

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS



PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

SEPTEMBER 6, 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 September 6, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the Township Hall with Trustee Cathy Schmelzer, Trustee Rod Pritchard, Township Administrator James Jewell, Human Resources Director Randi Good, Zoning Director Dana Scott, Zoning Assistant Sam Swisher, Recreation Director Michael Pollack, and Fire Chief Allen Scott present.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

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

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board appoint Randi Good as Fiscal Officer Pro Tem. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. Votes: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Sidewalk Public Hearing (Res. 31-23)

There was a public hearing regarding the 2023 sidewalk replacement program assessments, which will be forwarded to the Franklin County Auditor. This year's program consisted of residents who chose to participate and involuntary participants. This year there were 31 addresses total. 29 participants chose to assess for a total of \$74,019.63 and 2 participants paid in full for a total of \$6,163.13 bringing the grand total for this year's program of \$80,182.76. After the public hearing, Mr. Jewell asked the Board to adopt Resolution 31-23 "A Resolution to levy special assessments for the repair of sidewalks in Prairie Township".

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board adopt Resolution 31-23 "A Resolution to levy special assessments for the repair of sidewalks in Prairie Township ". Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. Roll Call Votes: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes - August 23, 2023 regular meeting minutes and August 23, 2023 special meeting minutes.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont made a motion to approve the August 23, 2023 regular meeting minutes and August 23, 2023 special meeting minutes. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. Votes: 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 as follows:

8/23/2023 - 9/6/2023	Total
Total Calls for Service/Self-Initiated Runs	552

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Total Reports Taken	60
Arrests/Citations	38
Thefts	8
Suspicious Activity Stops / Calls	87
Traffic Stops	79
Stolen Vehicles	1
Recovered Stolen Vehicles	2
Drug Related Arrests	4
Overdose	2
Burglaries / B&E	1
OVI	1

- The FCSO Hope Task Force is investigating a double fatal overdose on Hilton Ave. Detectives believe that they have a person of interest in relation to this incident. Undercover detectives are assisting with the investigation as well.
- I wanted to take this opportunity, with Homecoming dances and parties around the corner, to remind parents as well as other youth that hosting a party and serving alcohol to minors is illegal just as consuming alcohol under the age of twenty-one is.
- Deputy Adkins will be taking over as the liaison for Prairie Twp but I will continue to assist him with anything he may need a hand with and you will continue to see me at some events in the township. Thank you for letting me serve your township.

Deputy Haren also introduced the new liaison, Deputy Dan Adkins.

Mr. Zalinski asked a few questions regarding the report given and asked how he could get the names of those arrested. Deputy Haren provided the information on how to request a public record from the Sheriff's office.

Fiscal Officer 's Report

Approval of Warrants and Payroll: This week's warrants list detailed payments to 77 vendors totaling \$182,832.80. Ms. Good requested the Board's approval to pay all items on this week's warrant list totaling \$182,832.80 along with 9/11/23 payroll of \$192,334.92 for a total cash disbursement of \$375,167.72.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont motioned "so moved". Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. Votes: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

FEMA Grant Closeout: Ms. Good asked the Board to approve Transferring \$20,794.21 to the FEMA fund from the General Fund (which will then be advanced back to the General Fund and will close out the **advances for the project**). She indicated that she believes this money was advanced back in 2021 but should have been transferred as a part of the township's **12.5% contribution towards the project**.

Comments/Issues: None

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Mr. Stormont moved that the Board approve transferring \$20,794.21 to the FEMA Fund (2902) from the General Fund (1000) in order to close out the FEMA Grant. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. Votes: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Standing Business

Fire Department

Resignation of Full-Time Firefighter: Chief Scott asked the Board to accept the resignation of full-time FF, Jake Rowe, effective September 19th. Jake has accepted a position at Pleasant Twp. We wish him well.

Comments/Issues: Mr. Pritchard asked if steps were being taken to replace Mr. Rowe. Chief Scott explained the normal hiring process.

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board accept the resignation of full-time firefighter Jake Rowe effective September 19, 2023. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. Votes: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Fire Department Monthly Report - August 2023:

Incident Type Group	Incident Type Code	Incident Type	Count of Incidents
100 - Fire	111	Building fire	1
	112	Fires in structure other than in a building	1
	113	Cooking fire, confined to container	3
	118	Trash or rubbish fire, contained	1
	142	Brush or brush-and-grass mixture fire	1
	151	Outside rubbish, trash or waste fire	1
	154	Dumpster or other outside trash receptacle fire	1
100 - Fire Total			9
200 - Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat	251	Excessive heat, scorch burns with no ignition	2
300 - Rescue & EMS	300	Rescue, EMS incident, other	2
	311	Medical assist, assist EMS crew	11
	320	Emergency medical service incident, other	3
	321	EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	231
	322	Motor vehicle accident with injuries	17
	324	Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.	13

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	360	Water & ice-related rescue, other	1
	381	Rescue or EMS standby	1
300 - Rescue & EMS Total			279
400 - Hazardous Condition	412	Gas leak (natural gas or LPG)	3
	424	Carbon monoxide incident	1
	444	Power line down	1
400 - Hazardous Condition Total			5
500 - Service Call	500	Service Call, other	1
	510	Person in distress, other	4
	511	Lock-out	1
	531	Smoke or odor removal	1
	551	Assist police or other governmental agency	1
	553	Public service	3
	554	Assist invalid	18
	561	Unauthorized burning	2
	571	Cover assignment, standby, moveup	1
500 - Service Call Total			32
600 - Good Intent Call	600	Good intent call, other	7
	611	Dispatched & canceled en route	46
	622	No incident found on arrival at dispatch address	15
600 - Good Intent Call Total			68
700 - False Alarm	700	False alarm or false call, other	5
	733	Smoke detector activation due to malfunction	1
	735	Alarm system sounded due to malfunction	1
	743	Smoke detector activation, no fire - unintentional	3
	745	Alarm system activation, no fire - unintentional	5
	746	Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO	1
700 - False Alarm Total			16
800 - Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	813	Wind storm, tornado/hurricane assessment	1
Grand Total			412
Fire Total			133
EMS Total			279

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241s Total		274	
243s Total		43	
Auto Aid Given			
Brown	3		
CFD	116		
Franklin	5		
Jeff	5		
Nowrich	2		
Total	131		
Aid Received			
CFD	14		
Frank	7		
Norwich	4		
Pleasant	2		
Jeff	1		
Working Fire on Buena Vista			
2 Fatal Motorcycle Accidents			
Inspections (TBD Later)			
Training Hours 162			

Mr. Pritchard asked for an update on equipment. Chief Scott explained the wrecked medic is currently being fixed and will hopefully be done by November. The new medic is still being built. The firetruck in Wisconsin has been inspected and they sent a list of other items that need to be done. They hope to have the grass fighter tank by the end of the month and it will take 1-2 weeks to install.

Community Center

Jr. Cavs Winter Basketball: Mr. Pollack asked the Board to approve an agreement between the Cleveland Cavaliers and the Community Center for a Jr. Cavs Partnership for the 2023-2024 season. The Cavaliers will provide jerseys, ticket vouchers and several additional benefits. The Community Center will pay \$35 per participant to the Cavaliers once registration ends. This is the second year for this program.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board approve a one-year agreement with the Cleveland Cavaliers for the Jr. Cavs Partnership for the 2023-2024 season and authorize the Recreation Director to sign the necessary documents. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. Votes: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

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Farmer’s Market Petty Cash: Mr. Pollack asked the Board to authorize issuing \$1,200.00 in petty cash to the Community Center for the WIC and SNAP programs at the Farmer’s Market.

Comments/Issues: Mr. Pollack is going to reach out to vendors to see if a location change would be favorable for future markets.

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board approve issuing \$1,200.00 in petty cash to the Community Center for the Farmer Market and authorize the Fiscal Office to issue a warrant on September 7, 2023. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. Votes: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Recreation Department Monthly Report - August 2023:

Community Center Monthly Report

Numbers as of **31-Aug-23**

		percentage
Total Current Community Center Members	7,285	
Total Members that are Prairie Township Residents	2,191	30.08%
Total Members that are Non-Residents	5,094	69.92%
Total Members that are JEDZ	141	1.94%
Total Members that are Senior Citizens	4,998	68.61%
Total Unique Senior Citizen Visits	5,389	
Number of new members/renewals since last report	113	
How many memberships that expired that were not renewed	101	
Retention rate percentage	99	
Events or significant programs		
Group Fitness Classes	911	
Basketball	420	
Pickleball	13	
Concert in the Park	160	
Farmers Market (WIC- 350)	725	
Youth Soccer League	160	
TOPSoccer	49	

Mr. Pollack thanked the Road Department for parking lot repairs. During shutdown, the floors were redone, building was deep cleaned, and pool maintenance was completed.

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Roads, Cemeteries, and Parks Department

Mr. McAninch was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Mr. Jewell presented the items for the Road Department.

Nuisance Tree (Res. 32-23): At the August 9, 2023 Trustee meeting, the Board declared a tree located at 4701 Frost Avenue a nuisance tree and ordered the homeowner to remove the tree. The tree and stump were properly removed at a cost of \$977.00 which the Township paid for. The owner of the property voluntarily participated in the process. Mr. Jewell asked the Board to approve the assessment of \$977.00 for nuisance tree removal at 4701 Frost Avenue to be paid over a five-year period interest free.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board approve Resolution 32-23, "A Resolution to levy a special assessment for the removal of a nuisance tree in Prairie Township. " Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. Roll Call Votes: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.
Road Department Monthly Report - August 2023:

14 Graves sold
6 funerals
Chipped tree limbs at 120 address's
Trash, weeds W Broad Street
Groom OneField 2 times
Nuisance abatements at 17 properties
Mow ROW with Flail Mower 6 days
Mow parks, cemeteries and GRSC
1 W Broad Street Sweep
Topsoil, seed fertilize and straw sidewalk program 3 day
Hot Mix Sidewalk Program 1 day
Arm Mower 1 days
Power Wash Park equipment 1 days
Mt Royal tile job 2 days
Trim headstones cemeteries 5 days
Vehicle Maintenance 2 days
Install Catch Basin William Penn
Hook Up downspout drain to sewer 8465 Bluelake
Pull Behind Mower bigger properties 5 days
Topsoil, seed fertilize and straw Mt Royal tile job
Patch potholes hot mix 2 days
Repair and Paint SWACO dumpster enclosure 2 days
Spray weeds curb and gutter lines 5 days
Footers cemeteries 6 days
Dig electric lines for 2 poles PTSC cameras
Power wash side of PTCC, crack seal and stripe parking lot PTCC
Install appreciation signs to Galloway baseball at PTSC
Add risers to 2 catch basins 288 and 297 Maple Drive
Took leaf machine to Galion for preventive maintenance before leaf season

Ms. Schmelzer stated the red bench at the Prairie Township Sports Complex is damaged. Mr. Jewell is aware and was notified that Jess Howard Electric backed into it and will repair or replace it.

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Mr. Zalinski thanked the Road Department for sidewalks on Hilton Avenue. He requested 10 feet of missing sidewalk on Woodlawn Avenue. Mr. Jewell will talk with Mr. McAninch about this.

Commercial Building and Zoning Department

Nuisance Process: Mr. Swisher shared a PowerPoint explaining the inspection and documentation process required for a nuisance violation.

Comments/Issues: Mr. Pritchard asked about current software and average cost of abatement. Mowing is an average of \$600.00 and trash averages about \$1,000.00. A question was asked on the difference in time and cost for property maintenance. Ms. Scott explained the process will be different and will take longer since it goes to court.

Ms. Schmelzer asked how much time the Fire Department has spent at Galloway Village. Chief Scott will check with Fire Marshal Powers.

Question - Are legal fees going to be paid through the court process? Ms. Scott explained Galloway Village was our first process. We may be able to ask for legal fees for continued violations.

Ms. Schmelzer requested a copy of this presentation be sent to the Board and she appreciates the presentation and information for the residents.

Ms. Scott explained that staff will be working overtime on the weekends looking for violations as they seem to occur after our work hours. They will also focus on trash citations on non-meeting weeks. Ms. Scott asked that if the Trustees see anything to let the department know.

Court Cases: Melissa Carlton at 4986 Owen Street, Columbus, Ohio 43228. This injunction would be for operating a business "Owen Organics" on the property without first obtaining a Conditional Use Permit and having agriculture (animal husbandry-chickens) on a property that is under one acre in size and is in a platted subdivision.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board approve starting the legal process for an injunction against Melissa Carlton at 4986 Owen Street, Columbus, Ohio 43228, as presented, and giving Brosius, Johnson, and Griggs permission to represent this case on behalf of Prairie Township. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. Votes: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

John Griffith at Parcel No. 240-001768 S. Main Street, Galloway, Ohio 43119. This injunction would be for the off-site parking of recreational and commercial vehicles on a parcel that is zoned (R-6) medium density, for a single-family home.

Comments/Issues: None

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Mr. Stormont moved that the Board approve starting the legal process for an injunction against John Griffith at Parcel No. 240-001768 S. Main Street, Galloway, Ohio 43119, as presented, and giving Brosius, Johnson, and Griggs permission to represent this case on behalf of Prairie Township. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. Votes: Mr. Pritchard, Abstained; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Zoning Department Monthly Report - August 2023:

Franklin County Courthouse	1
Development/Informational Meetings	141
Nuisance Inspections	187
Declared Nuisances	41
Trash Resolution Inspections	42
Trash Citations	4
Zoning Inspections	294
Zoning Violations	117
Permit Inspections	23
Do Not Knock Registries	14
Contractor Registrations	3
Zoning Compliances (Permits)	43
MS4 Land Disturbance Permits	3
Open Space Permit (Hunting)	
Commercial Permits	9
Transient Vendor Permits	1
Variance Applications	2
Conditional Use Applications	
Rezoning Applications	
Appeal Applications	
Amendments/EU Modifications	
Substantially Similar Application	
Citation Revenue	\$
Zoning Revenue	\$ 3,778.00
Commercial Building Revenue	\$ 5,830.22

Administration

Mr. Jewell thanked the Zoning Department for putting the presentation together.

Nuisance Resolutions: No one was in attendance to speak on behalf of tonight's nuisance cases.

1. Galloway Village - Refuse & Debris:

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Declared	Address	Parcel Number
X	4951-4973 Eastham Way	240-004822
X	4820 Medfield Way	240-004847
X	44 Sturbridge Road	240-004839

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board adopt Resolution NU- 51-23, "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.

2. Remaining Nuisances:

Declared	Address	Parcel Number
X	218 Carilla Lane	240-003560
X	330 Topsfield Road	240-003809
X	415 Yarmouth Lane	240-003501
X	218 Evergreen Terrace	240-002118
X	240-002388 Evergreen Terrace	240-002388
X	400 Fernhill Avenue	240-002416
X	240-002418 Fernhill Avenue	240-002418
X	4965 Penhurst Road	240-002676
X	250 Emmet Avenue	240-001560
	240-000107 Kuhlwein Drive	240-000107
X	6551 Birch Park Way	240-005596
X	6624 Maple Park Way	240-005710

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board adopt Resolution NU- 52-23, "A Resolution declaring nuisance and ordering abatement at properties with uncontrolled vegetation. " Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Declared	Address	Parcel Number
	17 Lennox Avenue	240-000388
X	80-160 Old Village Road	240-006829

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board adopt Resolution NU- 53-23, "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.

Declared	Address	Parcel Number
X	392 Darbyhurst Road	240-003655
X	4775 West Broad Street	240-004909
X	4765 West Broad Street	240-005190

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Mr. Stormont moved that the Board adopt Resolution NU-5 4-23, "A Resolution declaring nuisance and ordering abatement at properties with uncontrolled vegetation and 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.

Nuisance Assessments: Mr. Jewell asked the Board to execute a "Return and Statement to County Commissioners" requesting the assessments totaling \$9,538.62 for high grass and weed abatement at (16) properties in June - August 2023 as well as execute a "Return and Statement to County Commissioners" requesting assessments totaling \$18,185.29 for removal of trash and debris at (19) properties in June - August 2023.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board execute a "Return and Statement to County Commissioners " requesting the assessments totaling \$9,538.62 for high grass and weed abatement at (16) properties in June - August 2023 as well as execute a "Return and Statement to County Commissioners " requesting assessments totaling \$18,185.29 for removal of trash and debris at (19) properties in June - August 2023. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Accepting Tax Levies for the 2024 Collection Year (Res. 33-23): I will ask the Board to approve Resolution 33-23, which accepts the Budget Commission's tax amounts and rates and authorizes the county to collect the taxes. The Franklin County Budget Commission requests such a resolution annually to set tax amounts and rates for the upcoming year.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont moved that the Board adopt Resolution 33-23, "A resolution accepting the amounts and rates determined by the Budget Commission and authorizing the necessary tax levies and certifying them to the county auditor. " Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

Fiscal Officer Resignation: Mr. Jewell asked the Board to accept the resignation of Fiscal Officer Natalie McKay effective August 31, 2023. I will also ask the Board to declare the office of Township Fiscal Officer vacant effective September 1, 2023 and authorize the Chairman to prepare and sign all necessary documents in order to notify the appropriate governmental entities of Ms. McKay's resignation and the resulting vacancy. The Board will have 30 days after the effective vacancy date to appoint a new Fiscal Officer.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Stormont moved to declare the office of the Prairie Township Fiscal Officer vacant effective September 1, 2023, and to authorize Chair Doug Stormont to prepare and execute all necessary documents in connection with the vacancy. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

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Old Business

None

New Business

None

Public Comment

None

Announcements

None

Executive Session

At 8:21 p.m., Mr. Stormont 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]. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. Roll Call Votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

At 8:45 p.m., Mr. Stormont moved that the Board come out of executive session. Ms. Schmelzer seconded. Roll Call Votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye; Mr. Stormont, Aye. Motion passed.

No decisions were made during the executive session.

Adjournment

Mr. Stormont declared the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Chairman Doug Stormont

Fiscal Officer Pro Tem Randi Good

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