

Madison Township Board Meeting Tina  
7047 E. Landersdale Rd. Camby In 46113  
April 19, 2023  
7:00 pm

**Agenda**

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Jim Johnson at 7:03 pm.

Present: Trustee Larry Ellis, Board Chairman Jim Johnson, Board Member Ronnie McClure, Board Secretary Nelson Hoggatt, Clerk Tina Turner

Absent: None

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

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

- IV. **Agenda Items:**

- V. **Adoption of Minutes:**

Ronnie made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from 2-16-23, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Nelson. Motion passed 3-0.

- VI. **Trustee Report:**

Trustee Ellis displayed several pictures showing maintenance requirements needed at the fire houses.

Station #31: Bad door frame, vanity in men's locker room needs replaced, broken toilet tank. Some floor tile needs replaced. Hollow core door has been replaced with a solid steel door. No door on Ladies locker room, only a curtain, and we need to do something about that. Concrete work that was started last year needs to be completed. We will be getting bids on needed new concrete work as well as repairing/replacing old concrete work that is deteriorating.

Station #32: Women's living quarters in bad shape. We are doing the work ourselves, cutting the cost from approx.. \$12k down to approx. \$3k. Bad heater in building behind fire house. Soiled carpeting in firehouse needs replaced. Tile needs replaced in public restroom. Skirting needs replaced on modular. Air conditioning unit will probably need to be replaced at some point. Door has been replaced on shed. Pictures showed some of the work that needs to be done, but there are other

things needing maintenance. The pictures are intended to give us an idea of the work that needs to be done.

Trustee Ellis referred to a handout he prepared that shows savings we will achieved over the next four years. Savings on Insurance (\$164,000), elimination of recycle bins we don't use (\$8,208), and changing from Direct TV to UTUBE TV (\$19,200) totaling \$191,408 over the next four years.

Trustee Ellis stated we have a dumpster for each fire department building and they only cost us \$56 a month.

Trustee Ellis stated we no longer must maintain the Centenary Road Cemetery. That is on privately owned land. If the land owner does not maintain it, the county will deal with it. We will save approx.. \$1,000 of our \$5k budget a year by not mowing it. Our attorney is going to send a letter to the home owner informing him that Madison Township will no longer mow the cemetery. Mt. Olive cemetery over on Camby Road is a disaster. We will probably need to get some volunteers to clean that place up so that it can be mowed. Gregg Terhune suggested we contact a person named JoAnne Stuttgen to assist us with cemetery care restoration of headstones.

Trustee Ellis stated that with the cemetery savings we are now looking at about \$196,000 in savings over the next 4 years that we have determined over the last 3 or 4 months.

Trustee Ellis stated we have sold items; Engine 32 (\$75,000), dive equipment (\$9,000), and took in \$24,000 insurance on the SUV.

Trustee Ellis stated we have contacted our lawyer because we have found out that the dive equipment we purchased for \$42,000 is all used equipment. This equipment has put two of our firefighters in danger. One had to go to the hospital for hypothermia because the wet suit leaked. This is not public knowledge because we just found out ourselves that our gear is used. A reputable dive gear vendor has matched our equipment by serial number in determining it was used equipment when it was sold to us. Dawn Horock asked if the \$9,000 in equipment we sold was part of the \$42,000 in new equipment we just bought. Trustee Ellis said part of it was but there really isn't much of anything that is new here. There is not much we can sell. He said we did not know it was used when we purchased it. Dawn asked it we would have to go after (former) Chief Buckrop or the diving shop that sold us the equipment. Trustee Ellis responded that the recourse we would have with our attorney is to file a law suit against at least three people; Mr. Buckrop, Bottoms UP SCUBA, and Mr. Scott McDonough.

Trustee Ellis stated we have turned over the Hayne's Roofing controversy to our attorney also. Mr. Haynes claims the township owes him \$80,000.

A citizen asked if the roofing we have sitting on the ground is good. Trustee Ellis stated that according to another roofing company, if the bundles have not been opened, they are still good. Trustee Ellis' opinion is that it should all be replaced, but that is just his opinion. He will take a professional opinion over his own. We have also solicited the opinion of another roofing contractor on what we have. We also sent an inspector out to Station #31 to evaluate the work that was done there. We are currently getting a quote on fixing what was not done properly by Haynes. This has become a year and a half fiasco where we are trying to better understand what we've got. Unfortunately, we have had to involve our attorney in both the scuba gear and roofing issues.

Trustee Ellis said we have \$26,000 coming in from Medicaid from 2020. We are also looking at 2021 to see if we have any money we can collect from 2021.

A citizen asked if three bids went out by the previous administration for the roofing contract. Trustee Ellis answered NO. Initially, the insurance adjuster and roofer came out and did an estimate. The former trustee proceeded to pay out \$150,000 to the roofing company for materials and it was never put out for bids properly. The trustee was called out on that, but proceeded on the advice of our former counsel, which we no longer employ. They decided to let them leave the material and bid out the labor. The labor was bid out and Haynes won the bid. Haynes showed up when Trustee Ellis took office and said he was ready to do this job. Trustee Ellis refused to let him start the work at that time. Haynes said he has a contract but we have not seen a contract. Unless we see a signed contract, we are not going to proceed with the work. Trustee Ellis talked to another roofing company and told them things were not done correctly, including adhering to OSHA mandates that include safety regulations. Trustee Ellis said we want to do things the right way. He said we got the insurance company to open the claim back up and as a result we have received another check, however, we don't know if it is enough to get the job done. He said we are going to get at least 3 bids and then the board will decide who does the work.

Nelson asked if the SBOA oversees our spending and do they have investigators who will investigate this problem for us. Trustee Ellis responded he has contacted the SBOA many times on this issue and they said they will put this in their records and proceed to the next step. He said we still must go the SBOA and tell them what is going on so that they can put these things in their records. The SBOA will come out and do an audit before the next four years is over and if there is an emergency situation, they will deal with it. But as this date, we have not seen an emergency.

**VII. Resolution 2023-08: Sale of 2009 Ford Horton Ambulance**

Resolution authorizes the Trustee to sell the 2009 Ford Horton Ambulance on EBAY. Trustee Ellis stated the money from this sale will go into the Fire Fighting Fund.

Nelson made a motion to accept resolution 2023-08 as written, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ronnie. Motion passed 3-0.

**VIII. Resolution 2023-09: Welfare Administration Program Director**

Resolution authorizes Trustee to hire Tina Turner as the Welfare Administration Program Director for a salary of \$4,000 per year.

Ronnie made a motion to accept resolution 2023-09 as written, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Nelson. Motion passed 3-0.

**IX. Good to the Order**

Nelson addressed an email the board received from Trudy Ellis concerning the status of additional appropriations and spending from the previous administration. Nelson discussed several of Trudy's concerns and asked if it would suffice if he included her email noting her concerns, along with other pertinent information, to the meeting minutes so that we would have a permanent record. Trustee Ellis said we could attach the email to the meeting minutes so that we would have appropriate documentation.

Rick Harrison said that on Easter Sunday he observed a take home vehicle being driven in a reckless manner. He just wanted to bring this to the attention of the administration.

Gregg Terhune brought up the issue of Salary Resolution from a previous board meeting. He stated the board was told the raise involved in that salary resolution was in the 7-8 percent range. A citizen said they thought it was quite a bit more than that. Gregg said the board was assured that was not the case. Then a board member asked if the raise was within budget and if there was room in the budget to accommodate this resolution and they were told it was. The board gave the trustee the benefit of doubt and passed the resolution. Gregg said he did not have the figures at the time, but later learned that the raises were not in the 8% range, but more in the 22% range. He said although there might be enough money in the budget to cover the raise, he is doubtful, when you add in PERF and benefits. He is afraid that this budget will run out of money before the end of the year. He stated the board is not under any obligation to give the trustee the benefit of doubt. Gregg said the trustee's job is to provide fire protection and the board's job is to provide a check and balance to the trustee, and the board is also responsible for passing a

working budget. Jim said he thinks it is working. Jim said we have additional funds coming in later that will cover it. Trustee Ellis said we have a system called TOMS that tells us what percentage we have spent and what percentage is remaining. If you look at personal services, we still have 77% remaining. And that is to date. It accounts for the whole budget. Trustee Ellis said they look at each payroll and see if it fits within the budget. Trustee Ellis said he misspoke about the percentage of the raise. It is in the 20% range. Tina added that is not true for all fire fighters and Trustee Ellis responded that is just for full time. Trustee Ellis also said that for quite a period this year, we had less than 9 full time fire fighters. Trustee Ellis said we do not want any line to be out of budget. We want every line to be within budget on our watch. Trustee Ellis said every Wednesday he gets together with the Fire Chief and Deputy Chief and they talk about their numbers. They also talk about their plan and their plan for going into the future. They keep a handle of what is going on and they will continue to keep a handle on what is going on. Nelson said the percentages were actually more like 27%, 22%, and 17% for the 3 classes of fire fighters and almost 60%, 59.8% or so, for the paramedics. Nelson said we were first told there would be no overtime but we later learned there would be. He said the overtime is very expensive because of the higher salaries. He said he must check these things out closely but to him it looks like it is going to be extremely close to come in under budget. He said he is still learning and maybe Trustee Ellis can point out some things he might misunderstand. He said PERF looks bad. It's based on the salary of the highest paid fire fighter so we are paying a lot more money into PERF and he is very concerned about that. A citizen spoke up that other areas pay more than Madison Township. Nelson said you cannot compare us to other areas that have much higher assessed value. Nelson said he campaigned for the board position and talked to many people who are very concerned about the cost per capita of Madison Township. Nelson said Madison Township has a lot of older people who are retired. He said most of the people in his neighborhood are retired. Nelson mentioned the Fire Territory of 2020 and what a big financial impact that was going to be on Madison Township. People showed up at that meeting and were very angry. Nelson said he is afraid that we are headed down the same path with a lot of spending that is coming very fast. Trustee Ellis said we would be bringing the subject of Salary Resolution back in to explain the whole thing, the way it is laid out. We are going to bring some other information with us so that everyone understands what we've got because there is a lot of confusion. For example, there are two types of overtime, so we need to talk about that. Trustee Ellis said he has been doing a lot of maintenance but going forward he will hire contractors to do the work he is currently doing. Ronnie said he was on the merit board for about 5 years and when he saw what fire fighters are paid hourly, there is no way he would run into a burning building to save somebody for \$15 an hour. He thought that was ridiculous. He said he didn't understand the percentages. He didn't get caught up in the percentages but he understands why they are important. He said looking at the budget provided by Tina, he thinks it's fantastic. He said we've talked about the budget a lot, but this is the first time he has seen where our budget is and what we have spent. Ronnie

asked how current the handout Tina supplied was and Tina replied it was current effective today (4/19/2023) seventh payroll. Ronnie said we are about 4 months into the year and still have 77% left, so it appears to him that we are trending towards being in budget. Ronnie said he is thankful for these men and women who don't have healthcare, who are taking unknown risks to their healthcare by breathing toxins. He said he would be disappointed if we did not have a fire department, should his family have an emergency. He is not a fire fighter, he worked in the office at UHC for 18 years, but he knows seconds matter and if we did not have one here, for example, it would take much more time. Ronnie said not to completely disagree with what Nelson is saying, he has lived in this community longer than he has, he has only lived here since 2001. His perception of Madison Township is that we are not as old as might be seen. In his neighborhood, for example, the vast majority of people are still working and probably in their 40's or 50's. Driving through Heartland Crossing, the majority of people are in their 40's. The vast majority are renting their homes because they do not have the money to buy. While he thinks there are some things we still need to see play out, he does not have the same perception or mindset right now that things are bad. Nelson stated that the total compensation for a fire fighter first class, who might be a captain or lieutenant is close to \$80k. Chief Wilson replied closer to \$70k. Ronnie said we are talking about salaries with no healthcare benefits. He knows people who go to work at FedEx just to get healthcare benefits. He said that as an employer, if we pay someone \$41-\$50k with benefits, that salary is actually \$25k more per employee just due to giving them healthcare. That is the cost to us as an employer just paying for that coverage.

A citizen stated that all these extra payments, like stipends and captain, do not add to their PERF. Jim responded that is right. Nelson responded that PERF contributions are based on the highest fire fighter's salary. The citizen said they earn that four grand. Nelson said to not misunderstand him. He believes they should have been paid more. It just was not rolled out right. There were deceptions and lies told and that is just not the way to do it. It's not the right way. Chief Wilson said he doesn't think there were any lies told. Nelson pointed out that when asked the fire fighters individual salary increase he and Trustee Ellis replied 8ish. Chief Wilson stated that when he said there was not overtime, he was talking about part time fire fighters. Nelson said we were discussing full time fire fighters and Ronnie stated no overtime, and you did not correct him. Chief Wilson responded, right. Chief Wilson said he was not aware the board was not told before how FLSA overtime works. Trustee Ellis said we will talk about this in another meeting. It will be spelled out so that everyone understands it.

Dawn Horock spoke up that we are paying all PERF, when the employees are supposed to be paying a portion of it. There was discussion about whether that was ever approved or not, and Trustee Ellis said it was voted on. Jim interrupted and said we are going to wrap this up. The next meeting, we are going to go over this. Then

he allowed one more comment. Denise McClure said she wanted to commend Tina for the job she is doing.

**X. Adjournment**

Ronnie made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:09, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Nelson.  
Motion passed 3-0.

Minutes prepared by Nelson Hoggatt, Board Member Secretary



Dated this 20th day of July, 2023.

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Roni M

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Jana J

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Nelson H

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ATTEST:

[Signature]  
Trustee Ellis, Madison Township Trustee