second: Mr. Clebone.

Roll Call: Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Motion carried.

23-50 Motion to authorize Fiscal Officer Matthew Connelly, appointed by the Board of Trustees, to apply for the \$2,000 NOPEC Community Event Sponsorship Program for the year 2023.

Motion: Mr. Cizmar. Second: Mr. Stanley.

Roll Call: Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Motion carried.

23-51 Motion to accept the resignation of firefighter Nick Tingley effective February 5, 2023.

Motion: Mr. Cizmar. Second: Mr. Clebone.

Roll Call: Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Mr. Stanley, Yes. Motion carried.

23-52 Motion to promote Nick Foard to probationary full time status effective March 1, 2023 according to the agreement between the IAFF and Board of Trustees.

Motion: Mr. Stanley. Second: Mr. Clebone.

Roll Call: Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Motion carried.

23-53 Motion to adopt the following resolution to proceed with the demolition of the residential structure at 1602 Lincoln Avenue:

**RESOLUTION TO PROCEED WITH DEMOLITION OF THE RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE LOCATED AT 1602 LINCOLN AVENUE, LIBERTY TOWNSHIP, TRUMBULL COUNTY, OHIO**

WHEREAS, Ohio Revised Code Section 505.86 authorizes a Township Board of Trustees to declare structures within the Township to be a nuisance by reason of being insecure, unsafe, structurally defective, or unfit for human habitation, and to provide for the abatement of said nuisance by demolition and removal of said structures; and;

WHEREAS, on October 16, 2022, the residential structure located at 1602 Lincoln Avenue, Liberty Township, Trumbull County Ohio, Permanent Parcel No. 12-468011, (hereinafter “the Property”) was heavily damaged by fire; and

WHEREAS, on February 2, 2023, the Liberty Township Fire Chief inspected the Property and declared the residential dwelling structure (hereinafter “the Structure”) on the Property to be structurally damaged, unsafe and structurally defective, because of the fire damage; and

WHEREAS, by resolution adopted on February 3, 2023 the Board of Trustees determined the residential structure to be unsafe, structurally defective and unfit for human habitation and instructed the Zoning Inspector to notify the Property owner and Lienholders of record of the determination; and

WHEREAS, the individuals or entities with an ownership or legal or equitable lien interest in the Property and/or Structure (hereinafter collectively “Parties in Interest”) were notified by certified mail, return receipt requested, regular mail, and posting on the property of the Township’s declaration of nuisance, right to request a hearing, and the demand to abate said nuisance by demolition, pursuant to RC 505.86(B) and(C); and

WHEREAS, the Parties in Interest failed to provide for the demolition and removal of said nuisance Structure or request a hearing before the Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Liberty Township, Trumbull County, Ohio, by authority of Section 505.86 of the Ohio Revised Code, as follows:

**SECTION 1.** The residential structure on the property located at 1602 Lincoln Avenue, Liberty Township, Trumbull County, Ohio, Permanent Parcel No. 12-468011, is unsafe and structurally defective because of fire damage and constitutes a nuisance and a threat to the public health and safety. The Structure is not reasonably repairable and must be demolished and removed to protect the health and safety of the township residents.

**SECTION 2.** The Liberty Township Zoning Inspector is authorized to execute a contract with Foust Construction for the demolition and removal of the Structure on the Property and site restoration, in the sum of \$10,180.00.

**SECTION 3.** The total cost of the demolition of the structure and all associated site restoration work shall be assessed to the owner(s) of record and the Liberty Township Fiscal Officer shall certify the total costs, together with a proper description of the lands, to the county auditor who shall place the costs upon the tax duplicate. The costs are a lien upon such lands from and after the date of entry. The costs shall be collected as other taxes and returned to the township general fund.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

Motion: Mr. Clebone. Second. Mr. Cizmar.

Roll Call: Mr. Clebone, Yes. Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Mr. Stanley, Yes. Motion carried.

23-54 Motion to enter into a contract with Dave Price in the amount of \$24,000 to clean up the debris from the brush hogging along Tibbetts-Wick.

Motion: Mr. Cizmar. Second: Mr. Stanley.

Roll Call: Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Motion carried.

23-55 Motion to approve a letter of support the Emergency Management Association, EOC Mobile Command Center to apply for a grant.

Motion: Mr. Stanley. Second: Mr. Clebone.

Roll Call: Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Motion carried.

Comment: Resident expressed his appreciation to the Board who intend to clean up the debris from brush hogging and asked about their plans to replace some of the destroyed vegetation. Trustee Stanley responded that although the Board cannot replace established rhododendron and like vegetation, it is the Trustees intention to finds solutions with acceptable substitutes.

A resident whose property borders Belmont Pines conveyed her concerns for her safety when juveniles attempt escape Belmont Pines by running through her yard and woods. Over the years she has fenced in her back yard and more recently purchase security cameras. However, she has concerns for her safety and asked what can be done. Both the Police Chief and Trustees agreed there is problems. They have and continue to work with the Director to find solutions, but all agree something needs to be done.

Brent Fine and Charles Russel, representing Liberty Baseball Association spoke to the Board regarding clay dirt for ballfields. The cost could range from \$6,000 up to around \$15,000 delivered. The Board indicated they hope to be able to upgrade Center Park, including the ballfields and bleachers.

Zoning Code Enforcement Officer Rodway reported the loggers on Academy will be returning weather permitting to grade and seed. Thanks to Trumbull County videos of Academy Drive and Sampson Drive were taken prior to the logging. There are signs partial depth repairs will be needed, mainly on Academy.

Fire Chief Theobald is continuing to work with Emergency Management and other communities on a response plan, in light of the railway disaster at East Palestine. An application was submitted to the State for consideration of a Star of Life lifesaving award. He continues to work with the Chaplains and Walmart to create containers with basic needs to provide victims after a fire or disaster. Chief is working with the Senior Loft Facility to make sure a standpipe is included in the structure.

Road Superintended Hickman reported Squaw Creek has approximately \$50,000 in grant funds (\$17,000 township) remaining for drainage and plantings will resume this spring. The 2022 Paving Program "punch list" is being addressed. The project came under bid between \$20,000 & \$30,000. Flailing has begun at Naylor Lloyd by our road workers. After Advanced Tree will address the larger vegetation. A pre-construction meeting will be set up with RT Vernal and the County soon. The damage at Churchill Park bathrooms needs cleaned up. Not sure who is cleaning it, the township or Adam and Eve but the bathrooms need repaired soon. Wayne asked to consider upgrading the entrance to the Park with a new gate and lighting. The garbage along the entrance to Churchill Park remains, despite the multiple requests to Station Square to pick up their litter. Wayne will ask the county to put us on a list to survey the property lines of the park. Wayne reported the new John Deere tractor has finally arrived. He asked that the remaining roads be picked by the Board not covered by OPWC or CDBG.

Police Chief Meloro thanked Trustee Cizmar for saving the budget around \$20,000 when purchasing the two police cruisers. Chief apologized for the confusion with the purchase of the flashlights for the police cars. Chief discussed some additional upgrades which, if approved, would need bid out. He received multiple calls from residents about hosting an easter egg hunt for children. Will hold a quick committee meeting but the tentative date will be April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Trustee Clebone is researching a possible Nature Works Grant for the Parks. He also said there is a person who is available to prepare the grant. He received a proposal of \$1,600 to apply for the grant.

Trustee Cizmar reported we auctioned 13 vehicles and received \$17,775 in revenue.

Trustee Stanley asked the Bord consider donating a vehicle if one becomes available for the Residents Assistance Program, a volunteer subcommittee of the 501(c)(3) Community and Historical Society. This vehicle would transport lawn, snow removal, and home repair equipment to the site chosen by the volunteer group to do minor home repairs and lawn or snow removal.

Administrator Weirick addressed signage and publications for a Trade Exchange Zone where cameras are recording. The Board is not opposed.

Earth Day Saturday April 22, 2023. Trustee Cizmar and Administrator Weirick will work with the schools and community in the coming weeks.

Motion to adjourn into executive session at 10:00 a.m. to consider discipline and compensation of public employees.

Motion: Mr. Stanley. Second: Mr. Clebone.

Roll Call: Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn from executive session and resume regular session at 11:22 a.m.

Motion: Mr. Cizmar. Second: Mr. Stanley.

Roll Call: Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Motion carried.

23-56 Motion to increase part time firefighter rates of pay effective February 26, 2023 by \$1 per hour as follows: EMT basic \$15.00 per hour; paramedic \$17.00 per hour; \$18.00 per hour for paramedics after 5 years with the township.

Motion: Mr. Cizmar. Second: Mr. Stanley.

Roll Call: Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Motion carried.

Motion to end meeting at 11:24 a.m.

Motion: Mr. Stanley. Second: Mr. Clebone.

Roll Call: Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Motion carried.

Next meeting Friday, March 3, 2023 @ 8:30 a.m.

---

MATTHEW CONNELLY  
FISCAL OFFICER

---

DEVON STANLEY, CHAIRPERSON