

Special Meeting  
UNION TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES  
October 31, 2019

The Union Township Trustees met in special session at 9:00 am on October 31, 2019, at the Union Township Complex. Roll call showed Charles Prince, John Slater, Randy Weekly, and Paula Greene were present. Trustee Prince led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Guest: Curt & Tonya Painter, Allison Terry, Lili McCutcheon, Mikey Bishop, Jamison Gordon, Bill McCullough, and Susan Ginise.

The purpose of the special meeting was to appoint two Township Trustees to the Refugee Canyon Joint Fire District Board through December 31, 2019. The Village of Hebron Village Council unanimously approved the amended fire district resolution on October 30. The amended resolution provides that any financial debt brought to the Fire District by Hebron Fire will return to the Village should the Fire District disband.

Mr. Prince moved to take nominations.

Mr. Slater said he wanted to understand how the fireboard intended to operate as Hebron Council is delaying their appointments until November 13 (after elections) and that the second township appointment should be chosen from a resident within Union Township. Mr. Slater felt the trustees need to be very selective of who represents Union Township as a member of the fireboard. Mr. Slater said he wants to follow the resolution and appoint one Union Township Trustee and a resident of Union Township for the Township's second representative. Mr. Slater wants to take the time and select a resident.

Mr. Prince said Hebron Council postponed selecting fireboard members as they want to appoint a person who is presently running for a council seat.

Mr. Slater said again, he wants to be careful of who represents the township, and as the Council delayed their appointments, it gives them time to select a second township resident.

Mr. Weekly reviewed the resolution regarding board member qualifications. Mr. Slater said the resolution states "one trustee" can be appointed, and the second appointment shall be a township resident or another trustee. Mr. Prince said all trustees are residents of the township.

Mr. Prince does not want to delay the appointments until the next regular township meeting on November 18. Mr. Prince said the fifth fireboard member needs to be chosen and could be a person from the township. Mr. Prince said he is afraid Granville Township Trustees may exercise the 90-day cancellation clause and cut off service.

Mr. Slater said that was not a fair statement as Granville Township currently contracts with Union Township; now that the fire district exists, Granville Township will need to contract with them.

Mr. Slater said again the trustees need to be extremely careful in the selection of the township's fire board members. Mr. Slater is concerned that as four fire board members are of the same belief's they will select the fifth position who feels the same.

Mr. Prince said the fireboard needs to be comprised of persons committed to making the Fire District work.

Mr. Weekly said, making the fire district work begins with the trustees. Mr. Weekly said he took an oath to serve the entire township, and if chosen to serve on the fireboard, he will represent the whole township, and that includes the Village of Hebron.

Mr. Slater said all people should feel passionate about the township, and in doing so, he wants to take some time to make the two Fire District appointments. Mr. Slater recommends comprising a small list of township residents who would represent the township's best interest. Mr. Slater said they need to select a township resident that everyone has confidence in.

Mr. Prince said as the appointments are for two months, they need to move forward, and if the terms were longer, Mr. Slater's points would be more valid. Mr. Prince does not want to delay the appointments. Granville Twp. Trustee Bird stated their issue was one of legal language, but Trustee Bennett made comments in the Newark Advocate that the residents of Granville Township need to be protected.

Mr. Slater said that was one comment, printed in a newspaper, and that he has talked to Trustees Byrd and VanNess, and they did not agree with Trustee Bennett. Mr. Prince said Trustee VanNess said nothing during a meeting he attended, and this concerned him. Mr. Prince said we must provide service and the level of service he feels the residents deserve that will come when the satellite station is operational.

Mr. Prince said the appointments were for two months only. Mr. Slater said it is a necessity the fire district board consists of members the community will have confidence in.

Mr. Weekly said as a township trustee, he is confident, they can make the necessary decisions. Mr. Prince said the board needs to move forward now as a levy needs to be on the March ballot. The levy deadline is December 18. There also needs to be time to pick a fifth board member.

Mr. Slater said he was not trying to sabotage the fireboard, but wants the best representation, so all the residents believe the fire district board has their best interests in mind.

Mr. Prince said he did not feel Mr. Slater was trying to sabotage the district, but there are time restraints. Mr. Prince said he believes the large attendance at the last township meeting was due to the false information posted in a flyer. Mr. Prince told by moving ahead, they can prove to the residents by giving them real evidence such as opening the centrally located satellite station and significantly lowering the response time the fire district is what the township needed.

Mr. Slater said he was also concerned if two township trustees are seated on the fireboard; any conversations between the two would have to occur during a public meeting. Mr. Prince said the issue has existed for a year and brought up Monday night.

Mr. Slater then asked why should they appoint two township trustees when appointing a township resident, and a township trustee would avoid the situation.

Mr. Weekly said discussions between two fire board members would not be permitted. Mr. Prince said two fire board members meeting would not be a majority of the fireboard.

Mr. Prince said he does not want the public to believe the fireboard is meeting privately for discussions. Mr. Prince said it is difficult to discuss matters in public, which he is why he has not held private conversations with either trustee. Mr. Prince said they are short on time; new appointments could be made January 1, at which time they can search for another member. The levy needs to be on the ballot. Mr. Prince said the appointments have to be made now.

Allison Terry said she agreed with Mr. Slater, that two township trustees should not be appointed to the fireboard at this time. Mrs. Terry said as Hebron was delaying their appointments, there would be no harm in delaying the township's appointments to look for a township resident to fill the second position. Mr. Prince said Hebron would appoint their members the day after the election. Mrs. McCutcheon noted at last night's council meeting the council said they would hold a meeting on November 13 to make appointments

Mrs. Terry feels the trustees would appear more transparent if they appointed one township trustee now and schedule a special meeting in a week where the trustees can interview and select a resident. Mrs. Terry said she researched the Ohio Revised Code and other fire districts and found in most cases when a village and township create a fire district; the fire district board consists of one councilman, one trustee, and a resident at large. Mrs. Terry spoke with Hebron Mayor McFarland, who was going to encourage Council members to appoint one Hebron resident, and one council member to represent the Village. Mrs. Terry also feels two trustees serving on the fireboard would be a problem.

Mr. Prince said he felt a three-member board would not function as well as a five-member board. Mr. Prince said there is a need to earn back the respect of everyone in the township and overcome the misinformation.

Mr. Weekly asked if the resolution stated the fireboard consisted of two township trustees. Mr. Prince said Mr. Slater was correct when he stated one fireboard member would be a township trustee, and the second member could be a township trustee or a township resident. Mr. Prince said feels they are short on time and need to know what Granville Township's intentions are and have to assume comments made to the Newark Advocate are accurate.

Mr. Slater said caution must be taken when communicating through the media. Mr. Prince said that Granville Township Trustees should have contacted him. Mr. Prince said he has had no communication with Granville other than Trustee Byrd shared legal concerns about the contract.

Mr. Weekly said he believes for the first two months, two township trustees need to serve on the fire district board to get things started in the right direction.

Susan Ginise asked if they felt the public would have a negative opinion of two township trustees serving on the fireboard after the trustees had pushed through the fire district.

Mr. Weekly said the fire district was not pushed through. Mr. Prince said the fire district had been discussed publicly for eighteen months.

Mr. Weekly interrupted and said the subject of the meeting was to appoint board members. Mrs. Ginise felt the public perception would be better if the Trustees followed Hebron's timeline.

Mr. Prince said Hebron would select their board members the day after the election, and adequate public notices would need to be made by the township if they held another meeting. The first fireboard meeting is on November 8. Mr. Prince said he has put considerable effort into this and is committed to giving it his best. Mr. Prince said a search for a second township resident could be done in the next two months.

Mr. Prince said he wasn't anxious to attend more meetings. Mr. Weekly interrupted and said it was for the safety and well-being of the peoples' lives and property; they will participate in additional meetings.

Mrs. Terry asked that over the next two months, would notice be made for any township resident that would be interested in the second township seat. Mr. Prince said one of the first items on the fireboard agenda is to solicit for the fifth board member and/or someone for the second trustee seat.

Mr. Weekly nominated Mr. Prince to represent Union Township on the fire district board as he has dedicated his time and believes he has a right to be a member on the fireboard for two months. Mr. Prince called for a second. Hearing none, Mr. Prince then seconded the motion.

Mr. Prince then nominated Mr. Weekly to be the second Union Township Trustee

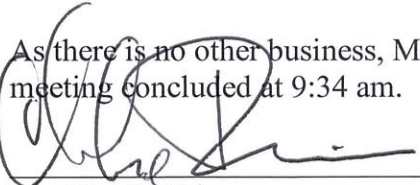
representative for his 42 years of his experience in the fire service and his commitment to the safety and well-being of the township. Mr. Slater seconded.

Roll call for Mr. Weekly's appointment: Mr. Slater -yes; Mr. Prince-yes

Roll call for Mr. Prince's appointment: Mr. Weekly-yes; Mr. Slater-no  
Mr. Prince said he was not going to abstain and voted "yes" to his appointment.

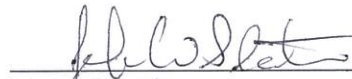
Mr. Slater said he felt there was adequate time to search for a second person to represent the board.

As there is no other business, Mr. Weekly moved to adjourn. Mr. Weekly seconded. The meeting concluded at 9:34 am.



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Mr. Charlie Prince



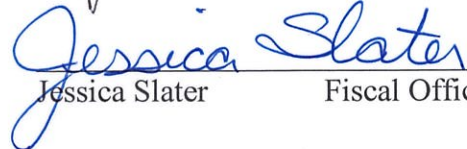
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Mr. John Slater



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Mr. Randy Weekly



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Jessica Slater                      Fiscal Officer