

The Board of Liberty Township Trustees met in Regular Session at the township administration office on Monday, March 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. with the following members in attendance, Mr. Arnie Clebone, Mr. Devon Stanley, and Mr. Gregory Cizmar presiding.

Officer David Rankin was promoted to Sergeant. Trustee Devon Stanley administered the oath of office to Sergeant Rankin.

Chief Toby Meloro mentioned the importance of establishing a strong force, now and for the future, with Officers who have good leadership skills like Officer Dave Rankin.

Fiscal Officer Matthew Connelly reviewed the Cash Summary By Fund Report. Matt compared balances from the past few years, displaying an increase from previous years. He mentioned the permanent budget on this evening's agenda and explained the importance of streamlining transactions electronically. Matt established extra layers of protections through the bank, as well as internal checks and balances. Matt attended the Ohio Township Association conference last month with Road Superintendent Wayne Hickman. While there, he attended the required ethics and public records classes.

#### **Reports:**

Administrator Mrs. Martha Weirick met with the Trumbull County Planning Commission last Thursday evening to discuss strategy for an upcoming Community Development Implementation Strategy (CDIS) Grant. Applications are due to the County Planning by April 11th and sent to the State by June 10th.

Fire Chief Doug Theobald reported this is the eighth month in a row experiencing over 300 runs. They average 185 EMS calls with the rest being accidents or mutual aid calls. He mentioned Ohio has a no open burning from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. He said for further details go to the State Fire Marshals website. They met students from ten different schools who participated in a Fire Extinguisher Simulator class. Under the current administration, the Chief said it appears federal grants have been put on hold. He has not heard anything regarding the Safer Grant but still remains hopeful that it will open for applications eventually. Finally, he indicated the department was able to walk through the new hotel being constructed to get a feel for the facility. Behavioral Health is still in the preliminary stages of being built, he said, however once the walls are erected, they can walk through that establishment.

Police Chief Toby Meloro presented his report. He was reviewing Calls for Service statistics for our entire area and found Liberty Township's Calls for Service had decreased while other communities have increased. The Police Department averages 1,100 Calls for Service a month. The Chief believes the reason for the decreased calls is a visible police presence and hopes it continues. Toby announced a Health Fair at Church Hill United Methodist Church on March 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Road Superintendent Mr. Wayne Hickman said the weather is turning warmer. However, as last winter progressed, he said, we went through our entire stockpile of salt and found it difficult to find additional salt due to salt shortages everywhere. Wayne wanted to thank ODOT, City of Girard, and the City of Youngstown who helped us in our time of need. Wayne ordered 15 tons of cold mix and reported the crew is currently on pothole patching and street sweeping duties. Foust Construction has resumed the preliminary work for the 2024 Paving Program. They are currently on St. Andrews working on the drainage portion, he added. Wayne said the 2025 Paving Program is with the County Engineers for design. Wayne reported he is working towards opening the parks, getting the water on, opening bathrooms, hanging swings, and dealing with back flow matters. Last, Wayne and Greg met with the County Engineers office establishing a good working relationship with their staff.

Zoning and Code Enforcement Director Mr. Jim Rodway presented his report.

#### **New Business:**

Motion to approve the minutes of the Thursday, February 20, 2025 Regular meeting and the March 6, 2025 special meeting.

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

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

Motion to approve warrant/eft expenditures for the month of February 2025 in the amount of \$509,373.35 warrants #26747 through #26809 inclusive.

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

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

Motion to approve the Purchase Order Listing and any Then and Now Certificates for the month of

February 2025.

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

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

25-47 Motion to promote Patrol Officer David Rankin to the rank of Sergeant effective December 22, 2024.

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

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

25-48 Motion to pass the Permanent Appropriations Budget for 2025:

Police	\$3,436,315.00
General	\$2,700,859.00
Fire	\$2,167,279.00
Road and Bridge	\$1,602,453.00
Ambulance/EMS	\$868,700.00
Gas Tax	\$397,819.00
Motor Vehicle	\$250,000.00
Lighting Assessments	\$130,775.00
Cemetery	\$21,250.00
Drug Law Enforcement	\$16,000.00
ARPA	\$871.00
Total Appropriations	\$11,592,321.00

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

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

25-49 Motion to promote part time Firefighter Paramedic Kenneth Jones to probationary full-time status per the terms of the agreement between the IAFF and Board of Liberty Township Trustees effective March 10, 2025 at a rate of \$22.00 per hour.

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

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

25-50 Motion to end employment of Probationary Firefighter John Greene effective 3/7/25 per the terms of the agreement between the IAFF and the Board of Liberty Township Trustees. Good luck in the future.

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

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

25-51 Motion to hire Julian Dillard as a Probationary Full Time Firefighter EMT per the terms of the agreement between the IAFF and Board of Liberty Township Trustees pending successful pre employment drug testing and background check. First day worked is his hire date.

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

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

25-52 Motion to purchase a 2006 International / Horton Squad ambulance from Bristol Township at a Cost of \$5,000.00.

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

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

Remarks: Trustee Clebone asked for more information. Trustee Stanley explained Bristol received a new ambulance from the County ARPA funds leaving them with an inventory of 3 ambulances. They kept one ambulance as their spare but had no need for a 3<sup>rd</sup> ambulance. The 2006 was on loan to us from Bristol because our ambulance was damaged in an accident. Fire Departments often help each other out, he added.

25-53 Motion to accept the resignation of Assistant Zoning Inspector Laura Fulmer effective immediately. Last day worked was 3/7/25. Good luck in the future.

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

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

A citizen expressed her concern over residents leaving their trash cans out by the road days after trash is picked up. Zoning Dept. Jim Rodway explained the Zoning Board is currently looking at adding language requiring trash cans be removed by a certain timeframe. She also inquired about political signs remaining in yards after elections have ended and asked if they can be required to remove them. Law Director Cherry Poteet said the township can regulate signs by size, location and number of signs, but cannot regulate them by content. Political signs are considered free speech and can remain up on private

property Trustee Clebone mentioned he had personally called someone who left political signs up and received permission to remove them. In addition, he suggested she ask the neighbor to consider removing the sign and offered to call on her behalf. She also complained about people not picking up dog waste. Chief Meloro asked if she spoke to the neighbor whose dog was defecating on her property. He offered to speak to them on her behalf.

A business owner complained about constant litter in front of his business on Liberty Street. He asked about no litter signs being installed. He spoke with Trustee Stanley regarding cameras able to catch the litterers, however, the law prevents prosecution if the individual throwing out the litter cannot be identified.

Another Citizen suggested we contact our state representatives to try to change the law.

A resident involved in using the baseball fields asked about the Center Park restorations and how it could impact baseball tournaments. He asked if they should look for other areas for this year's tournaments. Road Superintendent Wayne Hickman said it would be wise to look elsewhere this year.

A concerned citizen from the Cuyahoga Falls area, formerly from this area, read about the recent riot at Belmont Pines Hospital and had concerns. He did not want to see the children prosecuted. He spoke to the Police Chief and Trustees about his concerns and offered some suggestions. Trustee Clebone tried to obtain more information from the State Health Department regarding regulations at these types of facilities. Another citizen, who works in the mental health care offered to send him more information.

Trustees Remarks: Trustee Devon Stanley thanked Fiscal Officer Matthew Connelly for streamlining the township's finances. Devon also wanted to mention one of the first things he did after being elected was to have the township hire a person to pick up litter on township roads. She picks up litter from early spring to late fall until the snow stops her. The trustees invested money on a camera and trailer in hopes of catching those who litter, but the law prevents him from prosecuting those offenders since the cameras only record the car and not the person littering. He is willing to put up signs, but it is difficult catching those in the act. He does understand the property owner's frustrations. Liberty Street is a county road; therefore, we will have to ask them to erect no littering signs.

This past week Trustee Greg Cizmar attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the Akieva Middle School (formerly Allens Drug Mart) and the annual Trumbull County Engineers meeting with the newly elected officials. Greg is holding a car auction this month. Greg has not settled on a litter clean up date but is leaning towards Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup> or Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Trustee Arnie Clebone received a call from a resident on Goldie Road who received a letter from Lumas, a fiber optic company. Apparently, they will be in Liberty Township neighborhoods updating fiber optics. Wayne added, they are following the same path from the recent upgrades made by East Ohio Gas. Arnie said they will be digging up yards again. Lastly, Arnie is hosting a meeting with local businesses along Belmont Avenue, on Wednesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. at Kravitz Deli. Anyone interested in the Build a Better Belmont Coalition is invited to attend. He offered, Beth Carmichael, Trumbull Tourism will be the guest speaker. They will also see if there is any interest in forming a Business Association.

Motion to adjourn into executive session at 7:05 p.m. to consider the appointment, employment, or dismissal of a public employee.

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

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

Motion to adjourn from executive session at 7:52 p.m. and end meeting.

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

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

Next business meeting Thursday, March 20, 2025 at 8:00 a.m.

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MATTHEW CONNELLY, FISCAL OFFICER

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GREG CIZMAR, CHAIRPERSON