

The Board of Liberty Township Trustees met in Regular Session at the township administration office on Monday, December 8, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. with the following members in attendance, Mr. Devon Stanley, Mr. Arnie Clebone and Mr. Gregory Cizmar presiding.

Fiscal Officer Matthew Connelly presented his financial report. Matthew reviewed the Cash Summary Report noting the \$7M balance in reality is 5.6M because of various grants and other funds already committed. He balanced September and October's bank reconciliations and is almost finished with November's bank reconciliation. He noted the Temporary Budget will be passed this evening and the Permanent Budget will be passed in March. However, because of union negotiations Matt said he will need to estimate the budgets for those departments until the contracts are settled. Matt also mentioned he had a visit from the State Auditor offering help wherever needed.

Administrator Martha Weirick updated the Board on a reimbursable grant though Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste. She reported that despite the lower than anticipated turnout, the annual tree lighting and Santa's visit was enjoyed by those in attendance last Saturday. Martha extended a thank you to LHS Vocal Director Donna Popio and the LHS choir for the festive music, the employees who worked hard preparing and organizing the event, the fire department for delivering Santa and his Elf, & Robyn, Store Manager of the Belmont Walmart, who provided Santa and his Elf.

Fire Department Chief Doug Theobald was absent.

Acting Police Chief Ray Buhala presented his report and asked if the Board had any questions. He reviewed some of the statistics, including 1,223 calls for service, 96 incident reports, 86 traffic stops, 26 warnings and 62 citations were given. He finished by saying the officers continue to patrol the neighborhoods.

Road Superintendent Mr. Wayne Hickman was absent but provided his report. He wrote the Road Department will continue to provide snow and ice control, pothole patching and drainage repairs.

Zoning and Code Enforcement Director Melissa Ritchie Murphy presented her report to the Board and asked if they had any questions.

Motion to approve the minutes of the Thursday, November 20, 2025 Regular 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 November 2025 in the amount of \$558,730.38 warrants #27297 through #27352 inclusive.

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

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

Motion to approve the Purchase Order Listing and any Then and Now Certificates for the month of November 2025.

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

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

25-145 Motion to adopt the following temporary budget for the year 2026:

GENERAL FUND	\$ 914,201.00
MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSE TAX FUND	\$ 78,000.00
GASOLINE TAX FUND	\$
164,709.50	ROAD AND BRIDGE FUND
643,600.00	\$
CEMETERY FUND	\$ 12,500.00
BP CEMETERY	\$ 139,726.50
LIGHTING ASSESSMENT FUND	\$ 65,367.50
POLICE DISTRICT FUND	\$1,334,249.00
FIRE DISTRICT FUND	\$1,074,878.50
DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT FUND	\$ 8,750.00
<u>AMBULANCE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES FUND</u>	<u>\$ 466,812.50</u>
	\$4,902,794.50

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

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

25-146 Motion to reappoint Thomas Anness to the Zoning Board of Appeals term ending 12/31/2030.  
Motion: Mr. Cizmar. Second. Mr. Clebone.

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

25-147 Motion to hire Jeffry Riedel December 15, 2025 at a rate of \$21.00 per hour, as a full-time probationary Road Department employee per the terms of the bargaining agreement between the Board of Liberty Township Trustees and 377 Teamsters.

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

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

25-148 Motion to extend the contract with Anthem for Employee Health Care Insurance coverage from 1/1/26 through 12/31/26 with a 26% premium increase and continuing the employee contribution at 15%.

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

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

25-149 Motion to award the Liberty Township Center Park Restoration Project – Drainage Improvements to LM & R Excavating LLC in the amount of \$289,478.00, as the low bidder, subject to LM & R executing the Owner-Contractor Agreement and Addendum and providing the other documents required.

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

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

25-150 Motion to appoint Tony Villanueva as a reserve officer for the Police Department, no wages or benefits. Officer Villanueva brings a wealth of experience as a Major with the Trumbull County Sheriff's Office.

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

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

25-151 Motion to approve erecting no trespassing signs at township parks or properties. Those who trespass when the park is closed, before dawn or after dusk, can be arrested if they refuse to vacate the property. In addition, the township will talk with neighboring property owners about posting no trespassing signs on their property.

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

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

A resident addressed the board during the public comment period. He continued his discussion from the previous months on zoning matters that concerned him. Zoning Inspector Ritchie was able to address some of those concerns with him. Melissa provided him with written zoning violations notices that had been issued last month. The resident was pleased and commended her for her work. The resident noticed furniture which had been dumped at the Tibbetts Wick gas station was removed and asked if township employees had removed it. Trustee Cizmar said, "no employees were involved in the removal" then added "it was taken care of." The resident went on to formally request the board clarify their level of commitment with regards to property maintenance by way of a resolution but received no response.

During the period of Trustees' remarks, Trustee Clebone thanked Zoning Inspector Melissa Ritchie for her outstanding work and what she's accomplished in such a short time.

Trustee Greg Cizmar also complimented Zoning Inspector Melissa Ritchie and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Motion to adjourn into executive session at 6:24 p.m. to discuss preparing for union negotiations, threatened court action, employee compensation, discipline and or dismissal before returning to the regular meeting.

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 7:15 p.m. and resume regular meeting.

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

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

25-152 Motion to pass the following resolution:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ADMINISTRATOR MARTHA WEIRICK TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND / OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM(S) AND TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS AS REQUIRED

WHEREAS, the State Capital Improvement Program and the Local Transportation Improvement Program both provide financial assistance to political subdivisions for capital improvements to public infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, the LIBERTY TOWNSHIP is planning to make capital improvements to THE 2026 Utah, Joann, Middle, etc. ROAD RESURFACING PROGRAM; and

WHEREAS, the infrastructure improvement herein above described is considered to be a priority need for the community and is a qualified project under the OPWC programs,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by LIBERTY TOWNSHIP, TRUMBULL COUNTY; Section 1: Liberty Township Administrator Martha Weirick is hereby authorized to apply to the OPWC for funds as described above.

Section 2: Liberty Township Administrator Martha Weirick is authorized to enter into any agreements as may be necessary and appropriate for obtaining this financial assistance.

Section 3: The Chief Financial Officer of Liberty Township is Matthew Connelly, Fiscal Officer, and the Project Manager for the OPWC Project is Wayne Hickman, Road Superintendent and each is authorized to execute any documents as may be necessary and appropriate for obtaining this financial assistance.

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

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

25-153 A RESOLUTION CERTIFYING THE NECESSARY AMOUNT TO BE USED TO PAY THE LOCAL SHARE NECESSARY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM:

WHEREAS, the State Capital Improvement Program and the Local Transportation Improvement Program both provide financial assistance to political subdivisions for capital improvements to public infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, Liberty Township is planning to make capital improvements to the 2026 Utah, Joann, Middle, etc. Road Resurfacing Program, and

WHEREAS, the infrastructure improvement herein above described is considered to be a priority need for the community and is a qualified project under the OPWC programs,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by Liberty Township:

Section 1: Liberty Township has the amount of \$404,377 in local funds available to pay the local share for the herein above described project when it is required.

Section 2: Matthew Connelly, Fiscal Officer, is hereby directed to complete the Chief Financial Officer's Certification of Local Funds for the project.

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

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

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

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

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

Next business meeting Thursday, December 18, 2025 at 8:00 a.m.

Reorganization Meeting Monday, January 12, 2026 6:00 p.m.