

The Chester Township Board of Trustees met in special session **Thursday, February 2, 2023** in the Town Hall Meeting Room at 5:00 P.M. Chairman Craig Richter presided.

Roll Call: All Trustees and the Fiscal Officer were present.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The Board led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Leading Motion #: 2023-40

The meeting began with a pickleball update from Mr. Bud Kinney. After going over financials he noted he hoped the Township could fund the excavation costs and site preparation. He is hopeful that nothing would need to be deferred in the project. His goal is to begin construction in March and have the project completed by the beginning of pickleball season. Mr. Kinney would like to see the initializing of the NOPEC grant. Mr. Onyshko is concerned because the Road Department has their own things to do in addition to the costs associated with this project. Mr. Richter shared concern with the work the Road Department would need to do in addition to the current jobs that are lined up. The discussion continued regarding finances and money to be spent. It was agreed that the Board of Trustees are committed to the pickleball project. Trying to get the project complete by summer continues to be a topic of discussion.

A discussion involving current & future Township strategic planning on prioritization of goals and potential issues & ideas to address them began. Chief Young started with the departments 6 core values which include: integrity, empathy, respect, innovation, professionalism and team work. He shared the success of the SRO at the school. The school will commit to the total cost of the SRO moving forward. Wellness and mental health was touched upon since police officers often see a variety of tragedy over their career. He shared the success of the Business Outreach Program and the importance of communication. Crime prevention initiative is not new, but basically a renewed interaction with the residents. They updated the Modified Training Committee. The Detective Bureau was expanded. Social media presence is active now and appears to be a popular page. Video surveillance has been updated. Some offices in the department have been relocated. The case management system is working very well.

Goals and objectives for 2023 regarding the Police Department will include the processing and auditing of the evidence room to make it more user friendly, the expansion of the SRO Program and the creation of a 5 year comprehensive replacement schedule for a variety of items. A Digital Evidence Officer was discussed and the possibility of getting an officer certified. A discussion took place about the realignment of the Police Department. Lt. Sherwood discussed towing in the township and the pricing. Fuel cards were discussed as an idea for a pilot or test program with no cost to the Township or Police Department. Chief Young is looking into sergeant promotional and would like to take the Honor Guard to the next level.

Jamie Saric, a Chesterland resident and business owner, asked how many police officers are on duty at a time. Chief Young shared 2 and sometimes 3. Chief Young looks at the budget and the manpower and does the best he can. Currently there are 15 officers on staff now.

Mr. Purchase shared due to a loss of a levy years ago, the police staff was reduced to 12 officers. The prosecutor then met with Mr. Purchase, the Police Chief back then, and got the staff increased to 15. The FBI statistics put the number at 21-23 based on the population size of Chester Township. Jamie Saric shared that as a business owner she feels there is a lot going on in the world these days. Chairman Richter looked to adding a volunteer in 2023 to the department.

Mr. Onyshko, the Road Superintendent, reported the cemetery needs a lawn mower. Mr. Onyshko noted the Board of Trustees is aware of all the department issues. He shared ongoing issues with Heath Road and indicated that there are several projects the county is working on. He noted many residents are not replacing their drive-pipes and that the cost has nearly doubled. Payment plans were offered. Two chassis are coming in this year with an expected cost of \$130,000 each with the snow and ice package. He noted he could use a hydro-seeder and definitely a small trailer. He conducted an interview and stated it went good. The current staff is working well. He is aware that the pond needs repaired although he is waiting on the weather to break. Regarding driveway aprons, reimbursement was previously done for material and labor. Mr. Onyshko needs an okay to go ahead and share what is exactly covered with our residents. The letter the Township sends out seems vague and he would like to see it re-written. It should say for labor and materials relative to an asphalt drive installation. The Heath Road discussion included possibly making one lane for safety purposes. Shane from the County has been kept in the loop. For the record, the Township policy does not state a bare road policy. Mr. Richter is hoping for better communication between the Police Department and Road Department as to when to send the crew out to eliminate Mr. Onyshko driving around to determine if roads need to be cleared. A general conversation continued about the possibility of using the gas card noting possible pros and cons.

Mr. Mazzurco shared he feels vehicles should be able to fill up on site for gas. It's a huge waste of time for an employee to leave to go fill up. He is suggesting that we use any extra rescue money to allow employees to fill up here. Mr. Mazzurco is asking if we have any Covid-19 money left.

A brief conversation took place about the IT Department at the county and the cost associated to use it.

Chief Shaw of the Fire Department shared via e-mail his 2023 Fire Department Goals. These goals included securing department e-mail for all employees, oversee the successful passage of the 2 fire levies, monitor construction and delivery of the new fire engine, complete the update of operational policies, ensure full time lieutenants attend at least 1 leadership training class, and increase the use of existing computer software to better track and measure information. He will continue to seek out qualified interested personnel.

A brief discussion took place regarding the Fire Department purchasing food for emergency purposes. An e-mail was sent to Chief Shaw to review and advise.

Mr. Radtke shared pickleball is on his list for 2023 as with the Henry House. In addition, he would like to see an emergency response plan, which will be a combined effort with all departments. He would like CPR training as well and will support levies for the Township

and start funding the reserve accounts. Mr. Radtke would like the department heads to attend a BOT meeting at least once a quarter. He is looking into the new website and is concerned about housekeeping at the Recycle Park.

Mr. Richter shared his goals included training for all admins., department heads and included public records training. He also noted he wants to begin building the reserve fund and emergency response. Mr. Richter stated that Township meetings are every other week and seem to work out leaving the off weeks available for a special meeting if needed. Mrs. Jarrett confirmed. The Recycle Park area – wondering if the area would be conducive to potentially the Town Center? Then he added should we even have the recycle area with the clean-up issues? He suggested maybe we should move to curb-side recycling or a combination? Also, a thought could be to get the committee back together and discuss options? There is the idea of funding a storage building and finding a location. Mr. Richter voiced concern about the structure of the Road Department Building and again looking forward to pickleball going forward in the Township.

Mr. Mazzurco shared he will be looking at the gates at the Recycle Park. He has reason to believe the misuse of the park is taking place at night. He is looking to find a way to shut it down at night. Staff is policing the cameras. Mr. Mazzurco also shared he is interested in getting together with the school or fire department and getting CPR training. Mr. Purchase suggested training on AED and having one unit in the Road Department and one at the Town Hall. He reported park lights and the budget need to be looked at in the future and some updates for the park landscaping. He shared he is aware they are trying to get bathrooms completed this year so they may remain open a bit longer.

Mr. Richter said we need to update the records retention policy. Another item of concern is payment in lieu of taxes for Hawkin School located in Chesterland. The school is tax exempt. Laurel school does pay Russell Twp. tax dollars of approximately \$22,000. Mayfield Church does pay some property tax. Jamie Saric shared a movie is being filmed at the Mayfield Church. She asked if the Township got paid. The answer is no. A general statement noting we need to look at zoning issues.

Mr. Purchase suggested reviewing the reserve funds, looking into the process of removing cars, trucks and bigger equipment and the care of Township buildings. The passage of 6 levies over the next 2 years will take priority. Deed restrictions will be removed from the Fire Department property to allow the Board to make a decision if they want to rezone it. Currently he is looking into the 80 acres and especially the front 5 acres, to see if maybe Geauga Parks has some interest. Mr. Purchase is hoping to move some drain lines for better water flow and he noted Town Hall needs some repairs. Mr. Purchases shared snow was blowing into the Town Hall lobby during the last snow storm, the light fixture outside the Town Hall is not working, the windows in the Town Hall all need replaced since they are so old and the back door is about ready to fall out of the frame and he highly recommends not using. Also, on Mr. Purchase's list was general landscape lighting, replacing chairs in the meeting room and updating the procedures listed in the procedural manual since they are outdated. Mr. Purchase would like the Township to get its own e-mail, Microsoft 365, etc. He is hoping for a complete telephone upgrade across the township. He would like the department heads to put together an emergency plan should there be a power outage.

2023-40. Mr. Richter moved to approve the minutes of the Board of Trustees meetings dated 12/29/22, 1/12/23 and 1/26/23 as presented to the Board by the Fiscal Officer. Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Mazzurco, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes. Motion passed.

2023-41. Mr. Richter moved to enter into executive session at 7:12 P.M. pursuant to Ohio Revised Codes 121.22 (G) (1) to consider the compensation of public employees and 121.22 (G) (4) preparing for, conducting, or reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with public employees concerning their compensation or other terms and conditions of their employment. Mr. Mazzurco seconded.

Roll call vote: Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Mazzurco, yes; Mr. Radtke. Motion passed.

Invited into the meeting is Patricia Jarret, Fiscal Officer and Mark Purchase, Township Administrator. The Board reentered public session at 8:06 P.M.

2023-42. Mr. Richter moved to approve the raises presented in the chart below starting at the first full pay period of 2023. Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Mazzurco, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes. Motion passed.

Employee	Current hourly pay	Increase	New Hourly Pay
Joanie Windnagel	\$ 19.00	\$ 1.00	\$ 20.00
Lisa Braemer	\$ 21.35	\$ 2.00	\$ 23.35
Lisa Luoma	\$ 18.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 20.00
John Onyshko	\$ 40.96	\$ 1.23	\$ 42.19
Craig Young	\$ 46.38	\$ 1.39	\$ 47.77

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Radtke adjourned the meeting at 8:08 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Jarrett, Fiscal Officer

March 9, 2023 Motion # 2023-79

Approval Date

Craig Richter, Chairman

Joseph C. Mazzurco, Vice-Chairman

Ken Radtke, Jr., Trustee