The Board of Liberty Township Trustees met in Regular Session on Thursday, September 24, 2026 at 8:00 a.m. with the following members in attendance Mr. Devon Stanley, Mr. Arnie Clebone & Mr. Gregory Cizmar presiding.

Guests: Trumbull County Treasurer Agostino Ragozzino and Senior Investigator/Supervisor Michael Robertson of the Delinquent Real Estate Tax and Collection Department.

Treasurer Ragozzino attended the meeting at the invitation of the Board of Trustees to engage in an open, collaborative discussion regarding how his office can better serve Liberty Township residents. During his overview of the Treasurer's Office, Mr. Ragozzino highlighted a significant shift in fiscal strategy. He noted, whereas his predecessor maintained an 80% liquidity rate and invested 20% of public funds, Mr. Ragozzino reversed this approach by investing 80% and keeping 20% liquid. This shift generated $750,000 in interest revenue for the county's use. Additionally, he noted that the office has been modernized to offer residents multiple tax collection methods. While Mr. Ragozzino briefly touched on delinquent taxes, he deferred to Supervisor Michael Robertson, who provided detailed insight into delinquencies, extensions, and structured payment plans. Together, their presentations provided a comprehensive overview of the Treasurer’s Office operations and functions.

26-150 Motion to approve the minutes from the September 14, 2026 Regular meeting and the September 14, 2026 Zoning Hearing.
Motion: Mr. Cizmar. Second: Mr. Stanley.
Roll Call: Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Motion carried.

26-151 Motion to end employment with Julian Dillard effective 9/24/26 per the bargaining agreement between the IAFF and Board of Liberty Township Trustees Article 15 Probationary Periods, Section 1. Every newly hired employee shall be required to serve a probationary period of one (1) year and may be dismissed at any time during the first year without cause. Newly hired employees shall be eligible to join the Union. However, if such newly hired employee is dismissed during his initial hire probationary period, he/she shall have no right of appeal through the grievance procedure set forth herein.
Motion: Mr. Clebone. Second. Mr. Cizmar.
Roll Call: Mr. Clebone, Yes. Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Mr. Stanley, Yes. Motion carried.

Discussion: Zoning Inspector Melissa Ritchie proposed assigning an address on Belmont Avenue to Churchill Park, noting it will likely be 4260 and it would help outsiders navigate the area more easily. Both the Fire and Police Chiefs voiced their support for the safety benefits, and the Board of Trustees subsequently approved the request. Melissa requested a zoning hearing for 5:30 p.m. on October 5th before the regular meeting. The Trustee agreed to her request.

Police Chief Ray Buhala announced that the department's annual Halloween open house will take place on Saturday, October 31st, from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The event will lead directly into the neighborhood Trick-or-Treat hours, scheduled from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Additionally, Chief Buhala noted that the department has taken delivery of its two newly acquired pre-owned squad cars.

Fire Chief Doug Theobald and Captain Phil Lucarel discussed the strategic value, operational challenges, and overall utility of part-time personnel with the Board. The department is actively working to rebuild its roster of part-time firefighters, who do not receive the benefits provided to full-time staff. By utilizing part-time employees to supplement daily staffing, the department is able to run three active ambulances. This initiative not only generates vital department revenue but also allows them to provide mutual aid to neighboring communities rather than relying on external assistance. Trustee Stanley noted the importance of the strategy, advising leadership to remain highly mindful of the department budget and the inherent challenges of maintaining it.

Administrator Martha Weirick reported receiving a call from Watchfire regarding the electronic sign in front of the administration building. Following a discussion with Fiscal Officer Matthew Connelly, a meeting was requested with Watchfire to discuss repair options for the current sign, as well as quotes for new signage at both the administration building and on Belmont Avenue in front of Churchill Park. Trustee Clebone noted that Goodwill may have an available sign and offered the use of it when installed. Administrator Weirick attended the Trumbull County Planning Commission Land Use meeting last evening. Hosted by Julie Green of the Trumbull County Planning Commission, the meeting sought community input to help update the Trumbull County Comprehensive Land Use Plan. This outreach initiative is one of several community meetings designed to guide future growth and sustainability. A final land use map and action recommendations will be presented to individual communities and local leaders at the conclusion of the planning process. Martha mentioned a press release from the Ohio Township Association. The OTA is urging communities to contact the General Assembly to request that state "rainy-day" funds be used to offset local revenue losses should the state gas tax be temporarily suspended. Trustee Arnie Clebone will write a letter to the General Assembly and possibly a letter to the editor of the Tribune.

Motion to adjourn meeting at 9:31 a.m.
Motion: Mr. Cizmar. Second: Mr. Stanley.
Roll Call: Mr. Cizmar, Yes. Mr. Stanley, Yes. Mr. Clebone, Yes. Motion carried.

Announcements: The 2026 Police & Fire Halloween Open house is Saturday, October 31st from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Township Administration Building for all township children.
Immediately followed by the Neighborhood Trick or Treat from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Next meeting is October 5, 2026 @ 6:00 p.m. **NOTE:** This meeting has been moved to the first Monday of the month because of Columbus Day observance.

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MATTHEW CONNELLY
FISCAL OFFICER

GREG CIZMAR, CHAIRPERSON