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## REGULAR MEETING MARCH 10, 2026

Mr. Barto called the meeting to order at 6:01 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

Roads and Parks Superintendent – Ryan Breininger

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

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

- Mr. Schuster asks resident Barb Kingsley to do the opening prayer.

#### **Mr. Barto – Trustee**

- Mr. Barto states that himself and Mr. Britton met with Dana Clark with the Port Authority. They had a discussion regarding options for the two vacant properties in the township. One is located on Summit Street and one is on Suder Avenue. The discussion was regarding possible ways to market these two properties to attract potential buyers. Mr. Barto explains the property on Summit Street is the property between Rudy's and the Dr's office on the corner. It tends to be an eye sore. The grass is never kept up with. The township is always having to go there and cut and clean up the property. If we were to get that property developed, have something go in there, doesn't matter what, it would help our tax base coming in to the township. The property on Suder would help in that aspect as well.

Also, in the discussion with Dana Clark they were also made aware of that the Port Authority is working with government entities in the area to renovate and update area fire stations and other municipal buildings. Two things that stood out to Mr. Barto that the township could use assistance with is a new HVAC System, ours needs replaced, and a backup generator. He feels it might be something worth looking into.

**Ryan Breininger – Road and Park Superintendent**

- Will be starting to work on pot holes.

**Fiscal Business**

**MOTION: Approve supplemental appropriations, blanket certificates, purchase orders and checks numbered 51488 to 51528 and electronic payments numbered 152 through 366, totaling \$153,639.22; \$51,886.97 for accounting, \$101,752.25 for payroll.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

**RESOLUTUION 10:26: Amend policy 618.4 (F) to include the verbiage for part time employees to say per budget year and upon completion of their probationary period.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

Mr. Barto asked Mrs. Nowakowski before he makes a Resolution declaring necessity to levy a tax to explain this. Mrs. Nowakowski states that at the last meeting there was some confusion when it came to what a Mill was. She put together a packet of information regarding this. It was requested from her to find out what the millage would be for \$125,000.00, \$250,000.00 and \$375,000.00 revenue. The following would be for a:

<u>Millage</u>	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Annual Cost Per Homeowner</u> <u>(Based on \$100,000 home)</u>
2.01	\$125,000	\$ 70.00
4.01	\$250,000	\$140.00
6.02	\$375,000	\$211.00

**These were the amounts she was asked to bring to the Board**

A Mill comes from a Latin derivative that means thousandth. 1 Mill is the equivalent of 1/1000. When applied to taxes, a Mill of tax is \$1 per \$1,000 of taxable (assessed) value.

The assessed value is 35% of the appraised value. On a \$100,000 home the calculations are as follows:

\$100,000 x 35% = \$35,000 Assessed Value

\$35,000 divided by 1,000 = \$35 (Per Mill)

\$35 x millage = Annual Cost

Mrs. Nowakowski also created spread sheets because they were trying to decide how much revenue they should ask for. Police and Fire right now have continuing levies. Continuing levies do not have to be voted on all the time because they are continuing, they don't term out. The problem is they do not keep up with inflation. That revenue when they were voted on that's how much they will get from that point forward.

Police have levies that were passed in 1983. That was 43 years ago. The dollar value on that one levy today it would have to be \$3.32 to equal that \$1.00 of revenue back in 1983. These continuing levies do not keep up with inflation but we have to keep operating on that same amount of revenue that is coming in. Mrs. Nowakowski states it's a real struggle. That's our main source of revenue. The last levy that was approved for police was in 2009 for 2.5 Mil. At that time, it was enough to sustain them. In 2015 they got the tow lot established. That brought in revenue which they were hoping to use for extra things like new police cars. The tow lot today is taking care of only the needed expenses that the levies are not keeping up with. The tow lot revenue is not revenue that they can count on. It's not consistent and it's not something they are guaranteed on like a levy.

Fire has a continuing levy that was made in 2004 which is 22 years old. They also have two levies that were just made continuing from term which brought in the same revenue as before when they weren't continuing. That was done in 2023. Since 2023 the dollar value has raised nine cents. The inflation is already up 8.26% for fire.

Mr. Barto feels we have to take a look at all this and come up with what we want to go with. There's a lot of back and forth before it gets on the ballot so you have to have this ready to go by the deadline which they think might be in July.

Chief Bailey would like to go to the residents and ask them their thoughts. Chief Bailey's plan would not only be to get funding to try to cover the cost of the 911 Bill which is \$29,000.00 a year for just the fire department. \$29,000.00 will not change or shape the outlook or footprint of the fire department for the future. He feels that the fire department which is running on a volunteer style will eventually go away. It will not sustain forever. He put two years into developing the staff and crews, getting young people involved, creating a family atmosphere and they have brought plenty of people in. Chief Bailey states that the underline factor is you cannot continue to pay these people \$15.00 an hour and expect them to save lives. They also have growing families of their own. Paying for the cost of taking care of their families at \$15.00 an hour just doesn't cut it. They are having to take other opportunities for jobs that the rate of pay is anywhere from \$22.00 - \$25.00 an hour or higher. We have to be able to stay with these competitive wages.

Operating his budget per year is just around \$400,000.00. He states that if you look at your taxes you will notice that 51% of it goes to Washington Local School District as opposed to your emergency services whether it be police or fire. He feels that the sustainability of EMS Services for this Township and its residents to call 911 and get two trained individuals to come assist you needs to have a part time staffing model. Two people here 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. He doesn't feel that this is impossible to do. That's the delivery that all of the other departments are facing and struggling with in the country. Over 80% of the departments are still volunteer nature. They are not like the City of Toledo but they have to try to move in that direction unless they are 100% rural which we are not. In order to be able to try and do that you look at the millage/numbers that Mrs. Nowakowski have got us. Chief Bailey believes they would be in the range of eight to ten Mills. He is a resident he knows it seems like a shocking number. But to have two people on shift here at \$25.00 an hour rate, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week we would require \$438,000.00 a year. In order to achieve that plus increasing some supervisory staff to look after a part time crew that's here full-time hours that would be rolled into that as well.

That would take the average home buyer at \$100,000.00 assessed value to \$281.00 per year which comes to \$11.00 a week. \$11.00 a week is nothing to be able to have emergency services available to come to you in a time of need.

Mr. Schuster asks what type of levy police are looking to ask for? Mrs. Nowakowski states that they did not give her any numbers yet as to what they think they need. Chief Kaiser states he just saw this information this afternoon. He has not had a chance to discuss yet with Deputy Chief Hart. He thanks Mrs. Nowakowski for putting all of this information together regarding the levies. He states for examples about money and dollars brought in years ago they bought two police cars in 2013 they paid \$22,000.00 apiece. Today they can't even touch one car for \$44,000.00. He states there is a lot of new expenses they have now to pay for since the last levy. The 911 bill, tasers, body cams, health and auto insurance has gone up that's just a few. They are taking the same amount of money in and now have all these new added expenses.

It's hard to continue to operate on 2009 set funding. He states he has made a lot of cuts. Court time continues to be a high expense too even though they try not to pay officers to go downtown at an overtime rate. The tow lot helps a lot. Mrs. Nowakowski states the tow lot brought in about \$220,000.00 in 2025. Mr. Schuster states overall it will be hard for these departments to sustain if they cannot pass a levy and are forced to have to operate with funds from levies from years ago.

Mr. Barto states we will have to discuss this further through the month. Maybe have a couple meetings and come up with definite ways on moving forward with this and put it on next month's agenda.

#### **Discuss elected officials pay raises.**

Mr. Barto asks Mrs. Nowakowski if she wants to explain this. Mrs. Nowakowski states she doesn't feel it is necessary its by statute, everything is transparent. Mr. Barto states just so everyone is aware and to be transparent him and Mr. Schuster received a 5% pay increase when they were reelected. It is state mandated.

#### **Trustee Business**

#### **MOTION: Approve Minutes from Regular Meeting of February 10, 2026.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

#### **Discuss state funding for capital improvements at Shoreland Park.**

Mr. Barto is going to fill out the application for the grant. The suggestion was to put a walking path around Shoreland Park. Many residents have mentioned this idea to Mr. Barto. Mr. Breininger is getting three estimates for Mr. Barto for the cost of the walking path. Mr. Schuster is more interested in getting a nice parking lot done. Mr. Barto states that is not one of the items you can use the state funding grant for. We will apply for it and they will let us know what they will give us towards it.

#### **Discuss acquiring 6031 Bridgeview property.**

Mr. Brittson stated that we were approached from the property owner of 6031 Bridgeview if the township was interested in purchasing the vacant land in Point Pleasant Cove. We are going to do some further research on it.

## Roads

**MOTION: Approve the purchase of a 2023 JCB 3CX-12 Compact Pro Backhoe Loader with 256 hours in the amount of \$71,000.00. \$68,000.00 for the Back Hoe and \$3,000.00 for the delivery cost.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded

Mr. Brittson's concern is that we are going to spend \$72,000.00 on a backhoe and then we are going to put a levy on. Mr. Brittson states in December we discussed that we weren't sure what was going to happen with the property taxes and we shouldn't make any purchases unless we absolutely need to. He is wondering if something has changed on that. He's confused why we would make this big purchase. Mr. Barto explains that we have been discussing purchasing a backhoe for two years. He states this is something we definitely need. We discussed this and have been looking at different options.

Mr. Brittson wants to make sure we have someone that is equipped to operate it.

Mr. Breininger states he is. He states he has a license to operate heavy equipment.

Mr. Schuster was thinking about that as well but feels that the road/park department has the money to purchase it. If it was one of the other departments it would be questionable. Mr. Brittson feels we could still find something cheaper. Mr. Schuster does agree with Mr. Brittson and sees where he is coming from.

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

**RESOLUTION #11:26: To spend \$64,000.00 on the backhoe out of the 2021 Fund Supplemental Appropriation.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

Mr. Barto would like to see a Spring Cleanup for the Township. Mr. Breininger would like to see a leaf pickup done as well. Mr. Barto would like Mr. Breininger to get him some dates and he will post it on the website and Facebook. Needs to be limited to small brush.

## Zoning

**Discuss ongoing blight issues at Raintree Village.**

Chief Kaiser states that Raintree Village has been let go for a while now but it is really bad. Some people are trying to keep it up. There are like 90 lots that are vacate. Mr. Barto wants to go with Mr. Brittson and drive through there and try to get it cleaned up.

Mr. Mayfield thinks we should see if we can talk to the prosecutor and go after the park owners and hold them responsible.

**Resolution #12:26: for 5330 Belpre 1308 (D).**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded

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

**Resolution #13:26: for 5324 Belpre 1308 (D).**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded

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

**Resolution #14:26: for 6230 Capshore 1325.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded

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

**Resolution #15:26: for 6128 Suder 1801 (C).**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded

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

**Update on 5735 Blessing blight issues.**

Mr. Britton states the home owner has cleaned up most of it. Mr. Britton will keep an eye on it.

**Motion: Enter into Executive Session per ORC 121.22(G)(1) to discuss investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee at 7:48 p.m.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

**MOTION: Return from Executive Session: 7:56 p.m.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Schuster seconded

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

Nothing was decided on in Executive Session that the Board will be making a decision on.

**DELEGATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Laura Wishart**

Questioned the statement at the January meeting made by Mr. Mayfield regarding the audit by state investigators.

**MOTION: Approve Sedgwick Invoice \$3,420.00. This is an annual invoice for workers compensation.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

**Kyle Heini**

Would like to know what the plans are and when the roads and pot holes will be repaired on her street. She lives on Meadowrise Court.

**MOTION: With no additional business or comments, Mr. Barto moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.**

Mr. Barto moved; Mr. Mayfield seconded.

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

APPROVED:



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Don Barto



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Mark Schuster



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Jerry Mayfield



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Kimberly Kay