

Madison Township Board Meeting  
7047 E. Landersdale Rd. Camby, IN 46113  
March 7, 2024  
7:00 pm

**Agenda**

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ronnie McClure at 7:00 PM.

Present: Trustee Larry Ellis, Chairman Ronnie McClure, Board Secretary Matthew Pranger, Board Member Nelson Hoggatt, Temporary Chief Chad Coulter

Absent: Clerk Tina Turner

- II. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Pledge was recited by board and audience.

- III. **Prayer/Moment of Silence:** Observed by board and audience.

- IV. Plans for Re-Opening Station 831:

Trustee Ellis: provided an update on reopening Station 31. The plan is to provide fire and EMS protection on the south end of the township. Permits will take the longest time to obtain.

The plan is to have temporary housing for personnel to stay in while repairs are being made to Station 31.

REMC will place a temporary pole to provide power to the temporary housing.

Acting Chief Chad Coulter: The plan is to have 3 personnel in Station 31 24/7. There will be fire and EMS service.

Trustee Ellis: All firefighters are EMT trained. Calls on the south end will dispatch the firetruck from Station 831 and the ambulance would be dispatched out of Station 832.

Station 831 has electrical issues, parking lot issues, and all sorts of issues that need to be addressed. An employee was previously injured walking through the parking lot. The goal has always been to reopen Station 831.

A background on the reason for closing Station 831 was provided. We have a Fire Marshall on our staff. We have a complete list of 36 fire code violations in the building. We had the structure inspected by the company who built the station. They reported no structural concerns. Air quality was also tested.

Reports are available by request. The concrete for the parking lot is the biggest concern. An estimate of just over \$143,000 was provided. The concrete will be one of the first projects. The fire apparatus will be housed in the parking lot until the bays are brought up to code.

Station 831 was inspected by Chad Coulter who was recently promoted to acting Chief. The board voiced concerns that a member of the fire department was asked to inspect and close Station 831 who could also benefit from the closure and potential remodel or rebuild of the previous fire station. Chad Coulter confirmed that he stopped the inspection after 36 code violations and there were more violations that were not reported.

Advisory Board: The board voiced concerns that we could fix the 36 violations and there could potentially be more unknown violations to address after the repairs. The board recommended having an independent Fire Marshall outside of the township inspect the building to provide a clearer picture of what needs to be done and a second opinion.

Trustee Ellis: Tonight's plan is to provide temporary housing. The long-term plan is to renovate or add-on to the building. Rebuilding is also being explored as we explore all possibilities.

Advisory Board: Motion was made by Chairman Ronnie McClure to have the station reinspected. Second by Secretary Matthew Pranger. All in favor. No one opposed.

Trustee Ellis: We have ample funding and no vote required to have temporary housing set up at Station 831. We can have most of the work required to reopen Station 831 within a week. If temporary housing can be delivered within a week or two, we can reopen within a week or two. An update on the timing for delivery of temporary housing will take place early next week. A provision has been set up that allows the station to reopen without the need to fix the parking lot by having the apparatus parked outside and temporary housing provided.

Advisory Board Member Nelson Hoggatt – Will work with an independent engineer to provide an estimate and assessment of the parking lot using soil tests.

Trustee Ellis: The current estimate is based on the data we provided. The estimate could adjust based on the results of the soil test results.

Chad Couter: The firehouse was already closed when that was inspected. Still quite a bit of life safety concerns that will keep it closed until they are addressed.

Eric Round (sp?): Trustee doing his own work without permits. No state inspections are not needed for anything. Unable to staff if we keep firing firefighters. We need to see the permits that Trustee Ellis claims are required. There have been five fire chiefs under Trustee Ellis.

Trustee Ellis: To address the staffing issue: In my tenure as the Trustee so far, we had one hiring procedure on the first of the year. Had to put pressure on the Chief and Deputy Chief to hire people.

Denise McClure: How much temporary housing?

Trustee Ellis: \$2300 per month coming out of the accumulation fund. There is over \$100,000 in the budget.

Denise McClure: Do we have a committee to oversee temporary housing?

Trustee Ellis: Yes.

Denise McClure: I would like to volunteer to be on that committee if the public is welcomed.

Trustee Ellis: We have no problem with that.

Danny Brock: Confirmed Chief Coulter is interim Chief. The quotes from engineering for a similar project he is working on are up to over \$50,000 in just research. Properly appropriate this funding. We are going to play a shell game with our equipment. Will we have ALS services in both places?

Trustee Ellis: We cannot guarantee ALS services in both stations. We only have one ambulance. When it came to budget time, if the fire chief asked for money in wages, we provided what they asked for.

Eric Shields: Question for Mr. Pranger: Can you clarify the concern with having someone within township inspect the building?

Mr. Pranger: I am concerned about the perception of an internal inspection.

Eric Shields: We are concerned about the staffing due to the bleeding of the staffing. We need to have a meeting related to retention. It does not matter how much you spend if you cannot staff the building.

Megan Butler: Biggest concern is that her post on Facebook had several responses to offer professional services at discount. The people in the community are out there. If we do not have enough people or ALS services, it might as well not be open. Was concerned to hear firefighters were worried about whether they could afford internet or Netflix based on their pay. Can we put a sign out front when it will be reopened? Can we make sure we do this right?

V. Public Comment / Questions:

Jordan Russell: Identified as the president of the local union. No specifics but wish to have a clearer plan. Seems it will take longer than a week to reopen. Staffing both stations is also a concern. Leave the estimates strictly to professionals. How do we appropriate funding without the board's approval?

Amy Russel: I was on the board for 4 years and Trustee Ellis consistently stated how we could have volunteers do this job. Asked Trustee Ellis where the volunteers are now.

Trustee Ellis: I will not have volunteers pour concrete. I have volunteers working in meetings and have a system now. We might have volunteers assist with opening the station.

Amy Russel: Why have we not provided temporary housing and reopen back in the beginning?

Trustee Ellis: We thought we could have things done more efficiently instead of having to work on one piece at a time. Initial plan was to have a more permanent 25-year fix.

Amy Russel: Are the women's quarters repaired here in Station 832?

Trustee Ellis: No but we will have a contractor in here probably next week to repair the women's quarters.

Patty Cooper: Shut down Station 831 down in October. But indicated that we do not have to vote to utilize temporary housing or use funds to make the improvements. Nothing was being done until the community started to complain. I would like to see the quote and have a date when it will be reopened. We have to wait a week to see if they can have temporary housing delivered and another week to see if housing can be connected to the sewer. Do you have a copy of the quote?

Trustee Ellis: Offered a copy of the quote after the meeting.

George Ignus: My questions are to the board and Mr. Ellis. You mentioned the reason you were elected was the promise to not raise taxes. I believe tax payers are willing to pay more taxes if it means supporting the staff and having the station open. If you educate the public, they will understand they are paying for 911.

Eric Round (sp?): Ask you as a board to hold him responsible. What was keeping that station closed? I required to see the fire code violations and we have not been provided a copy. Question to Fire Marshall Coulter: What were those life safety concerns that closed that fire station?

Anthony Rizzy: Regarding temporary housing. Confirmed with Trustee Ellis that we can use the temporary housing. We are going to run power, sewer, water, more. There are a lot that need to be considered as it relates to a building for firefighters. Will fire gear be stored away from housing?

Trustee Ellis: Everything will be in place for firefighters to safely operate. Living quarters will be close to the facility. We have a firefighter to ensure we have all the equipment necessary.

Nelson: Do we know the response time from here to our southern end.

Trustee Ellis: 11 minutes.

Nelson: What is our required response time?

Temporary Chief Coulter: 6 – 8 minutes to respond.

VI. Call for executive session.

Matthew Pranger: Since our last meeting, there have been several urgent matters and decisions by Trustee Ellis that require the board's immediate attention. Given the gravity of these issues and the potential legal ramifications, I am requesting that we schedule an executive session at the earliest convenience.

Trustee Ellis: I was going to call for an executive session anyways.

Motion made by Matthew Pranger to call executive meetings on March 12 at 6:30p. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ronnie. Motion carried. No objections.

VII. **Adjournment:**

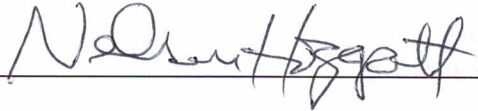
Matthew made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 PM, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Nelson Motion passed 3-0. No objections.

Minutes prepared by Board Secretary Matthew Pranger.

Dated this 8<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2024.

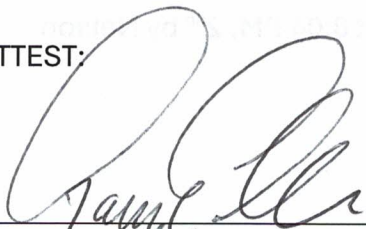
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ATTEST:

  
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Trustee Ellis, Madison Township Trustee