

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS



PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

FEBRUARY 22, 2023 - REGULAR MEETING 7 :00 PM 23 MAPLE DRIVE, COLUMBUS, OHIO 43228

Trustee Doug Stormont called the meeting of the Prairie Township Board of Trustees to order on February 22, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the Township Hall with Trustee Cathy Schmelzer, Trustee Rod Pritchard, Fiscal Officer Natalie McKay, Township Administrator James Jewell, Recreation Director Michael Pollack, Fire Chief Allen Scott, and Sheriff Deputy B. Haren 1078 present.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Stormont opened the meeting and led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes - February 8, 2023 regular meeting minutes and the February 22, 2023 special meeting minutes

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont made a motion to approve the February 8, 2023 regular meeting minutes and the February 22, 2023 special meeting minutes . Ms. Schmelzer seconded. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye ; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Franklin County Sheriff 's Office

Sheriff Deputy B. Haren 1078 gave the Sheriff's report for the last two weeks.

From date - To date	Total	Change since last report
Total Calls for Service/Self-Initiated Runs	565	+20
Total Reports Taken	61	+3
Arrests/Citations	47	-3
Thefts	5	-1
Suspicious Activity Stops / Calls	71	+13
Traffic Stops	68	+6
Stolen Vehicles	0	
Drug Related Arrests	3	
Overdose	2	

On Sunday February 12 Deputies Floyd and Anderson responded to a call of an aggressive dog running loose in the area of 81 Maple Dr. The deputies attempted to confine the dog in the fenced yard at this location, but it was able to jump the fence and at one point it was believed to have attacked a deputy and it was tased by both deputies. The deputies along with animal control were able to take control of the dog using lead poles. The responding did an excellent job keeping the dog confined to this area and keeping the public safe.

On Monday February 13 Deputies responded to a dog bite incident on Oxley Rd. A dog had gotten loose and ventured into a back yard on Oxley containing young children. The dog bit one of the children. While it was attacking the child a relative of the dog's owner was able to locate the dog and after multiple attempts to physically remove the bite the individual shot the dog. The child was transported to Children's Hospital by Prairie Medics.

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Deputy Haren along with Deputies Richards, Robinson and Ripple assisted Prairie Township Fire Investigators with locating, a person of interest, related to the fire at the Galloway Village Apartments last Thursday. We spoke to multiple people in the complex who know this person, but we were unable to locate them.

Discussion:

Mr. Pritchard asked if Deputy Haren was involved in the investigation he heard about on the news tonight, where individuals were cutting down trees in Galloway. The deputy said he was not familiar with the story. A few residents also had heard the story on the news.

Debra Kurtz of 217 Evergreen asked Deputy Haren to explain Citizens Academy.

“The mission of the Franklin County Sheriff’s Citizens Academy is to build a stronger relationship with the community it serves; expose citizens to some of the training a deputy sheriff receives; give citizens a better understand of our values, organization, and operation; reduce crime through community involvement; and promote cooperation and support for the Franklin County Sheriff’s Office.”

Voytek Zaleski of 4756 Hilton Avenue asked for clarification about the overdose cases and if either was a fatal case. He also asked if someone had intentionally set the fire at Galloway Village. Deputy Haren confirmed one of the overdose victims died. He also said that he isn’t investigating the fire so he cannot comment on that.

Fiscal Officer 's Report

Approval of Warrants and Payroll

Ms. McKay reported this week’s warrants list detailed payments to 61 vendors totaling \$222,484.51. She requested the Board’s approval to pay all items on this week’s warrant list totaling \$222,484.51 along with 2/24/23 payroll of \$227,002.51 for a total cash disbursement of \$449,487.02.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont motioned “so moved”. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion . The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Kate Martinez of 445 Emmitt asked “What is a warrant?”, and whether she is allowed to know who the vendors are. Ms. McKay described the warrant as a check used for payment, and said the information is public record. One can view the list of warrants on the township’s website.

Standing Business

Fire Department

Annual Physicals : Chief Scott asked the Board to approve an agreement with Mt. Carmel Occupational Health to conduct annual physicals for 22 of our full-time members at a cost not to exceed \$17,600.00. The individual physicals will vary based on age and necessary follow-up tests. This cost is a worst-case scenario. MCOC has been conducting our pre-employment and fit for duty physicals for several years and we have been pleased with the results.

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Comments/Issues: Mr. Pritchard asked why the Township contracts out for this service versus firefighters going to their primary care physicians for physicals. Chief Scott explained there is a special type of physical specific for firefighters, which a primary care physician wouldn't perform. Many firefighters share their results though, with their primary care physicians. He also added that in the past, the Township was billed per physical, and the cost of each was within the Chief's approval authority. MCOC has changed their billing practice and now the approval exceeds both his and the Township Administrator's approval, and must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board approve an agreement with Mt. Carmel Occupational Health to conduct annual physicals for full time firefighters at a cost not to exceed \$17,600.00. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

ESO Scheduling Upgrade : Chief Scott asked the Board's approval for an addition to our service agreement with ESO. We currently use the Basic Scheduling program and would like to upgrade to Scheduling Plus. The annual cost is \$3,895.00, with a start-up fee of \$595.00. This program will allow us to better track our daily personnel scheduling and unit assignments. We currently pay \$2,157.00. Therefore, the net annual cost for the advanced program will be \$1,738.00.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board approve an additional service agreement with ESO for Scheduling Plus at an annual cost of \$3,895.00 with a start-up fee of \$595.00 and authorize the Fire Chief to execute any necessary documents. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

E242 Repairs : Chief Scott asked the Board to approve an estimate for repairs to Engine 242 in the amount of \$7,847.83. This is our backup engine. The work will be completed by Atlantic Emergency Solutions.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board approve repairs to Engine 242 at a cost of \$7,847.83 to be completed by Atlantic Emergency Solutions. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Discussion: Mr. Pritchard commented that it's hard to keep track of all the repairs we're doing and asked for a quick review of what's going on. Chief Scott clarified that Engine 243 is the truck that is having the framework, not Engine 242. David Birlhelmer of 6362 Clover Meadow Court, asked after the age of Engine 242 and how long an Engine can be in service. Chief Scott said he's not aware of any ruling that specifies how long a truck can be in service. The replacement estimate for a new Engine truck is around \$800,000, so maintaining the trucks we have as long as possible is important. Mr. Stormont commented that he thought the Township trucks were on a 15 year rotation and Chief Scott said that sounds right.

Discussion on Railway Emergencies : Chief Scott, in response to a number of questions he's had recently because of the news coverage of the East Palestine spill, put together some notes to describe what a response might look like if there were a potential Railway Emergency in Prairie Township.

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1. A local Fire Department's initial role is to identify the threats, evacuate as necessary and attempt to contain the release or spill as much as possible. Tactics may include containing liquid runoff, extinguishing fires, or allowing them to burn off.
2. County, State, and Federal Emergency Management agencies will control the scene as soon as possible, after the initial response.
3. Local Fire Departments cannot mitigate large scale hazardous material releases.
4. There are mitigation plans in place for and resources available for such events... For example, Ohio Fire Chiefs Emergency Response System.

Update on Home Safety Surveys : Chief Scott reminded all in attendance that the Home Safety Surveys now being offered by the Fire Marshal are not limited to fire safety. They can also include fall prevention and other senior citizen safety issues. There is no charge for this service. Please contact F.M. Powers @ 614-878-7100 to schedule an appointment.

Community Center

Mr. Pollack didn't have any agenda items to present tonight.

Discussion: None

Roads, Cemeteries, and Parks Department

GRSC One Field Concrete Work : Mr. Jewell asked the Board to approve a quote from Berkshire Boys, Inc. in the amount of \$13,250.00 for concrete work at the One Field. This will include installation of sidewalk and handicap detectable warning mats connecting to the parking lot and make it wheelchair accessible from the parking lot to the field.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board approve concrete work at the One Field at a cost of \$13,250.00 to be completed by Berkshire Boys, Inc and authorize the Road Superintendent to sign any necessary documents. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Discussion: Mr. Pritchard asked if the concrete work at the One Field would be done before the ribbon cutting event on April 8th and Mr. Jewell said yes, in fact, the Berkshire Boys were ready to start this week but they had to wait for Board approval. There was some discussion about the gates at the One Field and concerns that some are locked and may lead to individuals climbing over the gates to get off the field. Mr. Jewell confirmed the gates have not yet been locked, just closed. Mr. Stormont asked if the concrete will be thick enough to support a medic and Mr. Jewell said he believed it would support a medic.

Commercial Building and Zoning Department

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Ms. Scott didn't have any Commercial Building and Zoning Department items to present tonight.

Discussion: None

Administration

Nuisance Assessments :

None

Nuisance Resolutions : Mr. Jewell presented the nuisances to be declared tonight.

Galloway Village Nuisance locations:

Address	Parcel Number
4951-4973 Eastham Way	240-004822
4820 Medfield Way	240-004847
4984-5006 Medfield Way	240-004838

*strike-through addresses not declared

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board adopt Resolution NU-07-23, "A Resolution declaring nuisance and ordering abatement at properties with refuse and debris. " Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The Roll Call votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Other Nuisance locations:

Address	Parcel Number
80-160 Old Village Road	240-006829
423 Wynbrook Court	240-006369
499 Emmit Avenue	240-001463
240-001464 Emmit Avenue	240-001464
542 S Grener Avenue	240-006849

*strike-through addresses not declared

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board adopt Resolution NU-08-23, "A Resolution declaring nuisance and ordering abatement at properties with refuse and debris. " Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The Roll Call votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Unsafe Structure (Res. 07-23) : Mr. Jewell requested the Trustees sign a Resolution to initiate the process for the removal of the insecure, unsafe, and structurally defective structure (per ORC 505.86) owned by Jerry E. Frazier, located at 454 Mix Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43228, Parcel No. 240-001413. The Board has been provided the Letter of Recommendation from Fire Marshal Matt Powers. He also asked the Board to authorize the Zoning Director to sign a Party In Interest Notification to all owners/lienholders on the property notifying them of the declared structure and option to request a hearing with the Board.

Comments/Issues: None

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Mr. Stormont moved that the Board adopt Resolution 07-23, "A Resolution providing notice of the intent to remove insecure, unsafe, and structurally defective structure owned by Jerry E. Frazier (aka Jerry Frasier), located on Franklin County Parcel No. 240-001413, in Prairie Township, Franklin County, Ohio" and authorize the Zoning Director to sign the notice to owners and lienholders of the insecure, unsafe, and structurally defective structure per ORC 505.86. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The Roll Call votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Mr. Pritchard asked Mr. Jewell to have Ms. Scott check out a concrete block building that's partially torn down, on South Greener.

2023 Wellness Competition : Mr. Jewell asked the Board to approve the 2023 Wellness Competition for full time employees participating in our insurance. This year's competition is once again 5K walk/run at the Galloway Road Sports Complex like we did last year. Employees who participate in the 5K will have a \$0.00 insurance premium deduction on their 5/10/23 paycheck (spouses and families are not required to participate but are welcome to attend). The date for the 5K walk is Thursday, April 27, 2023, at 5:00p.m.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board approve the 2023 Wellness Competition as presented. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Concession Stand Services Discussion : Mr. Jewell asked for the Board's guidance on the lease with Galloway Snack Shack LLC since the contract is expiring soon, and did they have a preference whether he extended the current lease or renegotiated a new one.

Discussion: Ms. Schmelzer asked Mr. Conner if he had a preference for extending or renegotiating and Mr. Conner said he is open to either. Mr. Pritchard commented that while it has been a struggle out there up till now, the spring and summer schedule looks pretty good. The Board agreed Mr. Jewell should proceed with extending the existing or negotiating a new contract with the Galloway Snack Shack LLC and bring it back to the Board for approval when ready.

Old Business

Branding - Phasing - Mr. Jewell reported that he was able to talk with Mr. Stormont about the Branding proposal shared by the CIC at an earlier meeting, and everyone on the Board is caught up on the plan. Mr. Stormont reminded the Board that the Trustees have the final rights of refusal for any logo or website changes. He went on to say that he didn't believe the website is phone friendly and there is an upgrade coming. Mr. Jewell recommended approving the CIC to move forward, in a controlled fashion, with the initial phases which would include Discovery and Research—engaging stakeholders through surveys, interviews, and live sessions to develop an understanding of what makes Prairie Township unique. Mr. Jewell will ask the CIC to hold on the other phases until a consultant can figure out what to do with the website.

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Community Garden - Ms. Martinez reported that she, along with Marie Gooslin and Debra Kurtz met with the with Deb, met with Mid-Ohio Food Collective, and visited one of their gardens. She said they were happy to learn about the opportunity in Prairie Township and interested in having their footprint replicated there. The Collective's mission is five-fold: foodbank, farm, farmacy, kitchen, market. Ms. Martinez said the Collective has a surplus of Vertigrow structures, and is interested in talking with Prairie Township. Ms. Martinez has scheduled a meeting with them on March 7th and invited Mr. Jewell to attend.

Ms. Gooslin said that she had reached out to neighbors as far out as Norton Road and Galloway Road and found a lot of interest among those she spoke with about having a community garden. Ms. Kurtz commented that having met with Ms. Martinez and the Collective, she understood that what they proposed is that Prairie Township's community garden would be under their umbrella. The purpose of the 3/7 meeting is to learn more about how their organization functions, and we wouldn't have to recreate the wheel.

Tony Self of 372 Fernhill Ave commented that "this is all well and good but who is going to pay for the upkeep" and what happens if there are damages and injuries there. Who is responsible and liable? Mr. Pritchard reiterated the Board's request for a proposal from the residents outlining the Community Garden plan, so that it can be evaluated by the Board of Trustees and the Township's attorney.

New Business

Mr. Zaleski asked for clarification of the Township's definition of transient and temporary. As an example, he asked if one were to set up a tent and sell cell phones, how long could one do that. Mr. Pritchard explained that selling within a brick and mortar structure is considered permanent and outside of that is considered transient or temporary, and to sell outside of a permanent structure would require a transient vendor license. Additionally, if staging in open air on private commercial property, the Township has the right to require a permit and the permit would define the duration.

Azee Raghbat of 4875 W. Broad St. spoke with the Board about his food truck. He said that April 7 is fast approaching, which is when his Prairie Township transient vendor permit expires. He said has plans for staying and for leaving, and isn't acting on either because he wants to know what he can do to convince the Board to allow him to stay. Mr. Stormont suggested that a variance might be called for, and he asked Mr. Jewell to follow up with Ms. Scott to see if that's the proper path forward.

Patty Birthelmer of 6362 Clover Meadow Court asked if there is a regulation on signage because she's noticed signage is still visible for a check cashing establishment that has gone out of business. Mr. Jewell, after confirming the establishment to which she was referring, said the new owner has approached the Township about their plans and we should be seeing changes there soon.

Mike Lascola, External Affairs Manager with AEP Ohio introduced himself to the Board of Trustees, and offered himself as their primary contact should they need anything from AEP Ohio. He offered his business card with contact information to each member of the Board.

Public Comment

None

Announcements

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Township Sheriff 's Office Number: The Township has been working with the Franklin County Sheriff's Office to create a designated phone number for the Prairie Township area. We are currently working with our IT department to get this number set up on our system.

Adjournment

Mr. Stormont declared the meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Chairman Doug Stormont

Fiscal Officer Natalie McKay