

The Chester Township Board of Trustees met in regular session **Thursday, January 11, 2024** in the Town Hall Meeting Room at 6:30 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 #: 2024-10

Mr. Richter welcomed Austin Smith and asked him why he selected Chester Township for employment. Mr. Smith shared he like the interviews with the Chief and Captain and they both made him feel welcome. Chief Young said Mr. Smith comes to us right out of the Police Academy. He comes to the department as a 2023 graduate from Hiram College where he played baseball. He is familiar with the team atmosphere and teamwork which Chief Young said is one of the core values.

**2024-10.** Mr. Richter moved to approve the terms of the conditional offer of employment, move to approve the recommendation of the Chief of Police and authorize the hiring of Austin Smith, to the position of Police Officer, effective Friday / January 12, 2024 at the entry level pay rate of \$31.37 per hour, \$65,257.92 annually.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

The swearing in of Austin Smith, Chester Township Police Officer took place.

**Approval of Minutes**

**2024-11.** Mr. Richter moved to approve the minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting(s) dated December 14, 2023 and December 19, 2023 as presented to the Board by the Fiscal Officer.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

**Public Comments/Questions**

Rev. George Zehnder spoke about USA 250 and what was completed in 2023 regarding the cemeteries. He also shared what the plans are for the year 2024 and said he needs permission to continue his work and would like an Ohio Historical Society Marker. The deadline is May 1, 2024. He is hopeful that permission will be granted for the marker and that he can announce it at the Memorial Day Service. Donations are accepted and the Rotary said they will pick up a significant amount of the cost. Mrs. Jarrett added that a donation made to Rotary for the marker is tax deductible as long as Rotary sends a letter to the donor noting the donation. Rev. Zehnder acknowledged the efforts of Lisa Luoma.

**Department Business – Road**

Radio Replacement Options were discussed. Our current radios will be obsolete in a year and a half. Normally the Road Department radios are hand-me-downs from Police and Fire. Administrator Purchase shared most of the radios are failing. Leasing is an option to consider. Mobile radios and hand-held radios are another option. Mrs. Jarrett suggested looking into FEMA money like the Fire Department utilized, but it appears FEMA money is only for Police & Fire. The hand-held radios are half

the price and can be on their person. Another option is regular CB radios, although communication will be limited since no one outside the Road Department can communicate with them. Administrator Purchase likes the portable radio idea. Approximately \$45,000.00 to \$60,000.00 for hand-held radios with probably 4 base units.

Moving to 2024 road projects and equipment, Road Superintendent Onyshko stated the County keeps raising the cost and we are up to nearly a million dollars for paving County Line Road and Old Mill Road, including the small extension (possibly Gates Mills). There are guardrail projects going down Sperry, four on Walnut Ridge and one on the extension where the old bridge was on County Line extension. Approximately \$120,000.00 for the guardrails. The Cherry Lane pipe is still on the list and so is Sperry. Delivery has been taken on one of the Road Department trucks. The budget does not take into consideration the cost for new radios. There is no objection from the BOT to grant the \$100,000.00 for the Road Department. It was suggested that Mr. Onyshko drop the plan to relace the pipe on Cherry Lane for now. It was agreed by all that Sperry Road needs assistance. A reminder that it takes the Road Department two (2) years from ordering the truck to actually get the truck.

### **Executive Session**

**2024-12.** Mr. Richter moved to enter into executive session at 7:24 P.M. pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 121.22 (G) (1) to consider the discipline of public employees.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Mazzurco, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes. Motion passed.

Invited into the executive session is Road Superintendent John Onyshko, Township Administrator Mark Purchase and Fiscal Officer Patricia Jarrett. The Board reentered public session at 8:08 P.M.

No motions coming out of the executive session.

**2024-13.** Mr. Richter moved to approve pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 505.10 (A) (7) the disposal of a Sun Drill Press. Said equipment is obsolete and has minimum value and will be sold at auction using GovDeals or will be salvaged.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

**2024-14.** Mr. Richter moved to approve after the fact a PO for McMaster Carr for \$5,000.00 using 2031-330-323-0075 Repairs and Maintenance (Vehicle & Equipment) to purchase containment pallets.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

**2024-15.** Mr. Richter moved to approve after the fact a PO for Henderson Truck for \$3,342.43 using 2031-330-323-0075 Repairs and Maintenance (Vehicle & Equipment) to pay for gear motors purchased in 2023.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

**2024-16.** Mr. Richter moved to approve the advertisement of various material bids for 2024 which will be received by the Chester Township Trustees, 12701 Chillicothe Road, Chesterland, OH, 44026 until 12:00 PM **March 21, 2024** for the furnishing and delivery of Township storage facility materials of various quantities of anti-skid materials, limestone, clay, aggregate and asphalt and asphalt

products. Bids are intended to be opened and read aloud at the Board of Trustees meeting scheduled for **March 21, 2024**, at 6:35 PM.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Mazzurco, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes. Motion passed.

**2024-17.** Mr. Richter moved to approve Road Department expenditures as listed below.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

PO #	Type	Amount	Payable To	Purpose
94-2024	Reg	\$2,364.00	Fullbay	Annual Maintenance Program
95-2024	Reg	\$2,100.00	Vermeer Sales & Service Inc.	Radiator for Wood Chipper
96-2024	Reg	\$5,250.00	NAPA Auto Parts Chesterland	10 Cameras/Sprayers for Plow Trucks

### **Department Business – Fire**

**2024-18.** Mr. Richter moved to approve the hiring of Elijah Smart as a part-time FF/EMT-P at the rate of \$21.53/hour, effective January 19, 2024 contingent on the employee successfully passing a drug test and background check.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

**2024-19.** Mr. Richter moved to approve up to \$600.00 for hotels, meals and related expenses for Assistant Chief Nagy and Lt. Neary to attend the 20th annual Fire Protection & Life Safety Forum February 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> in Columbus, Ohio.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

**2024-20.** Mr. Richter moved to accept two scholarships, one for Assistant Chief Nagy and one for Lt. Neary, to attend the 20th annual Fire Protection & Life Safety Forum February 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> in Columbus, Ohio sponsored by Campus Fire Safety and The Fire Code Academy. Value of the scholarships is \$330.00.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

**2024-21.** Mr. Richter moved to approve the hiring of Sean O'Neill as a part-time FF/EMT-P at the rate of \$22.52/hr., effective January 12, 2024.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

Sean O'Neill worked for the Chester Fire Department in the past and Mr. Richter will stop by the fire station and swear him in.

**2024-22.** Mr. Richter moved to approve Fire Department expenditures as listed below.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

PO #	Type	Amount	Payable To	Purpose
90-2024	Reg	\$3,400.00	Illuminating Co	Electricity

### **Department Business – Police**

**2024-23.** Mr. Richter moved to amend motion 2023-501 to read move to accept after the fact the retirement of Timothy S. Day effective November 30, 2023.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

**2024-24.** Mr. Richter moved to amend motion 2023-502 to read the following: approve after the fact the hiring of Timothy S. Day as part-time School Safety Officer effective December 1, 2023 at a pay rate of \$38.16 an hour with benefits as defined in the contract with the West Geauga Schools. Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

### **Department Business – Zoning**

Mr. Radtke began with discussing the priorities for the Zoning Commission. He would like the Zoning Commission to attend some of the Board of Trustees meetings and Mr. Radtke would like to see a Board of Trustees member attend at least one Zoning Commission meeting per month. Priorities were stated as follows: attached garages (size limitation), signage, parks and then pool covers. He shared some of these projects can be worked on simultaneously. Mr. Radtke reported that communication between the two Boards needs to improve and Mr. Radtke will step in and see that it happens. Mr. Mazzurco said there is nothing wrong with attending a meeting and letting the Board of Trustees know that they hit a wall or that they are at a stand-still. Mr. Radtke shared that when Kathleen McCarthy, the Zoning Administrative Assistant hears something in the Zoning Commission meeting that requires action to share it with the Trustees immediately rather than wait for the meeting minutes. This should help the process move quicker.

Mr. Richter shared the Parks and the Park District as well as other zones in our Zoning Resolution are important because it tells about each property. It is used as a tool. Without that it is difficult to make an informed decision. Mr. Richter thinks signage is coming. Mr. Radtke said having someone from the Zoning Commission come to a Board of Trustees meetings gives them the opportunity to give and get feedback. Mr. Purchase added signage is taking longer than it should and we don't need to rewrite the sign amendment, just need to simply add the electronic sign component. It has been a year and a half and nothing has really been done. Recently Mark, Kathleen and Chris got together and worked on the electronic portion to the amendment including the language and the definitions are complete. Still waiting on Dave Dietrich's review and the finalization. The plan is to get it to Jonathan Oswick and get it pushed through. Dave Dietrich will even come to the Zoning Commission meeting should there be any last minute questions. This should be easy to wrap up. It appears you need 400 feet of frontage to have a monument or ground sign in the commercial district or shopping center. Mr. Radtke suggested putting a draft together and presenting it to the Zoning Commission prior to their meeting so they have time to review it before their meeting on Wednesday. Mr. Purchases stressed that the changes are minor. Hoping if presented to Mr. Oswick prior to the meeting he will be able to review it and present it to the Zoning Commission as a starting point. Mr. Mazzurco suggests a Trustee attend a Zoning Commission meeting and have an open discussion. He also said that our Zoning Commission members will be attending another Township's Zoning Commission meeting at the end of the month. A corner lot will be allowed to count the frontage on both streets and if added together equal 400 will be good to go. Mr. Purchase would like to see a motion noting an expected date (maybe June 1, 2024) for Parks regarding the Zoning Commission and resubmittal. Mr. Radtke would like to approach it with something like the Board of Trustees has the expectation this will be done by June 1, 2024 and would like a commitment that it will be reflected in their meeting minutes. Mr. Radtke will be in attendance at the next Zoning Commission meeting and will report back to the Board of Trustees. Mr. Richter said there may be a reason why a proposed amendment is not going to go forward, but simply the Board just wants to know why.

**2024-25.** Mr. Richter moved to approve and authorize the creation of a purchase order for \$3,000.00, from Township appropriated line item: Other-Other expenses (Software & Computers) 1000-130-599-1401 and made payable to iWorq Zoning Systems PO Box 3784, Logan, Utah 84323. This is for the 2024 annual subscription fees of our web-based zoning software application. Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

**New Business**

Geauga County MS4 Audit – EPA audit will be on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Disposal Donation of Excess Unused Office Equipment – Many of the paper items are being scanned and the items that are being pitched should have been thrown out years ago. Regarding old filing cabinets it was suggested looking at the resale store.

Russell Township Accident – There was a spill involving hazardous material. It was determined that we are not notified if a truck is travelling through the Township with hazardous material.

Conditional Offers – Offers for potential employees are going out prior to the Board of Trustees reviewing them. These potential employees think they are getting hired. Mr. Richter would like to know who we are extending offers of employment to. From this point forward the conditional offer should be sent to the Board of Trustees prior to going out to the potential new hire. This could be shared in an executive session or even in an e-mail.

Road Department – Discussion regarding on call compensation took place next. Jimmy Mitri is currently out on medical leave and he is Mr. Onyshko’s back-up. The discussion was to determine if an employee should be compensated for being on-call. Mr. Mazzurco is willing to review the roads and make a call to employees if needed for the next few weeks. The situation at hand is when John Onyshko is not available. It was confirmed that Mr. Onyshko physically goes out to see if he needs to call people in to plow.

**2024-26.** Mr. Richter moved to approve payment to employees for 2023 vacation balances per the Township policy manual as listed below.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

Employee	2023 hours	Employee	2023 hours
Robert Pomnean	40	John Onyshko	80
Craig Young	72	Jeff Sherwood	56
Mary Lou Florentine	61.75		

**2024-27.** Mr. Richter moved to approve payment to employees for 2023 holiday balances per the Township policy manual as listed below.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

Employee	2022 hours	Employee	2023 hours
John Onyshko	35	Craig Young	1
Austin Giroski	4		

**2024-28.** Mr. Richter moved to approve Kelly Paulic’s request to permit a one-time exemption in carrying over 72 hours of vacation time, from 2023 and into calendar year 2024.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

**2024-29.** Mr. Richter moved to approve the use of the Chester Township property as listed below:

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

Individual/Organization	Date(s)	Location	Time(s)	Event
West Geauga Girl Scouts	3/9/24, 3/10/24, 3/16/24, 3/17/24, 3/23/24, 3/24/24	Townhall Parking Lot	10:00 am – 6:00 pm	Cookie Booths

**2024-30.** Mr. Richter moved to amend motion 2024-8 to include that compensation adjustments are effective the first full pay period of the calendar year 2024.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

**Township Park**

Mr. Mazzurco reviewed the Go Green Grant and will be filling out the necessary paperwork within the month. He shared the list of covered items has been extended regarding the \$15,000.00 grant. Mr. Mazzurco will see if anything on the list we can utilize. The list will be shared with the other Board members for review and input. The Park will be looking into replacing the rails on the wood benches.

**Financial Items**

**2024-31.** Mr. Richter moved to approve the financial transactions below.

Mr. Mazzurco seconded. Vote unanimous.; motion passed.

PURCHASE ORDERS					
Dept	PO #	Type	Amount	Payable To	Purpose
FD/Gen /RD	91-2024	Reg	\$8,500.00	Treasurer of State – UAN	Auditing Services
Gen	93-2024	Reg	\$1,017.60	Geauga County Engineer	2023 Annual Discharge Fee

CHECKS		
Date	Starting No.	Ending No.
1-16-24	87491	87504
Fiscal Officer's note: the last check number used on 1/3/24 was 87490		

EFT DIRECT DEPOSITS			
Date	Starting No.	Ending No.	Description
1-16-24	75-2024	146-2024	Regular Payroll

ON – LINE PAYMENT VOUCHERS		
Date	Starting No.	Ending No.
1/11/24	150-2024	219-2024

VOUCHERS & WITHHOLDINGS				
Voucher	Payee	Amount	Dated	Description
148-2024	First National Bank EFTPS	\$27,738.11	1-16-24	Employee & employer withholding – Federal
149-2024	Treasurer, State of Ohio	\$4,591.29	1-16-24	Employee & employer withholding – State

**Fiscal Officer's Report**

The State will not be doing the audit this year. The audit was sent out to bid and a selection has been made. The auditor is looking for Mrs. Jarrett to sign some papers and she is questioning if a motion is required. This audit is a paid audit. There is no bank reconciliation yet since working on year end. The last pay had all the unused vacation balances for the year. The next pay will be the first full pay of the year and will reflect the wage increases. Mrs. Jarrett shared on the 15<sup>th</sup> she should have the med account and should be able to begin closing.

### **Open/Ongoing Items**

2024 OTA Winter Conference – confirmed signed up.

Township Webinar Subscription Program – confirmed signed up. Mr. Purchase already took 2 classes.

VPODF/VFFDF –paperwork given to Mrs. Jarrett to file online.

### **Upcoming Items/Deadlines**

2024 NOPEC – Mr. Mazzurco shared the paperwork will be filled out.

### **Discussions**

Cedar Road – Speed Zone Study: No update yet according to Mr. Purchase.

Government Update: 1/11/24 JM; 1/25/24 CR; 2/8/24 KR

Mr. Purchase suggested maybe having another meeting to discuss the language of use it or lose it for vacation balances due to the high payout amount. Mrs. Jarrett said the Fire Department’s contract states they get paid out for unused vacation. The Fire Department does not need to declare a sell-back until November. Police have to declare by February 28th and the Road Department by March 1st.

Regarding the Veterans Memorial, Mr. Purchase said Mike of New Vista submitted an invoice. If it would have been a job that was priced out it would have been a \$31,000.00 job. Mr. Purchase raised \$12,106.00 that went towards the project. Materials and labor totaled \$18,934.00 and that was donated by New Vista. The project is now complete and paid in full. Mr. Purchase has \$4,000.00 remaining to put towards the \$7,400.00 double-sided sign.

In reference to the Park, the wind storm damaged the flag pole, ripped the rope and tore the flag to shreds. The flag will be destroyed properly. Once it warms up research will be done to determine the exact amount of damage to the pole and the rope in addition to how to repair it. Upon completion, a new flag will be flown.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Richter adjourned the meeting at 9:03 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patricia Jarrett, Fiscal Officer

February 22, 2024 – motion # 2024-81  
Approval Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Craig Richter, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph C. Mazzurco, Vice-Chairman

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Ken Radtke, Jr., Trustee