



**TRUSTEES:** Don Barto, Sr. 517.581.6871  
Jerry Mayfield 419.729.1167  
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 FEBRUARY 10, 2026

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

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

Pledge of Allegiance

### **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**

- Mr. Schuster delivered the opening prayer.

#### **Mr. Mayfield - Trustee**

- Mr. and Mrs. Mayfield have created a new informational township brochure. It will be mailed out to new residents that move into the township. Mr. Mayfield states there is no way to keep track of renters that move into the township so if anyone is aware of any please let them know so they can get them a brochure. Copies of the brochure will also be located in the lobby of the administration office as well.

#### **Mr. Barto - Trustee**

- Mr. Barto attended a conference in Columbus regarding the abolishment of property taxes in the State of Ohio. Governor DeWine also spoke on this topic. Mr. Barto is working with Mrs. Nowakowski to put some real time percentages together and is planning on having an informational meeting for residents in the near future to present the facts on where the township stands on this issue.

#### **Chief Bailey – Fire Department**

- Chief Bailey announced that the fire department had their 2025 Awards Ceremony. There were four awards that were given out:

**Boot (Rookie) of the Year Award** which is for a new member went to Firefighter/EMT Dustin Moon.

**Best Attendance Award - most number of calls made by a black hat (non-officer)** went to Dustin Moon.

**Best Attendance Award - most number of calls made by an officer** went to Assistant Chief Bill Long.

**Member of the Year Award** - went to Bailee Markowiak. This award was voted on by her peers.

### **Chief Kaiser – Police Department**

- Chief Kaiser states all officers were fitted for their bullet proof vest. Also new department hand guns were issued and all officers qualified with the new guns.
- Chief Kaiser states they had a department meeting and gave out awards to their officers:

**Meritorious Conduct Award** went to Officer Tom Fall and Officer Terry Picking.

**Police Commendation Award** went to Officer Tom Gearheart and Officer Andrew Whitmore.

**Medal of Valor Award** went to Officer Joe Gill and Officer Tom Fall. Final award was the Award of Excellence and that went to Andrew Whitmore.

**Award of Excellence** went to Andrew Whitmore.

### **Michele Nowakowski – Fiscal Officer**

- Attended Ohio Township Association Conference in Columbus.

### **Fiscal Business**

**MOTION: Approve supplemental appropriations, blanket certificates, purchase orders and checks numbered 51461 to 51487 and electronic payments numbered 66 through 151, totaling \$119,340.23; \$76,966.54 for accounting, \$42,373.69 for payroll.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

**MOTION: Approve \$12,000.00 payment to DR Ebel for outfitting 2015 Ford Explorer.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

**RESOLUTUION 08:26: Approve to move \$12,000.00 from General Fund to 2191 Fund to pay DR Ebel.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

**MOTION: Approve Superior Uniform Invoice for \$185.99.**

**Boots for Officer Joe Gill. Mr. Mayfield states there is a uniform policy that covers that but it wasn't totally in place then so they are making a one-time exception for the purchase.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

**MOTION: Approve reimbursement of \$82.55 to Don Barto for supplies he purchased for the Township Tree Lighting Ceremony.**

Mr. Mayfield moved; Mr. Schuster seconded.

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

**Discuss BWC Substance Use Preventative Program.**

Mr. Barto states Mrs. Nowakowski brought this to his attention. He will let her explain what it is. Mrs. Nowakowski explains right now we are in the reimbursement program but if we would go with a basic program then we would have more requirements to do and we would have to do it annually. If we would switch, we would get 2% more in rebate money for BWC. Right now, we get 2% it would bump it up to 4%. If they would do that there would be quite a bit involved. There would be training done annually for the employees and there's a charge for that. However, they say we would be reimbursed but she wasn't sure about that. She wasn't sure if it was a vendor type of thing for a sales pitch or what their intent was.

It is up to us ultimately what kind of program we want through BWC. Right now, we are in the reimbursement program. Mr. Schuster states it sounds like any training we would do for our employees we would have to pay them so he doesn't feel like we would be really getting a head even with the additional 2% back because of having to pay all the employees to take the training. Mrs. Nowakowski states they would reimburse us for the training but not for the cost of paying employees to take it. Also, next level would include random drug testing which would cost us as well. They also would want us to look at our policy too. Mr. Barto ask if anyone is interested in making a motion to switch? Mr. Mayfield states he has no interest. Mr. Schuster is not and feels it is just going to cost us more money in the long run. Mr. Barto agrees with both.

### **Trustee Business**

**MOTION: Approve Minutes from Regular Meeting of January 13, 2026.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Schuster seconded.

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

**RESCIND MOTION that was made for Uniform Policy. Should have been a Resolution.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

**Discussion regarding uniform policy.**

Mr. Schuster asks what is different from what we had in the previous policy? Mr. Barto states there was no footwear involved in that policy.

Mr. Schuster asks why are we approving a boot purchase then? Mr. Mayfield states there was a confusion with the policy at the time.

Mr. Schuster states whether it was the previous policy or the new policy they should have only been allowed to purchase a shoe/boot up to \$100.00. Why did we make a motion to approve the purchase of \$185.99. Deputy Chief Hart states they should check the Lexi Pol Policy that there is a contradiction there. It states that the township will provide boots under safety equipment.

It doesn't state anything regarding the purchase for a part time or full-time employee.

Mr. Barto says the policy hasn't been clear for a while. That's why we are trying to get this straight and put it in writing so everyone knows where it stands. Chief Bailey feels all his employees should be allowed the \$100.00 for or towards the purchase of new shoes.

**RESOLUTION #09:26: Amend Policy 618.4 Uniforms and Shoes Section F.**

Shoes shall be provided for department heads, assistant chiefs, and full-time employees as needed. Part-time employees may purchase shoes, submit their receipt and proof of payment, and be reimbursed up to \$100.00 (excluding tax), per budget year.

Mr. Mayfield states that is part of the changes there are a few other smaller changes in there too.

Mr. Schuster states when I am reading this am I correct in saying that it says that department heads, assistant chiefs and full-time employees can spend as much as they want because that's the way it reads? Mr. Mayfield states yes that's the way it reads. Mr. Brittson states well if there's other changes in there you have to put that in the Resolution. Mr. Mayfield states we are approving entire policy. Mr. Brittson states then you have to read the entire policy. Mr. Mayfield states its three, five pages we don't read the whole policy. Mr. Barto states we just have to read what we are changing.

Mr. Schuster ask if there is going to be a cap on shoe/boot purchase. Mr. Barto states there is not but we can make one. Mr. Schuster would like to suggest a \$200.00 limit for full time and department heads and if you are wanting to include part time, which would be all fire department. But he feels there should be something that specifies you have to have a year of service in because someone could be a new recruit and come in and buy a pair of boots and three weeks later leave. He would like to have it say they have to have 12 months of service in first before they are able to get shoes/boots. He feels this probably isn't in anyone's budget. Chief Bailey states that's totally fair. Mr. Brittson states you could just say after their probation is over. Mr. Schuster ask trustees if their ok with \$200.00 cap. They replied yes, they are.

Mr. Barto wants to amend the previous start of the Resolution:

**RESOLUTION #09:26: Policy 618.4 Uniforms and Shoes Section F.** Shoes shall be provided for department heads, assistant chiefs, and full-time employees as needed, up to a \$200.00 limit, and upon completion of their probationary period. Part-time employees may purchase shoes, submit their receipt and proof of payment, and be reimbursed up to \$100.00 (excluding tax), per budget year.

Mr. Mayfield would like to add that they are approving the entire policy and that is the part of the changes in it and are approving this sheet of paper with changes in it.

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

**Discuss health insurance renewal.**

Mr. Barto ask Mr. Brittson to discuss the health insurance renewal. Mr. Brittson states that an email and information was sent out for eligible employees to go onto Form Fire and fill out needed information.

After RJ from Savage and Associates receives notification that all employees that are eligible have completed Form Fire, he will begin to gather quotes from insurance companies to present to us to decide what company and plan we would like to go with.

**Discussion regarding Levies.**

Mr. Barto states that Mrs. Nowakowski and himself have discussed putting a potential levy on the ballot. He would like to open up a discussion to see how everyone else feels about it.

Mrs. Nowakowski states for one it kind of depends on if they abolish property taxes. She has been talking to police regarding them needing to put levy on the ballot for several years now. The tow lot revenue is what is keeping them going and all the forfeited cars they are selling. If they didn't have that they wouldn't be doing well at all, they wouldn't be. She states she has been talking to them about it for several years now.

They even talked about doing a 911 Levy because that amount was put on departments and forced upon. That was a big expense for the departments to take on. For police it was around \$76,000.00 they had to pay last year. That's at a 100%. Fire had to pay around \$29,000.00 or close to it. She states that is a lot of money when they weren't counting on that in their budget and then they are expected to pay but yet we are not getting any more property tax money to help pay these bills. We had to pay it with what budget we had to work with already.

Mr. Barto asked the other trustees what their thoughts were on it? Mr. Mayfield feels it is not a good time to put on a levy. Mr. Schuster thinks a 911 Levy makes more sense than a police or fire levy because people are going to say we are already paying a police levy but the 911 is a total new cost that has come up that they have never had to absorb before. He feels educating the people regarding what got dumped on us, what it is costing us and what we need to raise to keep these departments sustainable for the future is the way to go. It is all how we market it. But he feels some people will say enough is enough and won't support a levy. Deputy Chief Hart agrees with Mr. Schuster. He states the overall view of a public safety levy instead of an individual levy for police and fire would go over better. Chief Bailey states his portion is minimal to him. He feels there is a greater discussion at hand. Trying to put a name or number on it without doing research as to what it will cost residents is premature. He would like to know exactly how much and has been asking prior to this conversation, about exactly how much each resident per \$100,000.00 pays towards his fire department. He would like to educate the public what it is going to take to pay for his fire department to sustain for the future. He feels the future needs to build in full time or at least a modified part time staff, \$29,000.00 will not change his life in the fire department. He can cover his 911 bill. He has been and is still staying in the black. Recruiting and retaining individuals that's another story. Chief Bailey says that it will take a larger levy and needs to be discussed with residents and how they are going to want to proceed for the future for fire suppression in this community and Ems.

Mr. Barto states we do need to discuss all of this and start now because the deadline to submit everything for a levy will come up soon. Mr. Schuster thinks we need to let the tax payers decide. Put a levy out there. He likes the way that Deputy Chief Hart is wording it. If the residents want to continue to support the departments, then it will be voted positively and if they think they are paying too much already and not receiving what they are paying for it will get turned down. Ultimately the residents are making the choices. If we don't put it out there as a levy, we will continue the way we are.

Mrs. Nowakowski states that if the department heads have an idea on how much extra money, they need the budget commission and the county can help us with the millage amount. They have formulas and can calculate it for us if we can come up with a number that you're looking at. Mr. Mayfield feels that a public safety levy would go over better. Mr. Schuster still feels like they need to just put it out there and see what happens. He says let the people decide that's who they are representing. Chief Bailey would like to gather the information and have some informational town hall meetings to be able to hear from the residents. He would like the opportunity to state the fire departments needs and give the residents the information before just putting a levy out there.

Mrs. Nowakowski is going to reach out to the county and gather the information before starting the process.

## **POLICE**

### **Discuss additional cost of bullet proof vest purchase.**

Mrs. Nowakowski states it was approved last June not to exceed \$15,000.00 for the purchase of the bullet proof vest. According to Chief Kaisers report the bullet proof vests invoice from Superior Uniform came back at \$15,787.50 which is a difference of \$787.50. We will be getting a credit from the state but in order to pay the invoice Mrs. Nowakowski states she will need the additional \$787.50 approved because the original motion only approved \$15,000.00 to pay. Mr. Schuster questions why they went up from the original quote. Chief Kaiser states it didn't. In the end it won't be more than \$15,000.00 he states. Mrs. Nowakowski states Chief Kaiser stated it was \$15,787.50 so she needs a motion to approve to pay the difference. He's not sure where he got that amount. Mrs. Nowakowski states you said you got it of the quote. He doesn't recall that. He thinks it will be less. Trustees agree to make motion to make sure its covered. Mr. Schuster doesn't understand why they don't know where the increase came from.

### **MOTION: Approve an additional \$787.50 to cover the cost of the bullet proof vest if needed.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

### **MOTION: Enter into Executive Session at 6:59 p.m. per ORC 121.22(G)(1) to discuss employment of a public employee and ORC 121.22(G)(4)**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

### **MOTION: Return from Executive Session: 7:19 p.m.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded

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

Discussed potential employment of Derrick Canales to the Washington Township Fire Department.

**MOTION: To hire Derrick Canales to the Washington Township Fire Department effective 2/20/2026 as a probationary member at a pay rate of \$15.00.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

**MOTION: With no additional business or comments, Mr. Barto moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 p.m.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

APPROVED:



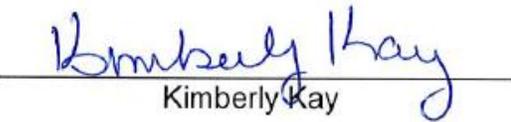
Don Barto



Mark Schuster



Jerry Mayfield



Kimberly Kay