

TOWN HALL

January 9, 2024

Fiscal Officer Karen Walder called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. Trustees Kristina Port, Jim Mueller and Matt Rambo were present. Board Administrator Melissa Palmer was present.

The following Department Heads were present: Police Chief Tom Swaidner, Fire Chief John Frazier, and Road Superintendent Gene Layne.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Mrs. Walder thanked the Trustees for their service to Russell Township. Mrs. Walder congratulated Ms. Port on starting her new term this year. Mrs. Walder stated that the Trustees and Fiscal Officer get statutory pay raises of 1.75%. Fiscal Officer salary is \$34,500 and Trustees salary is \$25,162 annually. Mrs. Walder noted that the Township enters 2024 with over \$13 million in resources, and as elected needs to continue to operate wisely, lawfully, and transparently for the benefit of the residents. Mrs. Walder stated that Russell Township needs the Trustee's investment of thought, energy and follow through. Mrs. Walder reminds the Trustees that the Board Administrator identified 8 key initiatives that need their direction. Mrs. Walder offers her advice and assistance to help implement as the board determines.

ORGANIZATIONAL:

CHAIR: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to open nominations for Chair of the Russell Township Board of Trustees for the year 2024. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Rambo nominated Kristina Port for the Chair.

Mr. Mueller made the motion to close nominations for Chair of the Russell Township Board of Trustees for the year 2024. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

For Ms. Port for Chair of the Russell Township Board of Trustees for the year 2023, the vote was as follows: Mr. Mueller yes; Mr. Rambo yes; Ms. Port yes. Ms. Port was elected as Chair.

VICE-CHAIR: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to open nominations for Vice-Chair of the Russell Township Board of Trustees for the year 2024. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Ms. Port nominated Matt Rambo for the Vice-Chair.

Ms. Port made the motion to close nominations for Vice-Chair of the Russell Township Board of Trustees for the year 2024. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

For Mr. Rambo for Vice-Chair of the Russell Township Board of Trustees for the year 2024, the vote was as follows: Mr. Mueller yes; Mr. Rambo yes; Ms. Port yes. Mr. Rambo was elected as Vice-Chair.

MINUTES: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on December 21, 2023, as presented. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

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Mr. Rambo made the motion to accept the minutes of the Special Meeting held on December 26, 2023, as presented. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and the vote is as follows: Mr. Mueller abstained; Ms. Port yes; Mr. Rambo yes, and the motion passed.

QUARTERLY REPORTS: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to acknowledge receipt of the 4th Quarter 2023 departmental reports from the Police, Fire, Road, Facilities & Zoning. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

GUEST: CHRIS LOXTERMAN, GEAUGA/LAKE HEALTH DEPT, SEPTIC SYSTEM TESTING: Mr. Loxterman gave an update on septic system testing for Geauga County residents. Stated that the Health Department will begin testing for Russell residents in mid-February. Currently, the 2 types of systems they will be testing are for NPDES and the Spray Irrigation Sewage System. Mr. Loxterman stated that these systems are supposed to be serviced twice a year and are required for annual sampling. Mr. Loxterman stated that they will send out a notice to the residents and this notice will also contain their fee for the sampling. Once the sampling is done, residents will receive a letter from the Health Department with their results. The Board Administrator will post the handouts on the website for residents to view. These include sample bills for each system type, and FAQs.

ADMINISTRATION DONATION: *Mr. Rambo made the motion, based on the Fiscal Officer's recommendation, to accept the donation from George & Susan Baker of \$50.00 to the Administration Building employees. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Rambo made the motion to approve the use of the \$50.00 donation for the Administration Building employees at the discretion of the Fiscal Officer. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

HAZMAT COG PROXY: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to authorize Chief John Frazier to carry a letter of proxy to the HAZMAT COG meetings in the event that a Trustee is not in attendance. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

HyFi WATER LEVEL SENSOR RENEWAL: Chief Frazier stated that they are currently paying a fee for the 2 sensors to monitor the watersheds of the Chagrin River. Board Administrator stated that they have 2 new features available; a cellular camera that can be placed at the site and email notifications can be made in an emergency situation. We currently don't have the cost yet if we want to add these new features. Board Administrator stated would have to negotiate the contract, which is not available yet. It is up to the Trustees and Chief Frazier to determine if they want to add these features because it would come out of the Fire Department's budget.

DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY: FIRE: *Mr. Rambo made the motion, at the recommendation of Fire Chief John Frazier, to dispose of township property listed in the document sent to the trustees with the subject "EMS Equipment Disposal List" dated November 9, 2023, as each item identified is not needed for public use, is obsolete, or is unfit for public use. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

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GRANT APPLICATIONS: Chief Frazier stated that they have 4 grants they would like to apply for. The AFG Grant they apply for every year, and last year used it for physicals. Both the State Fire Marshal's Grants, one for equipment and one for training, are due by the end of January. The State Fire Marshal's Training will reimburse for fire training, which is usually \$6,000 - \$7,000. The State Fire Marshal's Equipment Grant is very competitive and probably won't be awarded but it helps with receiving other grants. The Worker's Comp Grant is a second safety grant. Chief Frazier stated he put in the 2024 budget to replace their stair chairs and if awarded the Worker's Comp Grant, it would cover 75% of cost.

ACCEPT DONATION: *Mr. Rambo made the motion, based on the Fiscal Officer's recommendation, to accept the donation from George & Susan Baker of \$50.00 to the Fire Department. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Rambo made the motion to approve the use of the \$50.00 donation for the Fire Department at the discretion of the Fire Chief. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ACCEPT DONATION: *Mr. Mueller made the motion, based on the Fiscal Officer's recommendation, to accept the donation of a \$100.00 gift card to Mangia Mangia from the Andrew Haines family to the Fire Department. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Mueller made the motion to approve the use of the \$100.00 gift card for the Fire Department at the discretion of Fire Chief John Frazier. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ACCEPT DONATION: *Mr. Rambo made the motion, based on the Fiscal Officer's recommendation, to accept the donation from the Donahey family of \$250.00 to the Fire Department. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Rambo made the motion to approve the use of the \$250.00 donation for the Fire Department at the discretion of the Fire Chief. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ROAD DEPT: Mr. Layne mentioned he recently found out that on January 16th his facility will be audited by the EPA for a MS-4 audit. Mr. Rambo asked Mr. Layne once he finds out the time to please let the Trustees know and maybe one of them will try to attend it.

ACCEPT DONATION: *Mr. Mueller made the motion, based on the Fiscal Officer's recommendation, to accept the donation from George & Susan Baker of \$50.00 to the Road Department. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Mueller made the motion to approve the use of the \$50.00 donation for the Road Department at the discretion of the Road Superintendent. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

POLICE DEPT: Chief Swaidner stated that they sold the 2017 Police cruiser for \$8,300, which was more than the trade-in value.

ACCEPT DONATION: *Mr. Mueller made the motion, based on the Fiscal Officer's recommendation, to accept the donation from George & Susan Baker of \$50.00 to*

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the Police Department. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Mueller made the motion to approve the use of the \$50.00 donation for the Police Department at the discretion of the Police Chief. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ACCEPT DONATION: *Mr. Mueller made the motion, based on the Fiscal Officer's recommendation, to accept the donation from the Robert Kovey & family via Pershing Co/BNY Mellon Trust of \$500.00 to the Police Department. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Rambo made the motion to approve the use of the \$500.00 donation for the Police Department at the discretion of the Police Chief. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ACCEPT DONATION: *Mr. Mueller made the motion, based on the Fiscal Officer's recommendation, to accept the donation from the Donahey family of \$250.00 to the Police Department. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Mueller made the motion to approve the use of the \$250.00 donation for the Police Department at the discretion of the Police Chief. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ZONING DEPT: Ms. Port stated that she received a call from Mr. Philips that lives in Chagrin Heights and was concerned if the homes that were going to be built were going to be cluster homes. Ms. Port checked with Mr. Wrench, and he stated that they were not, and each home will have their own parcel and are subject to 35% coverage of lot. Ms. Port stated that Mr. Wrench is working with Water Resources regarding permitting and tie-ins for the parcels on Blackford and hoping to have more information for the February meeting.

FISCAL OFFICE: Mrs. Walder thanked the Police and Fire Department for their work on the truck rollover incident and appreciated keeping the Admin office up to date.

Mrs. Walder thanked her staff for getting temporary appropriations entered and getting 2024 POs and blankets opened.

Mrs. Walder stated that Jessica distributed a new requisition form for any general fund purchases. Jennifer noted that for all Department Heads, elected officials, and all employees, if you want a PO made, a requisition must be submitted.

Jennifer stated that Jessica will be sending out an email to everyone with an updated vendor packet, reminding everyone that vendor packets must be filled out before a PO can be made or an invoice paid. If anyone needs help, the Fiscal Office is more than happy to help.

Mrs. Walder stated that she forwarded a letter to the Trustees from the Geauga County Budget Commission thanking the board for taking action to mitigate the unvoted tax increase that resulted from the re-valuation.

Mrs. Walder stated that she sent out the annual benefit summary to each Department Head and Trustees that has the changes to our benefit plans. We are now set up with Principal, but ID cards will take 3-4 weeks to be mailed out.

Jennifer stated that if anyone needs a Vision or Dental card, please see her and she will issue a temporary one.

Mrs. Walder stated that she sent the Trustees the investment update from Meeder

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and total investment portfolio as the end of 2023 was \$8.3 million and weighted average maturity is 2.01 years, and weighted average yield is 2.22%.

Mrs. Walder stated that ClearGov virtual training is scheduled for January 16th at 2:00 pm and it will be recorded. Soon after that will get with each department and enter in 2024 projects.

Mrs. Walder said she will be submitting the Builder's Risk application to OTARMA, which will allow us to get pricing for the policy addition of the Community Building. Stated that Strollo has been very helpful in getting some of the information.

Mrs. Walder stated that the Township's 2024 OTA subscription is active and should have received an email letting everyone know.

Mrs. Walder stated that she will be working remotely from January 22 through February 2.

FO BC 100-2023: *Mr. Rambo made the motion, based on the Fiscal Officer's recommendation, to approve Blanket #100-2023, in the amount of \$307,377.00, the amount of which was above the \$45,000 limit and required trustee approval, and the transaction related to recording the Ambulance Lease-Purchase in the manner recommended by the Auditor of State. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to approve reasonable and necessary expenses for Jessica Ezzone to attend the Ohio Safety Congress and Expo March 27 – 29, 2024 in Columbus. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

ADP: MERAKI WIRELESS: Mrs. Walder stated that this was an action item from their quarterly meeting with ADP. This would replace the current Meraki's that are in the Administration Building that are not supported by the county and will be replaced with 2 new wireless units that are supported by ADP and will be able to report using our existing Meraki portal. Mrs. Walder stated that we would purchase the equipment and ADP would install it.

Mr. Mueller made the motion to approve the purchase of 2 Meraki access ports and their licenses, per quote number 064000, from Rhino Networks, dated January 2, 2024, for \$1,331.50. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC WERE RECEIVED

ACM: NOTICE TO COMMENCE WORK: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to approve the Notice to Commence Work document for ACM Construction Management, LLC for the Russell Township Community Meeting Building Project dated January 8, 2024, and authorizing Matthew Rambo to act as signatory on behalf of the Russell Township Board of Trustees. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and the vote is as follows: Mr. Mueller abstained; Ms. Port yes; Mr. Rambo yes, and the motion passed.*

ACM: PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT NOTICE: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to authorize Matthew Rambo to act as signatory on behalf of the Russell Township Board of Trustees for the notice of Commencement of a Public Improvement document for the Russell Township Community Meeting Building Project. Ms. Port seconded the motion, and the vote is as follows: Mr. Mueller abstained; Ms. Port yes; Mr. Rambo yes, and the motion passed.*

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GEAUGA COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to appoint Jim Mueller the Township representative to the Health District Advisory Council. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Ms. Port made the motion to appoint Matthew Rambo the alternate Township representative to the Health District Advisory Council. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

CHAGRIN RIVER WATERSHED PARTNERS: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to appoint Kristina Port as the Township representative to the Chagrin River Watershed Partners. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Mueller made the motion to appoint Kristina Port as the alternate Township representative to the Chagrin River Watershed Partners. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to appoint Kristina Port as Township representative to the Storm Water Management Program. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

HAZMAT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to appoint Jim Mueller as Trustee representative to the HAZMAT Council of Governments. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

CVIGC: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to appoint Jim Mueller as the Trustee representative to the Chagrin Valley Intergovernmental Council. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

OPBA: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to appoint Matthew Rambo as the Trustee representative to the Ohio Patrolman's Benevolent Association township management committee. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

VERCOG: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to appoint Jim Mueller as the Trustee representative to the Valley Enforcement Regional Council of Governments. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

WG DCC: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to appoint Kristina Port as the Trustee representative to the West Geauga District Communications Committee. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

GOV DEALS RESOLUTION: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to approve Resolution 2024-1 Authorizing the Use of Internet Auction for Disposition of Township Property. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

EXECUTIVE SESSION: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to move into executive session to discuss the employment and compensation of public employee pursuant to ORC 121.22 (G) (1). Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

The meeting moved into executive session at 3:23 pm.

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Ms. Port made the motion to return to regular session. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting moved to regular session at 3:26 pm.

REHIRE COMPENSATORY TIME REQUEST: GENE LAYNE: *Mr. Mueller made the motion to authorize 120 hours of compensatory time for Mr. Gene Layne per his annual request for 2024 based on his rehire agreement. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

PURCHASE ORDERS AND BILLS WERE APPROVED AS ATTACHED.

Mr. Rambo made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:27 pm.

Kristina Port, Chair

Karen Walder, Fiscal Officer

Recorded by: J. Ezzone