



**TRUSTEES:** Jerry Mayfield 419.729.1167  
Don Barto, Sr. 517.581.6871  
Mark Schuster 419.466.9884

**FISCAL OFFICER:** Michele Nowakowski 419.410.8304

2469 Shoreland Avenue, Toledo, OH 43611, 419.726.6621, Fax 419.727.9833 <http://www.washington-twp.com>

## REGULAR MEETING January 14, 2025

Mr. Mayfield called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Schuster, yes; Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes.

### **Also Present:**

**Fiscal Officer** – Michele Nowakowski

**Township Administrator** – Leo Britton

### **Department Heads Present:**

Fire – Chief Bailey

Police – Chief Kaiser and Deputy Chief Hart

Roads and Parks Superintendent – Ryan Breininger

### **Announcements from Trustees and Department Heads:**

#### **Mr. Schuster - Trustee**

- Thanked all who came out and celebrated New Year's Eve.
- Mr. Schuster wanted to let the audience know, and to be transparent, that they needed someone on the Board to nominate one of the trustees for the Chair for the Board of Trustees for 2025. Both Mr. Mayfield and Mr. Barto wanted the position so Mr. Schuster, knowing both trustees wanted it, felt both would be great for the position but didn't want to have to pick between the two. Mr. Schuster, instead of having to pick one over the other, wrote both their names on a piece of paper and had Mr. Mayfield (since he was the current Chair) draw one of the names. The name that was drawn was Mr. Mayfield. Mr. Barto will be Vice Chair.
- Mr. Schuster gave an opening prayer.

#### **Mr. Barto – Trustee**

- Stated that over the weekend there was a water rescue and Mark Schuster, Jr., who is a member of the Township Fire Department, happened to be at the right place at the right time, and helped someone in need on the ice. He expressed his thanks to him.

#### **Chief Bailey - Fire**

- Has two members on the department who are advancing their fire career by taking Fire One and it should be paid for by the state and will be free to them. They will receive a Certificate for Fire One status when completed.

#### **Leo Britton – Township Administrator**

- Wants employees to be careful with their emails. We have been receiving a lot of spam emails that look like a message from someone within our organization.

**Ryan Breininger – Roads and Park Department**

- Thanked those who moved their cars so he was able to plow the snow.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**FINANCE**

**MOTION: Approve supplemental appropriations, blanket certificates, purchase orders and checks numbered 1499 to 1621 (for year 2024) & 1 through 57 (for year 2025) totaling \$196,602.14; \$99,390.91 for accounting, \$97,211.23 for Payroll.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Schuster, yes; Mr. Barto, yes.

**POLICE**

**MOTION: To approve Patrolman Thomas Gearheart to carry over his 24-hour vacation time from 2024.**

Being new, Patrolman Gearheart didn't understand how vacation time worked. He was confused about how much time he had left at the end of the year.

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes; Mr. Schuster, yes.

**MOTION: To approve the change of status for Patrolman Joe Gill from full-time to part-time status effective February 2, 2025. He has accepted a full-time job with another department.**

Mr. Barto asks if we want to make this motion or hold off until next month to discuss with him to stay on as full time. Chief Kaiser and Deputy Chief Hart want to move forward with motion as it stands; an officer cannot hold two full-time positions at the same time.

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes; Mr. Schuster, yes.

**FIRE**

**MOTION: Approve change of status for Michael Tolles from EMT to Paramedic, effective January 20, 2025. Chief Bailey will get Fiscal Officer the change of status form with updated pay rate.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Schuster, yes; Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes.

**MOTION: Acknowledge Gabe Baldwin's probationary period as complete and recognize him as a badged member, effective January 20, 2025, with a pay increase from \$15.00 to \$17.00.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Schuster, yes; Mr. Barto, yes; Mr. Barto, yes.

**MOTION: Approve payment of ESO Invoice #159150 for EMS1 Academy (fire dept. continuing education program), in the amount of \$2,041.26.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Schuster, yes; Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes.

**Discuss a shift differential of \$5 per hour for overnight calls: Hours from 12:00 am. to 8:00 am.**

Mr. Brittson will add line in TruPay for Mrs. Nowakowski to accurately keep track of this and to add pay difference for those times.

**MOTION: Approve shift differential pay per hour of \$5.00 between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. for Washington Township Fire Department.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded

Roll Call: Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes; Mr. Schuster, yes.

**Discuss the purchase of an 18 ft. Ice & Water Rescue Airboat, with Load Rite trailer from Duck Water Boats, Inc., in the amount of \$69,800.00; \$27,861.00 from the General Fund and \$41,938.54 from the Fire Fund.**

Chief Bailey states they have had hovercrafts in the past. The fire department feels there is a need to help with water and ice rescue for the residents and the surrounding area as well. They looked at hovercrafts that they have had in the past that were actually recreational style hovercrafts that were converted and used for rescue. They weren't meant or designed to do so. He feels they came with shortcomings because of that.

They did some research and evaluated different types of rescue devices: hovercrafts, jet ski-styles, snowmobiles that have attachments, and four wheelers that can have flotation added to them.

What they came up with is what most people in the region are using, which are fan boats or airboats. Narrowing it down, Chief said he worked on getting quotes on the different boats. He received one estimate from a company out of Texas that does a lot of rescue-style airboats. They came in at just under \$130,000.00 with a trailer that would do the job. That was more of a swamp-style water airboat.

He checked into the pontoon-style airboat from Mexico. He hasn't received a quote back on those, but the base price was around \$130,000.00. Chief thinks the salesperson got the idea that it was out of their price range.

Chief Bailey spoke to Water Boats, in New Philadelphia, Ohio, and thinks it would be nice to use someone that is just a few hours away. He has pictures and videos of this company's rescue boats that are currently used by sheriffs and fire departments. He spoke to some of the chiefs that have this unit and they had nothing but good things to say about the equipment.

The manufacturer could make a brand new 18-foot, ice/water airboat with full enclosed cabin with two captain seats, one bench, 50-gallon fuel tank, and 6.0 Levitator LS motor, and high drive belt. He would also like to get a Load Rite Trailer with Coast Guard satisfactory lights and a fire department light bar. The price for all that came in at \$69,800.00. Chief Bailey feels this is the one that best fits their needs. He feels that, because this is a boating community, this would provide a unit that allows them to respond to rescue calls on the ice/water.

Chief said if people are wondering why we need it, he is happy to answer any questions. He feels we are a boating community there are people out on the ice - as referenced earlier - and people are going through the ice. He knows people are asking why is tiny little Washington Township is taking on the burden of this purchase? He states we are not a joint fire district. Washington Township set a precedent by having two hovercrafts here, on the edge of the rivers and the lakes, and having many successful rescues with them. People and other departments planned for the future based on us having that equipment. What they received was an email stating that we were no longer participating in that, and that the equipment was sold. They weren't given lead time to make adjustments to do so.

The surrounding departments - us, City of Toledo, Jerusalem Township, and Oregon - already made plans for the future based on us having that equipment and taking care of that "piece of the pie." When we sold the equipment, it left a void. Chief Bailey thinks Toledo Fire has a 42- and 52-foot fire boat that can go in deep water, and will do everything they need if there's a fire on a boat, or on one of the large ships that go through the channel or a fire on one of the islands.

Jerusalem Township has a dive team that does some surface rescue, below water/ice-level rescue, and recovery. Chief states that the township has looked into dive team training but it is really expensive; we haven't been able to afford it in the past and does not see it happening in the future. That's Jerusalem's "piece of the pie." Oregon just requested their city council purchase something to cover out their way. That is why Chief Bailey would like to have a piece of equipment to help out in this area for ice and water rescue. It would be much better and more reliable than what they had before. He was told that the company could have one ready for him in a month.

Mr. Mayfield stated that, about a year ago, a Motion was made to get rid of the last hovercraft in one meeting and, within a few hours, they were sold. He feels there was no due process done. It was said that the hovercrafts had problems - that they were water-logged. Mr. Schuster and his son went out and looked at them and they looked fine. He feels they rushed to judgement on getting rid of them.

Mr. Mayfield is asking that they do not handle purchasing something like this, and rushing it, by making a decision tonight. He feels the Coast Guard will end up reopening and feels that Washington Township should not take on this expense. Oregon has a large budget and they do not own a boat. He does not feel comfortable with Washington Township residents picking up that large bill. He just wants them to take the time and look into grants, or getting some kind of help from federal government by reaching out to our representatives. There are a lot of discrepancies and confusion on whose responsibility it is to cover the waterways and islands. He doesn't mind starting the conversation about purchasing something but doesn't want to rush into making the decision tonight to purchase one.

Mr. Schuster stated he was never for selling the old hovercrafts. He feels it is our responsibility to offer life-saving services on the river and we need a piece of equipment to provide those services. He is surprised how reasonable the proposal was that Chief Bailey received for the boat. Mr. Schuster is in favor of moving forward this evening to make a motion to purchase the new boat. Mr. Schuster expressed how thankful he was that his son was out there with his airboat when the person was in distress and needed to be pulled out of the water/ice; everybody said the guy would have died.

Mr. Barto asked Fiscal Officer Mrs. Nowakowski if they did budget for 2025 the purchase of a boat? She replied yes, it was budgeted.

Mr. Barto explained the cost of the boat for township taxpayers, spread out over the life of the boat, and he doesn't want to put a price tag on a human life. He would like to go ahead and make a motion to purchase. Chief Bailey has received the three quotes required before a purchase of that amount is made.

Chief Bailey explained that residents would not be billed for rescue service; non-residents would be billed for any rescue service.

**MOTION: To approve spending up to \$69,800.00 to Duck Water Boats, Inc. to purchase an 18-foot ice and water rescue boat: \$27,861.00 from the General Fund and \$41,938.54 from the Fire Fund.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Schuster seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Mayfield, no; Mr. Barto, yes; Mr. Schuster, yes.

Regarding the above discussion and Motion made, Mrs. Nowakowski would like to bring to Chief Bailey's attention that the fire department has \$70,000.00 total capital budgeted for the whole year. This is going to take a big chunk of it out and she just wanted him to be aware. Chief Bailey stated it is well worth it.

Laura Wishart asked questions regarding the airboat: she wanted to know if our fire department personnel are trained to operate the airboat, and if they are trained in ice rescue? She expressed concern about putting our people at risk when they are not trained. Chief Bailey explained that training will be provided with delivery of the airboat and that our fire personnel are trained from level 1 to level 3 rescue, and level 4 operators for ice and water.

### **TRUSTEES**

**MOTION: Approve Minutes from December 10, 2024 Regular Meeting.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Schuster, yes; Mr. Barto, yes.

**MOTION: Reappoint Becky Bodette as Zoning Alternate for 2025.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll call: Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes; Mr. Schuster, yes.

**MOTION: Approve Annual Township Highway System Mileage Certification – 10.909 miles.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call; Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes; Mr. Schuster, yes.

**RESOLUTION #03:25: Declaring property located at 2940 Northshore a nuisance, under 1308 (D) of the zoning code, 7-day notice.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes; Mr. Schuster, yes.

**MOTION: Enter into Executive Session at 7:02 p.m. under 121.22(G)(1): To consider the employment and/or compensation of public employee.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Schuster, yes; Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes.

**MOTION: Return from Executive Session at 7:54.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Schuster, yes; Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes.

**MOTION: To give Police Officers, Command Officer Eric Hart, and Elected Officials Assistant a 5% pay raise, effective pay period starting January 20, 2025.**

Chief Kaiser offered not to take a raise so his officers could have one. Mr. Mayfield appreciated that, but felt he should still receive one.

Fiscal Officer Michele Nowakowski stated she is "red flagging" the police fund; she stays strong on it. Chief Kaiser stated he would like more time off instead of a raise. Mr. Mayfield said they can discuss that and table that until the next meeting.

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Schuster, yes; Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes.

**MOTION: To increase Ryan Breininger hourly rate \$26.00, effective pay period starting January 20, 2025.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Schuster, yes; Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Barto, yes.

Mr. Schuster stated for the record that the trustees offered Mr. Brittson a raise but he declined it. He expressed his thanks to both Mr. Brittson and Chief Kaiser.

**DELEGATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Laura Wishart, 2611 Point Pleasant Way**

Would like to know if there is any update on the audit? She remembers the fiscal officer stating a few months back that we had to pay the invoice. Mr. Mayfield stated there are no updates.

**With no additional business or comments, Mr. Mayfield adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Barto seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Mayfield, yes; Mr. Schuster, yes; Mr. Barto yes.

Approved:



---

Jerry Mayfield



---

Don Barto, Sr.



---

Mark Schuster



---

Kimberly Kay