

The Board of Liberty Township Trustees met in Regular Session at the township administration office on Monday, March 9, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. with the following members in attendance, Mr. Devon Stanley, Mr. Arnie Clebone and Mr. Gregory Cizmar presiding.

AWARDS:

For all those who run towards danger....Congratulations to our brave Safety CHAMPIONS!

The follow persons were sworn in as new hires: FF/Medic Kenneth Jones, FF/Medic Daniel Beauchene, FF/EMT Christian Timm-Smith

The following Firefighters were awarded the Medal of Courage: Lt. Ronnie Simone, Lt. Matthew Gray, Members receiving Ribbon of Courage: FF/Medic Eric Lyszaz, FF/Medic Alec Coman for the house explosion.

The following Firefighters were awarded the Ribbon of Commendation for male Choking patient: Captain William Opsitnik, FF/Medic Daniel Beauchene FF/EMT Judd Radvic, FF/Medic Robert Shape

The following Firefighters were awarded the Ribbon of Meritorious Conduct for male Bee sting patient: Lt Chuck Wise, FF/Medic Eric Lyszaz, FF/EMT Brian Gordon

The following Police Officers were awarded the Ribbon of Meritorious Service for the house explosion: Officer Tyler Beck, Officer Kenny Griffin, Officer Colin Traves, Sergeant Dave Rankin

The following Fire Departments were recognized for their Meritorious Service for the house explosion: The City of Girard Fire Dept., The Joint Eagle Fire District, The Vienna Twp. Fire Dept.

Fiscal Officer Matthew Connelly presented his financial report. Matt reviewed the funds and explained how the County Auditor was late in distributing property taxes. He compared funds from previous years to the beginning of 2026. Matt said he has reconciled January and February bank statements. He mentioned we are in the middle of negotiations with the Fire Union and now the Teamsters Road and Clerical. He met with the State Auditor about exiting fiscal caution but has another meeting scheduled with them. Since the Permanent Budget has passed, he is asking for an amended certificate.

Reports:

Administrator Martha Weirick presented her report. She said the Annual Easter Egg Hunt is set for March 28th at the LYRIC building and Music In Churchill Park will start in June. We received grants from Geauga Trumbull Go Green, as well as NOPEC Grants. Martha thanked Trustee Clebone for submitting a State Community Grant to help with Belmont Cemetery's Mausoleum. Lastly she thanked the elected officials for their service to Liberty Township. "This particular board works hard each and every day and is always accessible. They don't shy away from their responsibilities."

Fire Department Chief Doug Theobald presented his report and revealed the total runs for the month.

Police Department Chief Ray Buhala reviewed the stats from his report. Chief Buhala stated that patrols will be more visible in our neighborhoods, particularly as warmer weather leads to more children playing outside. The Chief has directed patrol officers to actively monitor for littering violations. He is asking the public if they witness those littering to jot down the license plate and call the police department. He will follow through with a call to the offender.

Road Superintendent Mr. Wayne Hickman asked the public to stay away from Center Park while upgrades are happening. "It is not safe, and the area is a big mud hole," he cautioned. "The contractor is about halfway done," he added, "and hopes to be completed by June." On a different matter, he scheduled a preconstruction meeting for Phase I sidewalks for Wednesday, March 25th. Winter is not over, he stated therefore he will keep the salt boxes on the trucks for a few more weeks. Once the weather turns warmer for good, the road department will begin street sweeping.

Zoning Inspector Ms. Melissa Ritchie gave her report. She met with the zoning appeals board earlier this month and mentioned no additional zoning meetings were scheduled the remainder of this month. She is reviewing the property maintenance codes and researching a cloud based program that multiple communities are using.

Lauren Hill, a member of the crosswalkcounty Engineering Department addressed the Board about upcoming county projects including Logan Gate upgrades and the State Route 193 Phase III Sidewalk

Project, mid-block crossing, cross walk enhancements and lighting, etc.

New Business:

Motion to approve the minutes of the Thursday, February 19, 2026 Regular meeting.

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

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

Motion to approve warrant/eft expenditures for the month of February 2026 in the amount of \$699,347.63 warrants #27463 through #27526 inclusive.

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

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

Motion to approve the Purchase Order Listing and any Then and Now Certificates for the month of February 2026.

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

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

26-49 Motion to advance \$55,000 from the General Fund to the Police Fund for wages and benefits until the Real Estate Taxes are distributed from the County.

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

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

26-50 Motion to hire Andrew Leshinsky as a part time basic EMT at a rate of \$20.00 per hour pending pre-employment drug testing and a successful background check. First day he works will be his hire date.

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

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

26-51 Motion to request an updated amended Certificate from the County Auditor for the following funds due to increases in revenues received:

4951 Permanent Cemetery Endowment Fund (new fund) – adding \$2,407,516.00

2042 Belmont Park Cemetery Fund (new fund) – adding \$125,000.00

2041 Churchill Cemetery Fund – adding \$20,500.00

4401 OPWC Capital Improvement Fund – adding \$112,222.74

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

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

26-52 Motion to accept the resignation of part time firefighter Matt Kello effective 2/23. Good Luck!

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

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

26-53 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF A CAPITAL FUNDING APPLICATION FOR ROOF REPLACEMENT AND PRESERVATION WORK AT BELMONT PARK CEMETERY MAUSOLEUM AND CHAPEL, AND AUTHORIZING TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE RELATED DOCUMENTS

WHEREAS, Belmont Park Cemetery, established 1903, is a 114-acre, park-like cemetery and public resource owned/operated by Liberty Township and containing a 1913 mausoleum and central chapel of historic and community significance, and

WHEREAS, Liberty Township was required under Ohio law to assume stewardship of the cemetery last year after the private operating entity exhausted its funds and was unable to continue maintenance and required repairs, and

WHEREAS, the mausoleum/chapel is in severe disrepair and requires immediate, time-sensitive capital preservation to prevent further deterioration, protect interments (including veterans), and avoid far greater future emergency or demolition costs, and

WHEREAS, Liberty Township's routine operating budget covers general maintenance but cannot absorb the capital cost of urgent preservation, and the Township is pursuing private donations (heirs of those interred, veterans' organizations, local businesses, foundations, and civic partners) in addition to public funding, and

WHEREAS, Liberty Township seeks \$245,000 in grant/capital assistance toward a \$270,000 roof-first preservation project (assessment, emergency protection, historically sensitive roof replacement, flashing/gutters, targeted framing repairs, drainage improvements, and post-construction reporting) to stabilize the structure while additional restoration funding is pursued;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Liberty Township, County of Trumbull, State of Ohio, that:

The Board approves submission of a capital funding application for roof replacement and preservation work at the Belmont Park Cemetery mausoleum and chapel and supports the request for funding in the amount of \$245,000 toward the estimated \$270,000 project.

The Board certifies that Liberty Township is the legal steward of Belmont Park Cemetery and has authority to apply for and administer state or federal capital funds for the described project.

The Board commits that awarded funds will be used only for the approved scope of work and that the Township will comply with applicable procurement, reporting, historic-review, and grant administration requirements. The Board agrees to provide a ten percent match of \$25,000 for the repairs.

The Township Fiscal Officer, Township Administrator, and/or Arnie Clebone, Trustee, are all authorized to execute and deliver the application and any related documents, agreements, certifications, or assurances required by funding agencies and to take such actions as necessary to secure and administer the funds and implement the project.

The Board affirms the Township's continuing responsibility to maintain the cemetery and the completed improvements for the useful life of the project and supports parallel fundraising efforts to secure private match and additional restoration funding.

The Board authorizes staff to collect and provide letters of support and pledge commitments from heirs, veterans' groups, historical societies, businesses, neighborhood associations, and other community stakeholders to strengthen the application and assist with future funding efforts.

ADOPTED this 9th day of March, 2026.

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

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

A resident expressed concerns regarding the physical condition and stocking practices of local retail establishments, citing personal difficulty in obtaining assistance with heavy items.

A resident asked the Police Chief for additional patrols on Will-O-Wood to discourage speeders.

A resident thanked the Police Chief for his pro-active approach on littering. He asked about the gas station on Tibbetts-Wick Road and suggested the fire department consider a controlled burn as a training exercise. Trustee Cizmar did not think it possible as the building is cinderblock which does not burn. The fire would be limited to the roof, making it a high-risk, low-reward exercise and could leave a bigger mess. Also, the building is structurally sound and is not condemned.

Trustees' remarks: Trustee Devon Stanley said he is pleased to see the safety forces working together. He thanked all the departments for working together.

Trustee Arnie Clebone mentioned the upcoming Bike Belmont, at the end of March. The course will start at Wick Park in Youngstown ending at Giant Eagle on Belmont, or for more experienced riders finishing at the Youngstown Airport. The Community and Historical Society is planning an event on July 18th at Churchill Park to celebrate America's History 250. The event will coincide with the National History 250 anniversary celebration. The all-day event will feature local historians and businesses displaying historical artifacts. Anyone interested in participating in either of the events can contact Arnie.

Trustee Greg Cizmar stated an on-line auction, through Knights Auction, will be starting tomorrow. Greg announced this year's annual township litter clean-up is scheduled for April 25th. It is asking for help. Any volunteers, church groups, and school groups can contact him for more information or show up on the day of the event. We will give out bags, gloves, and safety vests to those participants.

Motion to adjourn into executive session to conference with the law director regarding negotiations with bargaining agreements with public employees at 6:50 p.m.

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

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

Motion to adjourn from executive session at 7:35 p.m. and resume regular session.

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

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

Motion to end meeting at 7:36 p.m.

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

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

Next business meeting is Thursday, March 19, 2026 at 8:00 a.m.

MATTHEW CONNELLY
FISCAL OFFICER

GREG CIZMAR, CHAIRPERSON