

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

SHARON TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES REGULAR SESSION HELD AT

Meeting

GOVERNMENT FORMS & SUPPLIES 844-224-3338 FORM NO. 1016

Held 95 E. Wilson Bridge Road _____ 20____
January 18, 2023
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The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm.

Roll Call:	Laura Kunze, Chair	Present
	John Oberle, Vice Chair	Present
	Tony Palmer, Trustee	Present
	Michael Farley, Fiscal Officer	Present

Attendance: Chief Tuchfarber, Supt. Tom Kayati

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge was led by Chair Kunze.

Guest Speakers:

None

Approval of Agenda:

Oberle moved, Kunze seconded. Carried unanimously.

Resident Comments

Resident noted that an RV is now present in the area referred to as a junkyard. Chief Tuchfarber noted that Franklin County is aware and is taking remedial action.

Resident noted support for a privacy wall along State Route 315. Resident requested that the privacy wall should be added to the agenda.

TRUSTEES

Old Business:

Worthington/Township Fire District—Update on City's Request

Palmer asked Oberle to introduce the topic. Robyn Stewart, Chief Zambito and the Mayor of Riverlea were all recognized in attendance. Oberle emphasized the value of the partnerships involved in the fire department. Oberle provided some historical context for the fire department. Noting that it was formerly the Sharon Township Fire Department until the early 1990's when it became the Worthington Fire Department. Oberle provided background on the funding mechanism between the two entities. Oberle recounted that thorough, open-dialogue has been in place and noted the fact that this topic has been on the Sharon Township Trustees agenda for the entirety of 2022.

The background for the recent November 2022 request was explained. Oberle noted that the Township has not taken a formal position on the request. Oberle noted that February 1, 2023 is the deadline for the Trustees to decide. There will be three public meetings dedicated to fire department funding before and including January 27, 2023.

Oberle noted that a continued dialogue with residents is what is intended.

Robyn Stewart provided comments and noted the long-standing partnership between Sharon Township and the City of Worthington. Stewart noted that the taxed amount for township residents has remained constant in dollars and the effective millage has gone down. The contract provides requirements for the City of Worthington to seek an increase. Stewart noted that Worthington has increased taxes three separate times since the inception of the fire contract. Stewart explained the four factors in the contract used to determine cost of fire service. Stewart explained how Sharon Township fits into the factors and percentages used. The City blended the factors and came up with a thirteen percent request that is a little more than \$1,000,000. Current cost of the fire service is about \$7.1 million. Worthington did an analysis for other townships in Franklin County.

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Kayati asked questions about the income tax and the applicability of the income tax on residents. Kayati asked about I-270 factors and the "service area" to Sharon Township residents compared to City of Worthington residents. Stewart noted that the Fire Department is funded by the City general fund. Stewart explained that approximately 23% of the general fund is used to operate the police department. There is an additional capital expenditure separate from the general fund. Kunze asked about number of runs and which ones were answered under mutual aid, as well as traffic runs on I-270.

Oberle noted that Riverlea residents asked about the breakdown for Riverlea runs. (Oberle has provided information to Village of Riverlea residents and Village leadership.)

Kunze noted that Perry Township is also served. Stewart explained that the contract is different.

Farley asked about the cost for each resident based on the requested millage. Stewart committed to getting that number.

Farley explained the differences in how cities and townships appropriate, receive, and use tax dollars.

Resident asked about the fact that the budget has doubled while the request is more than doubled. Stewart explained this dynamic.

Resident asked who would be allowed to vote. Oberle discussed the process of putting the levy on the ballot. Oberle noted that only unincorporated Township and Riverlea residents will vote on the matter. Oberle explained the contractual ramifications of not reaching an agreement. Oberle also explained that election expenses would be covered by the Township.

Resident noted that the residents of the Worthington School District just passed a levy and that this could add to pressures.

Resident noted how fabulous the EMS personnel service has been. The resident noted that 8.1 mills will not be fully understood. Resident asked what happens if the levy is not passed and if the vote is separate between Sharon Township and Riverlea.

Oberle responded that the process is important and explaining the need for further communication on the matter. Oberle noted the partnership and if the levy failed what would happen.

Resident noted that the resident thought that the Township was being rushed in making the decision. Oberle noted that the Township is not being rushed. The process is being driven by the contract and the ramifications of not putting the issue on the ballot.

Dan Guttman, legal counsel for the Township, explained the conflict resolution process of the contract.

Stewart did note that there were signals provided by the City for more than a year.

Farley noted that additional legal process will add additional cost if the conflict resolution process in the contract is triggered.

The Mayor of Riverlea appreciated the quality of fire and EMS service and communication and his desire to reach an agreement between all parties.

Resident asked about the millage and how it is calculated. The resident noted a calculation of millage. Concern was expressed if the number is too large.

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Farley explained the determination of millage.

Resident asked about proportional cost and if incremental cost. Stewart explained that the contract does not state the cost. Guttman explained the contractual ramifications. Stewart noted the significant disparity in cost currently and the impossibility of calculation.

Resident noted the appreciation of the fire service and willingness to pay a fair share for quality service. Resident sought demonstration of fairness and per home cost of the increased levy.

Kayati noted that when the City took over, it was a reduction in the cost for Sharon Township residents.

Stewart noted that they were agreeable to addressing this more often and more regularly.

Oberle stated that the questions were being catalogued and answers will be provided. Oberle noted that the meetings are streamed. Information will be placed on the webpage. Oberle also said residents can call.

Resident asked what happens if the levy doesn't pass—and the ramifications.

Resident asked if it is possible if a website can be developed to look at all the information presented to assist in resident decision-making.

Stewart noted that the information is not currently posted, but expressed a willingness to work with Trustees. Palmer noted that there is information currently on the Township website.

Resident asked if the Fire Department does cost recovery from non-residents. Stewart noted that EMS transport billing is an area that is billed. Resident followed up if they could bill on non-transport. Chief Zambito noted that Medicare rules do not allow such billing for non-transport. Resident asked if there was a mechanism to assess cost for those that use the services more. Oberle asked how much was generated from EMS billing. Stewart answered that it was about \$500,000. Stewart noted that the City does not aggressively collect.

Resident asked how the 8.1 mill levy will change over the years. Farley, Stewart, and legal counsel, explained how the millage is restricted.

Resident asked if the millage could grow over time. Farley and legal counsel explained that this is not allowed under state law.

Resident noted that his property taxes have been increasing over the last ten years. Resident explained that some residents are on fixed incomes. Resident noted the pressure of the increase in home valuations by the County Auditor.

Resident noted appreciation for the response to the recent major fire. The resident expressed appreciation for Chief Zambito being personally present at the fire.

Resident asked if the 8.1 mills was in addition. Stewart explained that the City is asking for a dollar amount and the millage number was an estimate.

Resident asked if a link can be included on the Township website to the Auditor's website to determine final impact on residents.

Palmer thanked everybody for attending the meeting and the questions asked. Palmer expressed thanks to the City. Palmer noted that there will be more meetings.

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January 18, 2023**Page 4 of 5****New Business:****Recognition of Worthington Fire Fighters**

Oberle introduced the recognition of Worthington Fire Fighters. Oberle referenced the recent fire and the amazing response to Township residents. Oberle further explained the countless examples of service to our community. Oberle provided a historical background of the fire service in our community.

Kunze provided comments praising the members of the fire department.

Palmer also provided comments about the professionalism and care that the fire department provides our community.

Chief Zambito provided prepared comments in recognition of the incident and then awarded the Chief's Commendation.

Fire fighters presented with the Chief's Commendation are:

- Acting Battalion Chief Pat Toole
- Lieutenant Matt Harding
- Lieutenant Clayton Miller
- Firefighter Dan Rott
- Firefighter Chris Catt
- Firefighter Chris Dawson
- Firefighter Paul Fredieu
- Firefighter Erik Wampler
- Firefighter Scott Murphy
- Firefighter Erik Kullman

Annual Pay Increase for Chief Tuchfarber*

Kunze provided background on the need for a pay increase for the Chief. Oberle provided a historical background to get the annual raises.

Farley expressed appreciation for the Chief's fiscal responsibility in running the budget.

Kunze moved for a five percent raise. Oberle noted that five percent may not continue ongoing in future years. Palmer discussed the possibility of having all of these raise periods for entire departments and the ability to put into a planning calendar. Oberle expressed support and requested the development of such a calendar. Palmer explained that he has already commenced work on this.

Kunze moved for five percent raise, Oberle seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

FISCAL OFFICER**Old Business:**

None

New Business:**December Credit Card Statement**

Palmer was presented the credit card statement and Palmer signed the statement.

POLICE**Old Business:**

None

New Business:**Grant for Body Cameras**

Chief Tuchfarber informed the Trustees that a \$23,520 grant for body cameras and the server was awarded today. Sgt. Grant did the substantial work on applying for the grant. Further information will be forthcoming about the grant.

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ROAD and CEMETERY:

Old Business:

None

Approval of Minutes:

January 4, 2023: Kunze moved, Oberle seconded. Carried unanimously.

Palmer noted that Executive Session will be held.

Oberle moved to enter executive session to discuss the discipline of a public employee according to Ohio law, Kunze seconded the motion. Palmer asked for a roll call vote.

Roll Call

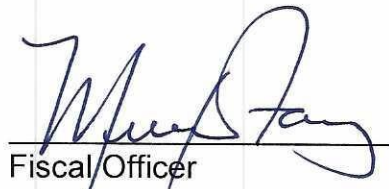
Kunze voted yes
Oberle voted yes
Palmer voted yes

At 8:13pm the Trustees entered into executive session. Executive session ended at 8:37pm.
Regular session resumed.

At 8:38pm, Palmer moved to adjourn, Oberle seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2/1/2023
Date


Chair


Fiscal Officer