

Montville Township Trustees
January 28, 2025 – Regular Trustees Meeting

Present:

Trustee Sally Albrecht, Chairman
Trustee Allen Biehl
Trustee Jeff Brandon
Fiscal Officer Mary Pawlowski
Police Chief Matt Neil
Planning & Zoning Dir. Paul Jeffers
Service Director Chris Kosman

Also Present:

Resident Bill Hanigan
Copley Township Trustee Bruce Koellner

At 7:00 p.m. Trustee Albrecht opened the regular meeting of the Montville Township Trustees. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Police Chief Matt Neil offered a prayer. Trustee Albrecht welcomed residents and stated that the meeting is being recorded for transcription purposes only.

GUEST RECOGNITION

Trustee Albrecht introduced Copley Township Trustee Bruce Koellner, who was here to explain how Copley handles their non-emergency transports.

Mr. Koellner provided the Trustees some details of his education and professional background, having served in the Fire Department for 35 years and currently as Copley Township Trustee for 7 years.

Trustee Brandon explained to Trustee Koellner the unique setup of our three local entities involved together on LST. We can track the dates and times of where our LST squads go to nursing homes or individual residences. Trustee Albrecht added that we should be able to have the Cleveland Clinic organize the calls from emergency to non-emergency and that we should not be responsible for paying for the non-emergency calls.

Mr. Koellner said that this issue brings up a lot of liability and that discerning what is an emergency over a phone call is not always accurate. Trustee Albrecht agreed, that it is a subjective decision. She thought that the simplest way for us to handle it is for the nursing home to have a nurse to determine whether something is an emergency. Mr. Koellner agreed but said that it will not happen since a nursing facility is a for-profit company and when they are understaffed and overwhelmed with multiple simultaneous events will result in their removing them from the facility.

Mr. Koellner said that the definition of an emergency is what the caller deems an emergency. He said that putting pressure on the facilities and talking with them has been helpful for his township. Copley Township has ten nursing facilities. Their bariatric patients now need to have alternative transportation; private ambulances will do that but it usually takes a day.

Mr. Koellner feels that the true fix for this issue is that it needs to be handled at the State level, and they are working in that direction. Trustee Brandon agreed that the fix should be at the State level as this is a widespread problem; he asked whether there is someone in Columbus that is working on this for us to contact.

Mr. Koellner responded that our representative is Bill Roemer and there are other representatives that are having similar issues in large townships in the Cincinnati area.

Mr. Koellner said that Montville Township has a layer between the township and the services that render to the nursing facilities, and that is the contract. Mr. Koellner suggested to the Trustees to add an average response time when the contract is next negotiated. Those numbers must be accurately tracked so they are infallible for measurability in the system.

Trustee Brandon thought that Montville Township would want to help in the movement to help educate our representatives in Columbus that this is a problem for everyone, and it is getting worse.

Resident Bill Hanigan said that the residents in Country Lakes are currently receiving their property tax increases in the mail. As they are tied in with Medina City Schools, there is a double levy and it is not uncommon to see 20% hikes in property tax increases. The residents that are hurt most are those on fixed incomes. Mr. Hanigan said that, when a new development is put in place, there is an impact on the school system. What is the possibility of slowing the developers and, the developers incurring the cost for the increased student population to offset the property build-out of a school.

Fiscal Officer Pawlowski said that we have researched that and it is not a legal option.

Trustee Albrecht responded that Commissioner Steve Hambley is currently conducting a study to determine the burden and expense to townships and municipalities for these new neighborhoods and the cost of them. He is collecting data for a year and will have results of the study after a year. The study is called the Medina County Community Discussion Economic impact of homebuilding in Medina County comparative report on costs to revenue for local governments. Trustee Albrecht encouraged Mr. Hanigan to contact Commissioner Hambley.

Trustee Albrecht learned at the recent Planning Commission meeting that there was a similar study done in Medina County years ago. Because of that study, they were able to determine that they had to change their lot size from two acres to three acres because the data indicated that projected tax revenues would not be enough to support a two-acre lot size. Trustee Albrecht offered to email a copy of the study to Mr. Hanigan.

Fiscal Officer Pawlowski suggested that Mr. Hanigan address his question to the school board. The County Auditor would be able to advise him of the school's carryover amount. The schools also redistricted and the

students are being bused into different areas for the equity. They also closed two of their elementary schools due to decreased student population, indicating lower enrollment but they continue to incur the costs for Garfield and are using the building for other purposes.

Trustee Biehl followed up with Mr. Hanigan's question at the last Trustees meeting about the brush risk assessment in our parks. He said that he has been playing phone tag with Nathan from the County Parks and hopefully, by the next meeting, he will have an answer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Biehl made a motion approving the minutes for the January 14th special organizational meeting and the January 14th regular Trustees meeting. Trustee Brandon seconded the motion. The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

UTILITIES: Trustee Albrecht received a letter informing us that the Medina County electric aggregate program is transferring to Dynegy Energy Services East, LLC. Rates will stay the same; services will continue without changes or interruption.

Trustee Albrecht reported Armstrong prices are increasing their cable pricing.

ZONING: Planning & Zoning Director Jeffers requested, and **Trustee Biehl made a motion applying for the ODOT Pedestrian & Bicycle Solicitation grant for updating crosswalks to ADA standards. Trustee Brandon seconded the motion.** In discussion, Mr. Jeffers said that this is a grant that was brought to us by Trustee Biehl. This is 100% ODOT funded with no local match. We have a lot of subdivisions that are not to standard that could use the assistance of this grant. We are working with the County Engineer as LPA coordinator, where he is certified by ODOT to administer Federal grant projects. If we receive the grant, we would work with the County to upgrade to the current standards. Trustee Biehl said that we can and will apply for the funding for construction costs as well as the engineering and design and surveying. If we get this grant, the only cost to the township would be for our labor to assist the county for administering this. **The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.**

Trustee Biehl made a motion receiving the awards from ODNR for Capital Improvement grants for \$19,600 and \$24,500 for the watershed study and nature trail, respectively. Trustee Brandon seconded the motion. In discussion, Mr. Jeffers said that these were the grants that the township received for the 2024 capital budget. Due to matching costs, the playground grant was approved to be modified to place drain tile in the lacrosse fields. **The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.**

Trustee Biehl made a motion setting a public hearing for March 11, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. for the amendment to the JEDD agreement for properties being added and removed. Trustee Brandon seconded the motion. In discussion, Mr. Jeffers said that this will include the addition of the Mast property and the commercial areas that are now residential areas of the JEDD that are being removed. **The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.**

In his zoning report, Mr. Jeffers said that Hawks Ridge was seen before the Zoning Commission last week and was conditionally approved based on some variances that they will need approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals for density and setback variances.

Mr. Jeffers updated the Trustees on the request for a nonprofit using Badger Lodge for four Saturdays rent-free. At the last Trustees meeting, the Trustees offered to waive rental fees but with a deposit for weekday times instead of Saturdays. If they want to use it on Saturdays, they can do so and pay the rental fee because of demand. The nonprofit chose to pay for Badger Lodge rental for their leadership classes on January 25, February 22, March 15 and April 12. They have been given instructions on the clean-up rules to avoid losing their deposit.

POLICE: Chief Matt Neil requested, and **Trustee Brandon made a motion accepting an Ohio Criminal Justice Services grant reimbursement of \$8,626.87 for five radios purchased in 2023. Trustee Biehl seconded the motion.** In discussion, Chief Neil said that the Trustees approved this grant proposal in May, 2023. The radios have been purchased, received, and are in use. Part of the grant was for the Data Master which was put on hold from the manufacturer and was finally received and put into service last week. Because of the delay, OCJS picked up our 25% local match for both the DMT and the radios. **The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.**

Trustee Brandon made a motion paying expenses for Detective Vivo and Officer Sheers to attend Detective Legal Update 2025 on Thursday, August 21, 2025, in Cuyahoga Falls. Trustee Biehl seconded the motion. The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.

Chief Neil requested, and **Trustee Brandon made a motion covering expenses for Officer Denton and Officer Eckstine to attend the Ohio Tactical Officers annual training during the week of June 9, 2025, at Kalahari. Trustee Biehl seconded the motion.** In discussion, Chief Neil said that the registration needs to be submitted in the next week. **The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.**

Chief Neil said that he has been doing the annual license checks for all employees, which is done for insurance purposes. This check is done in January for all drivers' licenses and CDL's for employees that drive township vehicles. As usual, all employees are checked and are good during the previous twelve months.

LST/FIRE: Trustee Brandon reported the LST invoice of \$30,316.20 for December ambulance services. This was higher than the budgeted amount of \$25,730. There were 80 calls for ambulance services in the township during the month.

Trustee Brandon said that the first LST quarterly meeting is scheduled for February 27th. Chief Neil and Trustee Brandon will plan to attend the meeting.

Trustee Brandon said that he and Chief Neil met with Brandon Gibson from Medina County Economic Development on January 15th. They brought Mr. Gibson up to speed on LST, the way it operates, and the problems with nonemergency transports.

Chief Neil added that he provided Mr. Gibson with a copy of his call tracking spreadsheet, and he saw that the monthly costs are not the same as he had expected to see. Chief Neil told him that the only variable that should be what your revenue for insurance collections is; you know what the personnel and operating costs will be. Mr. Gibson saw that June, 2024, there were 58 calls and cost the township \$25,000; but, in March there were 59 calls and cost \$31,000. This month, December, we had 80 calls and it cost \$30,000.

Trustee Brandon said that there is a lot that goes into the monthly charge. There is Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements; there are self-pays and insurance pays. Each pay something different for each call. Patient collections vary by the month as well. Trustee Brandon said that the number of transports and non-transports could vary which affects the numbers.

Chief Neil said that we need to be cognizant and have conversations when we want to be fiscally responsible with taxpayers' money. He cannot explain why we had 20 more calls in December, 2024, than we did in January, 2024, and yet the monthly cost to the township were within \$150 of each other. The cost per call was \$370 in December and \$484 in January.

Fiscal Officer Pawlowski asked what the next step should be. Trustee Brandon would like to have us "join the bandwagon" if there is one. He would like to contact State Rep. Bill Roemer and involve as many people as we can in Columbus. Fiscal Officer Pawlowski suggested that our next step should be having one-on-one conversations with our state representatives, Sharon Ray and Melanie Miller. Trustee Brandon agreed, and to also include Senator Mark Romanchuk. He had reached out to all three but they will not be available during the OTA conference in Columbus.

Chief Neil said that he had reached out to Foundations with our concerns about LST costs for nursing facilities. He said that Mallory understands our concerns and emphasized that they will be penalized if they have reoccurrences of hospital visits. If they call 911 again after a patient returns to them and that patient is put back in the hospital, they lose money. They will make the call if that is best for the patient, even though they lose money. She said that, because of insurance, they are seeing across the board for Foundations health care that hospitals are sending patients that are more ill to nursing facilities whereas the hospital would have kept them longer before, they are sending the more acute

patients to nursing facilities; thus, they are seeing an increase in the rehospitalization of patients.

Chief Neil said that Foundations does not use staffing agencies to staff their facilities. The problem they see is that temporary workers are not familiar with the patients. Their staff sees the patients every day and knows them and when something is not right.

Chief Neil was pleased to hear that they have measures in place before calling 911. They are willing to meet with us as they get going. He does not expect that we need to meet quarterly in the beginning because it will be private pay initially, and it may be six months to a year before they are full.

Trustee Brandon said that we have received and will be paying the fee for 2025 fire services fee at \$323,411.

Chief Neil updated the Trustees about the mini pumper, engine #1, that has been having issues with the computer. They have been trying to work with the company sending the computer that continues to be replaced, which damages the engine. Chief Walters is trying to recoup the cost under warranty and keep the costs under \$10,000. Attorney Greg Huber in the Medina City Law Department is going to become involved. Chief Neil said that Chief Walters is trying to be good stewards of our truck in trying to find the right way and go after the issue, as we would. Currently, they have not sent us a bill for any expenses.

ROADS: Service Director Kosman reported that he met with the Associate County Engineer regarding our road paving for this year and next year. He requested that Trustee Biehl check out the heaving happening on Montville Lakes off Ridgewood and then meet with him later to discuss thinking outside the box and repaving that development. Mr. Kosman said that some parts of the road will settle down after the frost season is over but that the heaving is not all due to frost. He does not know the thickness of the road but it is an asphalt road with concrete curb and gutter, which is like the roads in Fox Meadows. Mr. Kosman suspects that the problem we have is a gurgling effect of the concrete curbing.

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING: Mr. Kosman requested, and **Trustee Biehl made a motion purchasing one mini split from Medina Heating & Cooling for \$10,000.00. Trustee Brandon seconded the motion.** In discussion, Mr. Kosman explained that a mini split is a dedicated air conditioner to one area; this area is in our server room. This is the original air conditioner to this building and it runs 24 hours a day. It is on a 13-year life span. We are having difficulties with it and can make some repairs to it; however, the technician said that we would be doing good if we were able to get 15 years out of it. Mr. Kosman feels that the correct decision is to replace it. Chief Neil added that Mr. Rodgers temperature and moisture/humidity sensors in that room indicate that the air conditioner is not keeping the moisture out of the room and that we should not chance damaging the equipment in the room. Chief Neil requested that this expense should be 50% General Fund and 50% Safety Services. **The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.**

Mr. Kosman said that he will begin working with Lewis Land on our parking lot. This job will be put out to bid, and there will be a timeline of April through October.

CEMETERY: Trustee Albrecht had no updates. Mr. Kosman said that the repaving will be going out with our road bids. We will be putting two inches on top, and he expects the cost to come back around \$60K. There is not a lot of work to the job but the cost of materials is high.

PARKS: Mr. Kosman had no updates.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Trustee Brandon reported that Medina County Economic Development will hold their next meeting on February 20th. The topic for the meeting will be the State of the Cities.

NOACA's Board of Directors held their organizational meeting on January 24th. Trustee Brandon noted that he had passed the baton to the new president, Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne.

Trustee Brandon mentioned the upcoming OTA conference in Columbus this week.

COMMUNITY EVENTS: Trustee Albrecht said that the January *Montville Living* magazine failed to print our article for recruiting applicants for the Service Department opening and for our community events planner/volunteer coordinator position. Trustee Albrecht is planning to put the jobs on Indeed and will work on the job description with Mr. Kosman this week.

Trustee Albrecht was pleased to report that Pastor Pete at the Church of the Nazarene has agreed to coordinating the Easter Egg Hunt, with the township supplying the eggs and the candy, and getting a sponsor. Trustee Albrecht and Mrs. Navicky will meet with Pastor Pete's outreach group to discuss what they will be doing. Trustee Albrecht likes the idea that we are broadening our volunteers, and they are very excited about it because they feel that this is a community outreach that is compatible with their mission.

Fiscal Officer Pawlowski has a concern that they may be recruiting church members at the Easter Egg Hunt, which is still Montville Township's event. Trustee Albrecht responded that she shared that concern as well, and that Pastor Pete understands that. Trustee Biehl said that Trustee Brandon will still DJ the event and can have a public acknowledgement of the Church of the Nazarene and thanking them for volunteering.

Fiscal Officer Pawlowski said a Montville Township employee needs to be on top of the event to be covered by our insurance. Trustee Albrecht said that she will be in charge until we hire an event planner. She will also have the volunteers sign a release of liability.

OTHER BUSINESS

Fiscal Officer Pawlowski requested, and **Trustee Biehl moved Resolution 012825.01 supporting ODOT District 3 to seek funding to support a planning study of existing and future conditions along State Route 3 (Wooster Pike). Trustee Brandon seconded the Resolution.** In discussion, Trustee Biehl explained that he prepared this Resolution to support District 3's efforts of trying to get funding for looking at the Route 3 corridor. They are looking for the support of the communities along the corridor, of which Montville Township is most of that area. Trustee Biehl said that a Resolution goes a long way when it goes to ODOT in Columbus. His wording intentionally includes that Montville Township, "agrees to cooperate," in order to help this along. Trustee Biehl wanted to be sure to include cover letter, which goes into detail about the growth aspect to provide additional emphasis on why this study is needed. **The Resolution was passed, 3 ayes, 0 naves and 0 abstentions.**

Trustee Brandon made a motion paying \$323,411.00 to the City of Medina for 2025 fire services. Trustee Biehl seconded the motion. The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 naves and 0 abstentions.

Trustee Biehl made a motion paying \$22,964.64 to Medina County Treasurer/John Burke for taxes. Trustee Brandon seconded the motion. In discussion, Fiscal Officer Pawlowski explained the properties that the township has. She wanted the Trustees to be aware of what we are actually paying on the property. **The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 naves and 0 abstentions.**

Trustee Brandon made a motion paying \$30,316.20 to Medina Hospital for December LST services. Trustee Biehl seconded the motion. The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 naves and 0 abstentions.

Trustee Biehl made a motion paying \$6,565.50 to Medina County Emergency Management Agency for 2025 All-Hazards Team cost allocations. Trustee Brandon seconded the motion. In discussion, Trustee Albrecht questioned whether we paid this much previously. Fiscal Officer Pawlowski said that it depends on their costs. She thought it seemed high and will go back to records to confirm what was previously billed. **The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 naves and 0 abstentions.**

Trustee Brandon made a motion paying \$4,428.97 to Medina County Emergency Management Agency for 2025 EMA cost allocations. Trustee Biehl seconded the motion. The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 naves and 0 abstentions.

Trustee Biehl made a motion approving BC & POs and paying bills totaling \$433,108.63. Trustee Brandon seconded the motion. The motion was passed, 3 ayes, 0 naves and 0 abstentions.

At 3:17 p.m. Trustee Albrecht adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Klafczynski

Approved By:

Date:

Attested:

Date: