

REGULAR MEETING  
UNION TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES  
March 18, 2019

**Present:** Charlie Prince, Trustee  
John Slater, Trustee  
Randy Weekly, Trustee  
Paula Greene, Administrator  
Jessica Slater, Fiscal Officer

The Union Township Trustees met in regular session at 7:00 pm on March 18, 2019, at the Union Township Complex. Roll call showed the following trustees present: Trustee Charles Prince, Trustee John Slater, and Trustee Randy Weekly. Jessica Slater, Fiscal Officer, was present. Trustee Prince led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Guest: Rich Moore, Bob Seaton, Laney Laughlin, Tonya Painter, Leslie Herro, Dan Van Ness, John Black, Mike Bishop, Greg Painter, Tony Campolo, Matt Ladzinotes, Hebron Fire Chief Cliff Mason, and Granville Fire Chief Casey Curtis.

Minutes

Mr. Weekly moved to approve the March 4, 2019 minutes as written and seconded by Mr. Slater. Motion passed.

Bills

The Fiscal Officer certified that the money to pay the bills was in the treasury or the process of collection. There were no questions regarding the bills. Mr. Slater made a motion to pay the bills. Mr. Weekly seconded. Motion carried.

Road and Bridge

Road Repairs – The street department has begun filling potholes with hot mix.

Administration

Zigan Map Amendment – The Zoning Commission approved a map amendment filed by Cory Zigan on March 6, 2019. The Trustees set a hearing date for April 1 at 6:30 pm.

Gulick Variance – The Gulick variance request will be heard on March 27 @7:00 pm.

Shackleford Contract Renewal – The trash removal contract is eligible for a three-year extension. The trustees want to continue the service at the same rate. Paula will speak with Mr. Shackleford.

Spring Clean Up – The Spring Clean Up will be on April 6 or April 27 depending on the availability of Shackleford Disposal. The notice will be included in the next Shackleford customer invoice.

## Trustees

Concerned citizens – Mr. Slater met with Leslie Herro, Chief Curtis, Trustee VanNess and a small group of residents at the Granville Twp. Fire Station. Mr. Slater addressed their concerns and felt the meeting ended on a positive note.

Buckeye Lake Regional Corporation Meeting – Mr. Slater reported the organization hoped to complete the repairs to the sternwheeler and launch it this summer. A South Bank Home Owners Association member has joined the organization. The group is publishing a newsletter and wants the State of Ohio to purchase a dredging machine to be used exclusively at Buckeye Lake. The installation of new boat docks is still an issue. Many activities will be scheduled for the public's enjoyment.

The Friends of the Buckeye Lake Library 5K/10K walk/run - Mr. Prince said the annual 5K/10K is being relocated to the new dam on Buckeye Lake from its previous location on Canal Road. Mr. Prince thanked all of the township residents and Mr. Slater for their cooperation in making the run a success in the past.

## Fire Discussion

Mr. Prince contacted the PUCO's Ohio Railroad Crossing Hotline and learned that in January 2019 the Columbus and Ohio River Railroad reported to the Federal Railroad Administration that it has a maximum of four trains per day and two at night using the rail line bisecting Union Township. The Federal report will be updated again in three years. The most recent state data was from 2009 which reported five trains during the day and three at night. Mr. Prince noted that the number of trains have dropped 25 percent (from eight to six per day) from 2009.

Fire Chief/Attorney Chip Comstock spoke during a public meeting held March 17 at 7:00 pm at the Hebron Village Hall. Mr. Comstock spoke on his experiences and gave recommendations with creating a fire district and a resolution.

Leslie Herro asked that Mr. Comstock could be scheduled to speak to the public again when more notice could be given to give others an opportunity to attend. Mr. Prince felt it would be too costly to do so and there was no cost as for Sunday's talk as Mr. Comstock was in the area to attend a Supreme Court hearing in Columbus. Chief Mason had contacted Mr. Comstock for guidance on the process of starting a fire district.

Mike Bishop gave a copy of his research regarding the costs of operating and staffing a Fire Station. Mr. Prince said he was open to review alternatives.

Ms. Herro felt Mr. Comstock provided good information adding he recommended a Fire District Board to consist of three residents and two public officials as residents would more likely have more time to commit, and there would not be a conflict of interest as there could be with two trustees serving on the board.

Ms. Herro asked if the Committee has reached out to West Licking Fire District for information regarding the creation and operation of a Fire District.

Mr. Price said Mr. Comstock was familiar with West Licking's resolution was felt it was inadequate. Mr. Comstock represented the former West Licking Fire Chief when he was



terminated from the department. Mr. Prince felt with Mr. Comstock's knowledge of West Licking's Fire District it would not be necessary to speak with someone from there.

Ms. Herro asked if the department was operating sufficiently now. Mr. Prince said he believed West Licking Fire District to be a good department but was costly as they operate with full-time employees. Mr. Prince said he asked for a copy of their resolution but did not receive a copy.

Ms. Herro asked if north of the tracks was to be part of the fire district. Mr. Prince feels the entire township should be included in the Fire District, but no determinations have been made at this point. Mr. Prince said everyone would benefit from the new satellite station especially residents in the Deeds Road area. Mr. Prince said there are times when both departments are tied up on runs.

Bob Seaton said he felt both departments proved a good service.

Mike Bishop asked if other options being considered. Mr. Prince said Hebron's six-month contract requires the board to meet with them to discuss creating a fire district every two weeks; therefore, they are focusing on researching a Fire District. There is a two-year contract with Granville Township.

Mike Bishop asked what the board believes to be an acceptable millage. Mr. Slater said he felt anything above ten mills is excessive, current estimates have been between six and seven mills, but feels with the information given the millage would be 7 or 8 mills. Mr. Slater said costs are still being reviewed.

Ms. Herro said she learned from the meeting last night the Fire District will be created and a board formed before the voters can vote on millage and the Board decides on the millage, not the Township Trustees. Mr. Slater said this was the reason for the research before committing to a District.

Mr. Prince said the idea was to provide better service without significantly raising the millage. Mr. Weekly said Mr. Comstock said some districts had not increased their millage.

Mr. Bishop discussed his research on millage and cost of operating fire and ems services and determined a Fire District to continue current services would cost taxpayers in Hebron and Union Township 6.44 mills which is a reduction in millage to Hebron property owners and increase to township property owners. Mr. Slater said they had determined similar numbers. A discussion was held on county fees, millage numbers, revenue, and costs. Mr. Bishop believes the millage to operate a satellite station would be closer to ten mills. Mr. Bishop and Ms. Herro questioned the cost and millage numbers in Dr. Kramer's report.

Mr. Prince said EMS billing income had not been calculated into the income figures. Mr. Prince said the voters can turn down Fire District millage down. Mr. Bishop said if the millage is determined to be 10 or above, he will campaign against the increase as there is not enough of a benefit to justify the increase. Mr. Bishop said he has not received all the documentation he requested. Mr. Bishop felt there are options not being considered. Mr.

Prince said the focus is fulfilling the township's contract with Hebron.

A discussion was held on the mortgage for Hebron Fire Department's building and the costs of the new Fire Department building in Licking Township. Ms. Herro felt the trustees would have more control if they operated their own department.

Chief Curtis asked for a list of areas the trustees feel they do not have control over that can be discussed before the next contract. Mr. Prince did not have any issues at this time. Mr. Slater said people have told him everyone should be paying the same millage as Hebron which is something, we don't have control over. Chief Curtis asked what contract language could be added in the next contract that would make the trustees feel they have more control. Mr. Prince said language to staff the satellite station would be helpful which is one of Dr. Kramer's alternatives.

A discussion was held on writing and receiving grants.

A discussion as held on funding a Fire District. According to the recent Ohio Attorney General's Opinion, a Fire District can operate on existing revenue from those agencies creating the District. A paper fire district could be created by July 1 if the Village of Hebron and Union Township each approved a resolution to enter a district. The District board would decide what revenue is needed and could ask for additional funding when needed. If a levy is passed, the new revenue is collected from the taxpayers the following year.

Chief Curtis asked to be placed on the April 1<sup>st</sup> agenda.

Executive Session

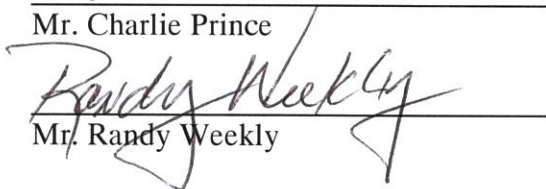
Mr. Weekly moved to enter into executive session at 8:12 pm to discuss an employee. Mr. Slater seconded the motion.

At 8:32 pm Mr. Weekly moved to return from executive session seconded by Mr. Slater. It was moved by Mr. Slater to authorize up to \$1500 for an employee to be examined by a third party.

There being no further business Mr. Weekly moved to adjourn at 8:33 pm.



Mr. Charlie Prince



Mr. Randy Weekly



Mr. John Slater



Jessica Slater

Fiscal Officer