

**Union Township Trustees
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 14, 2023**

The Union Township Trustees met in regular session on August 14, 2023, at 7:00 pm. Fiscal Officer Jessica Slater's roll call showed the following trustees: John Slater, Jeff Sharps and Roger Start present. Paula Greene, Township Administrator, was also present. Guests: Kenneth Fisher, Greg Large, Laura Haley, and Kraig Koester. Trustee Slater led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes – Mr. Start moved and Mr. Sharps seconded to approve the July 31 regular meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Bills – Mr. Start motioned, and Mr. Slater seconded to approve the bills. Motion carried.

Public Comments- none

Road and Bridge

Tree removal – Dave contacted Get'er Done and Bill & Pam's Tree Service for estimates. Get'er Done did not return the call. Bill & Pam's estimated \$1500. To remove the tree.

Motion – Mr. Start moved, and Mr. Sharps seconded to retain Bill & Pam's Tree Service in the amount of \$1500.00 for the removal of the tree on Canyon Road. Motion carried.

Fisher – Mr. Slater, Dave Cable, Jared Kneer, Licking County Engineer, Tyler Dye, Assistant Licking County Engineer, Prosecutor Carolyn Carnes, and the Fishers met at the site. Mr. Slater explained the history of the crossing and culvert placement. County records, provided by the Engineer's Office, show that the initial road engineering and culvert installation, made of sandstone, occurred in 1924, to allow water to cross under the road west to east. The current culvert has less capacity than the original design. The natural flow of the watershed water is west to east and not north.

At the site it was discussed whether water could be diverted from crossing Mr. Fisher's farm despite the natural watershed. Taking the water from its current course to the road ditch and then to a new drainage ditch would destroy the natural water flow.

Mr. Slater said maintenance of the ditch would not eliminate Mr. Fisher's problem. While viewing the site, trees growing in the ditch had been removed in the recent past and dirt had been pushed into parts of the ditch. At the site Mr. Fisher stated he had the fence line cleared a couple of years ago. The remaining stumps indicate that trees had been growing in the ditch for 20-25 years.

Mr. Kneer said preliminary engineering for a diversion ditch would cost \$2,500 to \$7,000 or more and complete engineering cost would exceed \$70,000 and would still disturb the natural watershed. Mr. Kneer said their office would not engineer plans and would forward names of engineering firms.

Mr. Slater recommended holding a Special Meeting at the site where all three trustees along with Mr. Kneer and the Fishers could view the area.

Paula discussed the situation with Dave and Prosecutor Carnes, who both recommended that Licking County Soil and Water contacted, before disturbing the natural watershed. Prosecutor Carnes said the Harrison Township Trustees need to include in the discussions, before engaging in any engineering cost as Harrison Twp. would be responsible for part of the engineering cost. Prosecutor Carnes cautioned against moving forward with such a project, as similar watershed situations exist throughout the Township and advised against setting a precedent.

Mr. Fisher feels the County records are not correct and the culvert may not be located where the plans show; the plans do not show the ditches. As the road is now wider, Mr. Fisher feels

restoring the ditches to their original location would put the ditch at the edge of the road. Mr. Fisher said the issue should be corrected by now and explained his views on the situation.

Mr. Slater explained the direction of the natural water flow and felt that Mr. Fisher still did not understand. Mr. Slater said changing the natural watershed may create new flooding issues for which the Township could be held liable.

The Board then held a discussion. Mr. Slater recommended holding a special meeting at the site so that all three Trustees could view the area in question. Both Trustees agreed. Mr. Slater suggests Engineer Jared Kneer should attend. Mr. Sharps said he wanted the township to do the right thing whatever that is. Mr. Start said to Mr. Fisher that the Trustees' final decision may not be what Mr. Fisher wants. Mr. Fisher said he did not realize there would be another meeting and is frustrated and the longer this goes on the more water keeps flowing.

Mr. Slater said Mr. Fisher's timeline was not going to be met and that the waterflow has not been changed; there is evidence where the watershed and culvert are located and there may be subsurface tile running east and west across the Fisher farm that may have been disturbed. Mr. Slater said the road ditches are for the purpose of drainage from the road.

Mr. Slater asked the board to provide Paula with dates when they would be available for a Special Meeting at the site. Paula asked Mr. Fisher to email her with his availability. Mr. Slater asked that Mr. Kneer also attend the meeting.

Deeds and Reserve – Mr. Start asked Dave if repairs to the erosion situation at the entrance to the Reserve and Deeds had been made. Dave was out at the last meeting but will inspect the area in the morning.

Administration

Meeting Date reminder – Next meeting will be held Tuesday, September 5 at 7:00 pm.

Elections – Voting in the building went well, with no problems.

Economic Development

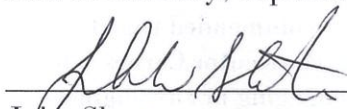
Framework – Mr. Sharps received the draft Framework Resolution and requested a review from Prosecutor Carnes. Mr. Sharps said he was not recommending moving forward with the Resolution at this time.

Public Comments: None

Trustees Comments

There were no comments.

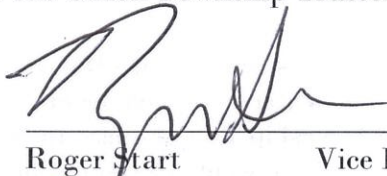
There being no further business, Mr. Start moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:30pm. Mr. Sharps seconded. Motion carried. The next meeting of the Union Township Trustees will be held on Monday, September 18, 2023, at 7:00 pm.



John Slater President



Jeff Sharps Trustee



Roger Start Vice President



Jessica Slater Fiscal Officer