

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

MADISON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES WORKSHOP

Minutes of

Meeting

GOVERNMENT FORMS & SUPPLIES 844-224-3338 FORM NO. 10148

February 13, 2024, at 6:00 P.M.

Held _____ 20 _____

Chairman Anderson called the February 13, 2024, Trustees' Workshop Meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and welcomed everyone to the meeting being held in the Trustees' Meeting Room at the Madison Township Administration Building.

Mr. Anderson called for a roll call: Mr. Gauntner, Mr. Wayman, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Gerred-Ditchcreek, Chief Hager, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Pasqualone were in attendance.

TRUSTEES:

Mr. Anderson stated the first issue tonight is a continued discussion regarding the Police Department budget which was discussed at the last meeting. Mr. Anderson turned the meeting over to Chief Hager.

Chief Hager stated there was some concern expressed at the last meeting regarding the employer portion of the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) increasing it to twenty-four percent (24%). According to the Ohio Township Association (OTA), this increase is not on the radar. Chief Hager wanted to advise the Trustees of this. Chief Hager prepared a packet of information for the Trustees that was prepared by Mrs. Gerred-Ditchcreek which included a comparison of Madison Township Police Department wages to other local communities and an hourly wage increase for Madison Township of six percent (6%) and twelve percent (12%). Also included was a step wage increase for police officers which Chief Hager wishes to change from five steps to just three steps. Mr. Gauntner asked how long it takes to get to step three. Chief Hager said an officer could go to step three by the end of his second year.

Chief Hager said he is not trying to bargain or negotiate for the officers. He is just wanting to come to some kind of understanding on how to keep our officers and compete with everyone else. If the Township cannot support a wage increase financially, he will try to hire new officers as best he can. Chief Hager said he has an excellent officer and supervisor who wanted to be Chief and was going to leave when an opportunity became available. Chief Hager said he was able to talk the officer into staying, and he would hate to lose this officer due to four dollars (\$4.00) an hour more in pay.

Chief Hager stated Mrs. Gerred-Ditchcreek has also prepared some very useful wage charts for the Trustees to review. Chief Hager said if the Trustees feel this is not the time to increase police wages, he will understand. He is just suggesting the Trustees make a business decision which will help to retain Madison Township officers. Chief Hager said losing officers costs the Township money. Mr. Gauntner stated there used to be forty (40) or more people applying for a job when we did Civil Service testing. If an officer left there was always someone waiting in the wings to take that position. It is not that way now so it hurts when someone leaves. Chief Hager stated he was open for suggestions.

Mr. Gauntner stated he would like to bring in Jeremy Iosue, Labor Management Consultant, and our labor negotiator, to see what he thinks. He could advise the Township as to whether we should open our union contract now or wait as the Police Department contract is up later this year. He could also advise how this will affect negotiations. Chief Hager said he talked to Jeremy who understands what the Township is trying to do. A decision was made to call Jeremy and set up an appointment for him to come meet with the Board. The Board can open negotiations now just for wages or the Board can open the entire contract up and do collective bargaining for a new three (3) year contract.

Mr. Gauntner thanked Chief Hager and Mrs. Gerred-Ditchcreek for the work they did on the Police Department wage figures. Chief Hager said Mrs. Gerred-Ditchcreek did all the work.

Mr. Brown stated he was in a meeting with some local representatives and was informed the Ohio Legislature has proposed legislation pending that looks like there is a good chance it will pass regarding replacement levies. The proposed legislation would not allow a replacement levy if this legislation passes, just a new levy or a renewal levy would be allowed on the ballot. Mr. Brown said this would create some long-term planning issues for the Police Department and the budget. Mr. Wayman stated the OTA feels a replacement levy is a deceptive way to get funds from tax payers. Mr. Brown said he just wanted to make the Board aware of this for future reference.

Mr. Gauntner asked Chief Hager the status of the K-9 police dog Madison Township would be getting. Chief Hager said he will present a Resolution at the next meeting for an agreement with the K-9 handler and dog. Chief Hager said he is still waiting for the car to be fitted with the parts necessary for the safety of the dog. Mr. Pasqualone recently prepared a similar contract for North

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Kingsville so he will be able to complete one for Madison Township. Chief Hager said the dog is certified by the State and is training with Lake County K-9 officers in the meantime.

Mr. Gauntner asked if the Police Department had a cruiser shot by Beebe pellets recently. Chief Hager said a window on cruiser #643 was shot out while parked at Madison Muffler at Hubbard & Chapel Roads. The Dairy Queen on Hubbard Road also had one of its windows shot with Beebe Pellets at the same time.

ADMINISTRATOR:

Mr. Brown stated the Lake County Department of Utilities has reviewed the plans for the North Ridge Sewer Project done by Barrington Consulting Group, Inc. There were seven (7) minor adjustments which Mr. Brown sent out to the Trustees. After the final plans are completed, the Township will start getting engineering estimates and then hold public meetings and hearings.

Mr. Brown said he met with the Local Government Fund (LGF) Ad Hoc committee today in Mentor to try to come up with a new alternative formula for distribution of the Local Government Fund to the twenty-three (23) Lake County communities. Mr. Brown stated the Ad Hoc Committee haggled for three and a half (3.5) hours and made a lot of progress. There seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel regarding a new LGF distribution formula. Mr. Brown said there is a framework in place to get this job done. Mr. Brown stated Morgan McIntosh (Concord Township Trustee) will give a presentation regarding the proposed new LGF formula at the Lake County Township Association Meeting on Thursday. Mr. Brown will be meeting with North Perry Village, Perry Village, Perry Township, and Madison Village to present the proposed new LFG distribution formula. Mr. Brown said he would meet with the three (3) Trustees individually to go over everything. Mr. Gauntner said he is glad to hear than an alternative formula is being proposed because the Township does not want to go with the State formula. Mr. Brown said the State formula is pretty much off the table.

Mr. Brown informed the Board an easement is needed at 5200 Emerson Road to do construction and maintenance on the Emerson Road waterway culvert. Mr. & Mrs. Chuck Daughters were so nice and so helpful in getting this easement in place by signing the paperwork promptly. There will be a Resolution for accepting the easement later tonight during the Regular Trustees' Meeting.

Mr. Brown gave the Board an update on the State Bike Signage Project. The Township signed an agreement with the State about a year ago. The signs should start to be installed in March and be completed by June 30th. There will be three (3) routes: Cincinnati to Toledo, Toledo to Conneaut, and Fremont to Bay Village.

Mr. Brown stated he asked for an update on the Ford Road Project. Mr. Brown was informed that nothing has changed. Lake County continues to work with the consultant towards final plans. The culvert has been ordered. Lake County received the shop drawings and specs for approval to proceed with manufacturing of the culvert sections. Mr. Gauntner said it sounds like they are proceeding with manufacturing culvert sections which must be like a prefab type of culvert. Mr. Brown said he cannot believe the culvert would not be poured on the site. Mr. Brown stated the Board could discuss this during the Regular Meeting if they so wish. Mr. Gauntner said Ford Road has been closed five hundred thirty-six (536) days.

Mr. Brown asked if the Board wanted to initiate a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for the new Sheetz at Green Road & Route 20 (North Ridge) now that Sheetz is up and running. Mr. Brown said he could prepare the paperwork for the first meeting in March if the Board of Trustees decide they want to proceed. The Township can decide not to TIF the property, the Township can TIF at fifty percent (50%), or the Township can TIF at twenty-five percent (25%). Mr. Wayman asked Mr. Brown what the Township TIF rate is for other businesses. Mr. Brown said fifty percent (50%). Mr. Gauntner said he thought the rate should be consistent at fifty percent (50%). Mr. Gauntner stated the Township needs to attract more economic development in this area. The TIF funds could be used for new infrastructure purposes. Mr. Wayman agreed with Mr. Gauntner and said the costs of those types of projects is not going to go down. Mr. Gauntner stated the cost of the currently proposed sanitary sewer project on North Ridge Road from Burns Road to west of Haines Road was three million dollars (\$3,000,000.00) in 2008. Now the cost is estimated to be six million dollars (\$6,000,000.00). Mr. Brown said he also agrees that a fifty percent (50%) TIF is a good bankroll towards future infrastructure. The Township needs money for future infrastructure and economic development. Mr. Brown said he would talk to the Trustees individually to see what the Board wishes to do and then prepare a Resolution.

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Mr. Brown mentioned that he gave the Trustees a copy of the "Rates of Taxation for 2023" tax table which everyone received with their property tax statements. Mr. Gauntner stated this is the page people in Madison receive with their tax bills that they do not understand. People think because Madison Township is listed first on the tax rate table that Madison Township's tax rate is the highest in Lake County. This is not true; Madison Township is just taxing district #1. Mr. Gauntner said what people should look at is the Residential/Agricultural Effective Rate per \$1,000 on the tax table. Madison Township's Effective Rate is 66.742137 per \$1,000. As an example, Willowick's Effective Rate is 79.582667 per \$1,000. Eastlake's Effective Rate is 70.085379 per \$1,000. Madison Township is actually in the middle of the pack with fourteen taxing districts having a higher effective tax rate than Madison Township. People do not understand this tax table. Mr. Gauntner said he sees comments on social media all the time about Madison Township's tax rate being the highest in Lake County just because Madison Township is at the top of the tax table list.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Chief Hager addressed the Board earlier in the Meeting.

LEGAL:

Solicitor, Mr. Pasqualone, stated he had nothing for the Workshop Meeting.

SERVICE DEPARTMENT:

Service Department Supervisor, Mr. Cook, addressed the Board regarding the Yard Waste Program for 2024. Mr. Cook said the current program has two (2) Saturdays a month available for brush and yard waste drop-offs. There have been some discussions in the Service Department about changing some of the ways the Township handles the program. It has been suggested that the program be changed to a drop-off only system. Mr. Cook said Painesville and Perry Township both use a drop-off system. Painesville hauls out weekly, and Perry grinds their yard waste material once a year. Another suggestion is to add an additional day (Wednesday) to the schedule. Mr. Cook said there would be no increase in overtime wages by cutting the staffing need from four (4) to two (2) employees. Monday haul-out days would be eliminated. There would be less wear and tear on equipment and employees. Mr. Cook stated the only additional cost would be the cost of a contractor coming to grind the yard waste and brush. Perry currently pays \$3,500.00 once a year for grinding. Mr. Cook said the current estimate for hauling, fuel, and extra maintenance of equipment for Madison Township is close to the same cost for grinding once a year. Mr. Gauntner asked where the yard waste and brush would be stored. Mr. Cook said in a pile on the southern border of the property at the drop-off site. Mr. Gauntner said he would be in favor of trying this system for a year to see how it goes. Mr. Anderson agreed. Mr. Cook said the number of days this program would be available would double to twenty-seven (27) days. Mr. Gauntner mentioned when he was Township Administrator back in the 1980's on the townships former Middle Ridge Road property, the Township did a similar program. At the end of the year we had a huge pile of yard waste and branches which was so tangled it could not be pulled apart. It had to be burned and buried. The Trustees decided to try the proposed changes to the Yard Waste & Branch drop off program for one year.

Mr. Cook stated he would like to apply for a Nature Works Grant for Stanton Park with the Boards approval. He would use the funds to purchase new picnic tables and benches. The Nature Works Grant would be a twenty-five percent (25%) match including In-Kind work which means any work done by the Township goes toward the twenty-five percent (25%) match. The deadline for the 2025 Round 30 is June 1, 2024. Mr. Cook said the picnic tables would be for around the Banquet Hall and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) picnic tables for under the chapel pavilion. The Township currently has old wooden benches to be installed around the walking trail once it is paved and completed. The Township would like to get composite benches for ease of maintenance. Mr. Cook said other municipalities have received Nature Works Grants for this type of project. Mr. Anderson stated he has talked to many seniors who are very excited about the walking trail project and asked if there would be benches to rest on along the way. Mr. Anderson said he will let them know the Township is working on it. Mr. Anderson said this is a great idea.

FISCAL OFFICER:

Mrs. Gerred-Ditchcreek, Fiscal Officer, stated she has nothing for the Workshop Meeting.

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ZONING:

Assistant Zoning Inspector, Chris Bernard stated he had nothing for the Workshop Meeting.

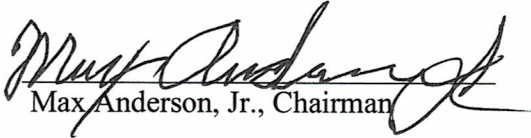
Mr. Anderson stated four (4) large Waste Management bags of rubbish sits on Route 528 across from Immaculate Conception Catholic Church and have been there a long time. Mr. Anderson has received complaints from residents. Mr. Bernard said a letter has been sent out from the Zoning Department regarding this issue. Mr. Anderson asked if the Zoning Department would follow up on this.

Mr. Wayman stated down in Columbus the State is talking about getting rid of everyone's zoning rules and only having one set of rules to apply for every township in the state which Mr. Wayman said would not work. Mr. Gauntner said he remembered a situation back in the 1980's when the State took away communities' control over gas & oil well drilling. What a mess it would be if they were to do that with zoning regulations. Mr. Gauntner said each community is very different and one set of zoning rules would not work for every township. Mr. Brown said he sent out an e-mail last week regarding some legislative proposals and a link to them. This is something to look into further.

Mr. Anderson asked if anyone had anything else to discuss at this time and with no further business, requested a motion to adjourn the Meeting.

Mr. Wayman presented a motion to adjourn the Meeting, seconded by Mr. Gauntner. Roll Call: Mr. Wayman: Yes Mr. Gauntner: Yes Mr. Anderson: Yes

Chairman Anderson adjourned the Trustees' Workshop Meeting at 6:53 P.M.


Max Anderson, Jr., Chairman


Terry Gerred-Ditchcreek, Fiscal officer

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