

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS



PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

APRIL 21, 2021 - REGULAR MEETING 7 :00 PM 123 INAH AVENUE, COLUMBUS, OHIO 43228

Due to the current COVID-19 Health Emergency and limited space at the Township Hall, the meeting was moved to Fire Station 241 and livestreamed via Webex on the Township's website.

Mr. Kennedy opened the meeting and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Steve Kennedy, Vice Chair Doug Stormont, Trustee Cathy Schmelzer, Fiscal Officer Sherry Henning, Township Administrator Rob Peters and Fire Chief Allen Scott were all in attendance at 123 Inah Avenue. Zoning Inspector Connie Swisher attended remotely. All other Department Heads were excused in advance from tonight's meeting.

Resolutions Honoring Retiring Employees

Three Resolutions were presented honoring Dave McAninch (Road), Connie Swisher (Zoning), and Mike Ellis (Fire) for their service to Prairie Township and congratulating them on their retirement.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board approve Resolution 09-21, "A Resolution honoring Firefighter Mike Ellis for his service to Prairie Township and congratulating him on his retirement " Mr. Stormont seconded. Roll Call Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board approve Resolution 10-21, "A Resolution honoring Zoning Inspector Connie Swisher for her service to Prairie Township and congratulating her on her retirement " Mr. Stormont seconded. Roll Call Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board approve Resolution 11-21, "A Resolution honoring Service Director Dave McAninch for his service to Prairie Township and congratulating him on his retirement " Mr. Stormont seconded. Roll Call Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes - April 7, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy motioned "So Moved". Mr. Stormont seconded. The votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. The meeting minutes for the April 7, 2021 Regular Meeting were approved.

Franklin County Sheriff 's Office

Deputy Hamilton reported 518 dispatch runs, 42 traffic stops, ATV stops, 78 suspicious vehicles. The speed trailer was placed on Alton Darby Creek with the highest speed recorded at 45 mph.

A question was raised regarding an update on the Hilton Ave incident involving the officer shooting. Deputy Hamilton explain the person was arrested that was involved in the shooting.

Fiscal Officer 's Report

Approval of Warrant s and Payroll

This week's warrants list detailed payments to 70 vendors totaling \$373,544.28.

Ms. Henning requested the Board's approval to pay all items on this week's warrant list totaling \$373,544.28 along with the 4/09/21 payroll of \$233,793.82 for a total cash disbursement of \$607,338.10.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy motioned "so moved". Mr. Stormont seconded. The votes were as follows: Mr . Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer , Aye. Motion passed.

Transfer to Road District

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Ms. Henning asked the Board to approve transferring \$500,000.00 from the General Fund (1000) to the Road District Fund (2141). This money was approved in the permanent appropriations.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board authorize the Fiscal Office to transfer \$500,000 from the General Fund to the Road District Fund. Mr. Stormont seconded. The votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Standing Business:

Fire Department

Chief Scott announced that the Firefighter's Association's annual Mother's Day Flower Sale is happening now and ends on April 30th. Flowers can be ordered on the Township website or the Association Facebook page. A question was raised regarding the flower sale and Chief Scott explained that the firefighters have an association that is a non-profit to help with the firefighter's budget.

Community Center

No items.

Roads, Cemeteries and Parks Department

Change Order #1 Galloway Road Improvement Project

Mr. Peters recommended the Board approve Change Order # 1 for the Galloway Road Improvements and Private Storm Sewer Improvements for Prairie Township Sports Complex Phase 2 Project. The change order is for a time extension caused by a request from Franklin County to delay closing Galloway Road until after the current school year.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board approve Change Order #1 for the Galloway Road Improvements and Private Storm Sewer Improvements and authorize the Chair to sign the Change Order. Mr. Kennedy seconded. The votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Approval to Hire

Mr. Peters recommended the Board hire Justin Bosch as a full time Road and Cemetery Laborer 1. Mr. Peters would like this hire to be effective May 1 2021. Justin would hire in at step one of the current five-step pay scale which is \$18.50 per hour. This hire would be contingent on Justin getting his class A CDL within six months of his hire date. Justin has been a part-time employee since 2016 and prior to that worked in our summer youth program.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board approve hiring Justin Bosch as Road Laborer 1 with a starting hourly rate of \$18.50, effective May 1, 2021. Mr. Stormont seconded. The votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Approval to Hire Part-Time Laborers

Mr. Peters asked the Board to approve hiring (2) part-time Road Laborers. Mr. Peters recommended hiring Earl Braithwaite III effective April 22, 2021 at a starting rate of \$16.00 per hour (Step 1 +\$2.00 CDL bonus) and Brandan Higginbotham, effective May 3, 2021 at a starting rate of \$14.00 per hour. These new hires will be subject to the new hire drug screening and Earl will go into the DOT random pool because he has a CDL.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board approve hiring Earl Braithwaite III, effective April 22, 2021 with a

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starting hourly rate of \$16.00 per hour and Brandon Higginbotham, effective May 3, 2021 with a starting hourly rate of \$14.00 per hour. Mr. Stormont seconded. The votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Road Work

Mr. Peters recommended the Board approve the roads provided in the attachment prior to the meeting to be included in the 2021 Franklin County Engineers Road Contract for Townships. The estimate Mr. McAninch is recommending comes to \$935,181.25. This only an estimate the work still needs to go to bid. The Maintenance of Traffic and a percentage of the bond is included in this cost but that is an estimate as well. The road district fund has \$750,000.00 in it. We have \$134,205.49 from the increase in Gas Tax. Any amount over what the road district budget and the increased gas tax amount will come from operating funds for the Road Department.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board approve 2021 road work, as presented. Mr. Stormont seconded. The votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Commercial Building and Zoning

Zoning Amendment Resolution (Res. 08-21)

Mr. Peters asked the Board to adopt a resolution approving Application Number 185-RZ-21. A public hearing was held at the last meeting to discuss Application Number 185-RZ-21 and a request to rezone from R-4 to R-8 for the property located at 264 Norton Road. Zoning Commission recommended approval of Application No. 185-RZ-21 at their February 23, 2021 Public Hearing.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board adopt Resolution 08-21, "A Resolution to amend the Zoning Resolution and maps of Prairie Township, Franklin County, Ohio Application Number 185-RZ-21". Mr. Stormont seconded. Roll Call Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Advanced Industry Supply ("AIS")

Mr. Peters asked the Board to authorize the Zoning Department to file a case against AIS (Advanced Industry Supply) with the Environmental Court. A letter from Brosius, Johnson & Griggs was sent on March 15, 2021 to the applicant giving them a deadline of 30 days to bring the property into full compliant with the Prairie Township Zoning Resolution.

This property is located by Bowling Brook by the railroad tracks is the property location.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board authorize the Zoning Department to file a case against Advanced Industry Supply with the Environmental Court. Mr. Stormont seconded. The votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Administration

Nuisance Cases

Kennedy moved that the Board adopt Resolution NU-29-21 "A Resolution declaring nuisance and ordering abatement at 33 Maple Drive." Mr. Stormont seconded. Roll Call Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

A question was asked regarding the criteria on the complaints for a difference of the 4 or 7 day complaint process? Paul Cramer, hired a landscaper to do work on the property, couldn't do it today with the snow on the ground. He will be doing the work tomorrow. Mr. Kennedy; if a nuisance was declared in the past 12 months, then the property gets escalated. The meeting is to declare the property. If the grass is cut prior to the township coming to the property to take care of the grass, the nuisance will go away.

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Kennedy moved that the Board adopt Resolution NU-30-21 "A Resolution declaring nuisance and ordering abatement at 4655 Hilton Avenue. " Mr. Stormont seconded. Roll Call Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Kennedy moved that the Board adopt Resolution NU-31-21 "A Resolution declaring nuisance and ordering abatement at 4678 Hilton Avenue. " Mr. Stormont seconded. Roll Call Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Kennedy moved that the Board adopt Resolution NU-32-21 "A Resolution declaring nuisance and ordering abatement at 174 Postle Boulevard." Mr. Stormont seconded. Roll Call Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

2021 Summer Youth Program

Mr. Peters asked the Board to approve advertising and hiring up to six (6) participants for the 2021 Summer Youth Program. Participants will be working under the Facility Maintenance Supervisor at the Community Center. The hourly rate for the participants will be \$8.80 per hour (minimum wage). The Township's appropriations include \$5,000 for this year's program (not including expenses for supplies). This year's program will begin on 6/16/21 and end on 8/12/21 to coincide with semi-monthly payroll dates.

Comments/Issues: None

Kennedy moved that the Board authorize the Township staff to advertise for the 2021 Summer Youth Work Program and hire up to 6 participants at an hourly rate of \$8.80 per hour. Mr. Stormont seconded. Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Trash Hauler Resolution Amendment

Mr. Peters presented an amendment to the trash hauler resolution adopted by the Board on January 13, 2021. Changes include:

- Adding "SER" to the included zoning districts
- Language regarding refuse not placed in containers & requirement to notify the township of violations
- Language regarding bulk pick up
- Language regarding containers in an alley
- Language regarding trash can removal within 24 hours
- 1st violation fine for violation of section 3 changed to \$150.00

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board waive the second reading of this resolution and authorize adoption on the final reading. Mr. Stormont seconded. Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Kennedy moved that the Board adopt "Amended Resolution HR-01-20, A resolution establishing licensing requirements for residential solid waste haulers and residential solid waste, garbage, refuse and rubbish collection ", as an emergency measure. Mr. Stormont seconded. Roll Call Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Concession Stand Lease Agreement

Mr. Peters asked the Board to adopt Resolution 12-21, "A Resolution approving the terms and conditions of a lease with Snack Shack LLC and authorizing the Township Administrator to execute the lease".

Comments/Issues: None

Kennedy moved that the Board adopt Resolution 12-21 "A Resolution approving the terms and conditions of a lease with Snack Shack LLC and authorizing the Township Administrator to execute the lease". Mr. Stormont seconded. Roll Call Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Old Business

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Dan Stagler of 4744 Frost Ave explained trailers and cars are in the yards and the rat problem that is coming into his yard. Mr. Kennedy recommends calling zoning for nuisance complaint. If anyone has a complaint, please call zoning.

A question was raised regarding what is happening with the property maintenance code. All three trustees have different opinions on having a property maintenance code.

Mr. Kennedy, personally doesn't believe in having a property maintenance code. Governments should not have a say in how homes are kept or in people's lives. The vote went to the residents 15 years ago and it was out voted. While the zoning department is outstanding, this does come with a cost and the current price is about \$400,000 per year. If the property maintenance code is implemented, then the zoning departments budget would need increased to manage the increased flow. The aging population is big in the township and if it is implemented, can the aging home owners be able to have the work done.

Ms. Schmelzer, does not want to tell you what color house, shutters, doors, or how many trees to plant on your property.

The property maintenance code is to get things cleaned up and get properties kept up. The changes in the trash hauling will help with the rat problem but that is only one part. Cars should not be kept in back yards or broken down. At this time if a car is broken down in the yard or in the back yard, they cannot do anything. RV's and vehicles have been in yards since Ms. Schmelzer has been in high school.

Mr. Stormont explained the property maintenance code should be put on the ballot to have the township vote on the code. If they vote it in, then it should be implemented.

Rod Pritchard of Mernan Rd explained that the property maintenance code is essential to maintain the property values in the Township. We already have rules and regulations that are in the Township that are enforced and this would be the same. We have to control this problem with a property maintenance code and to help control the rat problem.

Susan Howard of 238 Fernhill Rd explained that the Township took many things that were not garbage or trash from her yard but did not take the fallen tree branch that had recently fallen from a storm and should have been removed. Mr. Peters will follow up with them directly.

New Business

Rod Pritchard thanked the Trustees regarding the Pleasant-Prairie Solar Project. The Township now has the opportunity to have a say in the project. Rules for zoning, agricultural in that area, and the Darby Accord are being taken away. He wants to make sure they have the property. Mr. Pritchard encourages the Trustees to talk to the residents and help with spreading the word.

A question was asked on why a resolution regarding a need to file a court case was on the agenda today? Mr. Peters stated the February BZA hearing has not been held in compliance. The next step is to take it to court to resolve the problem and to become compliant with zoning.

Public Comment

None

Announcements

Mr. Peters announced the Annual Spring Clean-up schedule is April 29, 30, and May 1, with the personal document shredder on May 1st for the first time. May 6, 7, 8th is the second part of the clean-up schedule.

Executive Session

Mr. Peters requested an executive session to discuss personnel matters.

At 8:20 p.m., Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board go into executive session per ORC section 121.22(G)(1) to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee. G(2) To consider the purchase of property for public purposes, the sale of property at competitive bidding, or the sale or other disposition of unneeded, obsolete, or unfit-for-use property in accordance with section 505.10 of the Revised Code. Mr. Stormont seconded. Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

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At 9:08 p.m., Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board come out of Executive Session. Mr. Stormont seconded. Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

No decisions were made.

Administration, Continued:

Mr. Peters asked Board to approve an updated job description and title change for the Zoning Inspector position to Commercial Building & Zoning Director. An updated description was provided prior to the meeting.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board approve updated job description and job title change for the Zoning Inspector position to Commercial Building & Zoning Director. Mr. Stormont seconded. Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Promotion

Mr. Peters asked the Board to promote Dana Scott to the position of Interim Commercial Building and Zoning Director, effective May 1, 2021, with a rate of pay of \$79,000.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board promote Dana Scott to Interim Commercial Building and Zoning Director with a starting salary of \$79,000, effective May 1, 2021. Mr. Stormont seconded. Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Job Description

Mr. Peters asked the Board to approve a new job description for Recreation Supervisor 2.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board approve the job description for Recreation Supervisor 2 as submitted. Mr. Stormont seconded. Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Promotion

Mr. Peters asked the Board to approve promoting Christian Williams to Recreation Supervisor 2, effective May 1, 2021 with a rate of pay of \$50,000.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Kennedy moved that the Board approve promoting Christian Williams to Recreation Supervisor 2 at a rate of \$50,000, effective May 1, 2021. Mr. Stormont seconded. Votes were as follows: Mr. Stormont, Aye; Mr. Kennedy, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm

Chairman Steve Kennedy

Fiscal Officer Sherry Henning