

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS



PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

JANUARY 25, 2023 - REGULAR MEETING 7 :00 PM 23 MAPLE DRIVE, COLUMBUS, OHIO 43228

Trustee Cathy Schmelzer called the meeting of the Prairie Township Board of Trustees to order on January 25, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the Township Hall with Trustee Rod Pritchard, Fiscal Officer Natalie McKay, Township Administrator James Jewell, Road Superintendent Dave McAninch, Recreation Director Michael Pollack, Zoning Dept. Alicia Armentrout, Fire Chief Allen and Sheriff Deputy B. Haren 1078 present. Trustee Doug Stormont was not in attendance.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Schmelzer opened the meeting and led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CIC presentation

Abby Everson of 292 S. Starwood, OhioHealth and CIC member, was in attendance and discussed a rebranding initiative the CIC intends to fund and pursue, to include developing new logos for the Township. She said that Prairie Township lacks a clear identify and “branding will allow the township to express its true value and help create a united sense of community, while building equity among citizens, businesses, investors and visitors.” Prairie Township offers so many incredible benefits and services to its greater community, she said, listing the Community Center, the Galloway Sports Complex and One Field, the Farmer’s Market, and the \$20M investment from Doctor’s Hospital to expand their outpatient services as a few examples. Abby said that telling a succinct story of our community through a rebranding initiative would provide a way to showcase what sets Prairie Township apart. She described the six-phase approach the CIC has developed for the initiative, as well as the estimated costs per phase. Abby asked the Board to approve the CIC moving forward, to partner with the CIC, and to participate in the rebranding process.

Following her presentations, Abby answered questions from the Board members and the residents.

Debra Kurtz of 217 Evergreen asked who would pay for this initiative. Abby reiterated it would be the CIC who pays for it.

Trustee Pritchard verbalized his support of the initiative, agreeing that the Township lacks identity and is oftentimes referred to as Westland or Lincoln Village or even Galloway. He agreed the Township should boast about its benefits, including a great hospital system in Doctor’s Hospital, a metro park that is the jewel of the park system, and a fire department that is second to none. He agreed that we don’t talk about Prairie Township as a community and it would be beneficial to do so.

Kate Martinez of 445 Emmet asked how much the implementation would cost. Abby said it’s hard to say, but reiterated the estimated cost of the six-phase approach is \$62,500.

Someone reminded the group the logo was last changed when the Community Center was built. Mr. Jewell said this initiative started when the CIC was looking to put up gateway signs. They were looking at the economic development plan too, and agreed before looking at a refresh there, the CIC wanted to make sure there was clear alignment on who Prairie township is. They agreed it made sense to explore what they wanted before investing in permanent signage.

Trustee Schmelzer asked to table the decision until Trustee Stormont returns.

Approval of Minutes - January 11, 2023 regular meeting minutes

Comments/Issues: None

Ms. Schmelzer made a motion to approve the January 11, 2023, regular meeting minutes. Mr.

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Pritchard seconded. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye ; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye . Motion passed.

Franklin County Sheriff 's Office

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

Comments/Issues: None

1/11/23 - 1/25/23	Total
Total Calls for Service/Self-Initiated Runs	488
Total Reports Taken	57
Arrests/Citations	36
Thefts	11
Suspicious Activity Stops / Calls	58
Traffic Stops	46
Stolen Vehicles	3
Stolen Vehicles Recovered	3
Drug Related Arrests	4
Overdose	0
OVI	1

Deputy Richards responded to a call to assist medics in front of 4904 W. Broad on an unresponsive female in a van. Upon investigation Deputy Richards discovered a glass pipe a baggie believed to contain fentanyl and an illegally possessed firearm in the vehicle.

Deputies responded to a vehicle crash on Murnan Rd. early Tuesday morning. A vehicle traveling northbound on Murnan Rd. attempted to pass a slower moving vehicle, delivering papers, and ran off the roadway left losing control and going airborne, striking a tree and a utility pole. The crash resulted in two of the three occupants of the vehicle passing away from their injuries. Alcohol is suspected to be involved.

Deputy Corbitt along with the assistance of the Flock cameras in Prairie Township was able to locate an endangered missing adult out of Lakewood Ohio. Deputy Corbitt was logged onto the Flock system and was notified on his in-vehicle computer that a vehicle associated with a missing person had passed by one of the cameras on W. Broad St. He was able to locate that vehicle and execute a traffic stop on it and locate the missing person.

Fiscal Officer 's Report

Ms. McKay gave the Fiscal Officer's report.

Approval of Warrants and Payroll

Ms. McKay reported this week's warrants list detailed payments to 63 vendors totaling \$342,648.24. She requested the Board's approval to pay all items on this week's warrant list totaling \$342,648.24, along with the 1/25/23 payroll of \$354,814.09 for a total cash disbursement of \$697,462.33.

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Comments/Issues: None

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

Standing Business

Fire Department

Announcement - Home Fire Safety Surveys : Chief Scott announced that F.M. Powers is now offering Home Fire Safety Surveys, similar to the fire safety survey they would do for commercial buildings. Residents can call 614-878-7100 ext. 2157 to speak with Marshal Powers.

Community Center

Mr. Pollack said he had no Community Center topics for tonight's meeting but would take questions. There were no questions.

Roads, Cemeteries, and Parks Department

Mr. McAninch gave the Roads, Cemeteries and Parks Department report.

2023 Catch Basin Cleaning Program : Mr. McAninch recommended the Board approve an estimated amount for the 2023 catch basin cleaning program of \$20,000.00. He said he would schedule this to start as soon as the weather allows. The \$20,000.00 is only an estimate of the cost and time it will take to clean all the storm sewer catch basins. Mr. McAninch feels this is a valuable program for preventative maintenance for the townships storm sewer infrastructure. Mr. McAninch would also like the Board to authorize the Road Superintendent to sign a contract with Metropolitan Environmental Services Inc. establishing hourly rates for their services for 2023.

Comment/Issues: Trustee Pritchard asked what was spent for this service last year and Mr. McAninch said ~\$13,000.00

Ms. Schmelzer moved that the Board authorize an agreement with Metropolitan Environmental Services for catch basin maintenance/cleaning at a cost not to exceed \$20,000.00 and authorize the Road Superintendent to sign the contract.

Mr. Pritchard seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

2023 West Broad Street Lighting Services : Mr. McAninch recommended the Board approve the attached price list for electrical services from Jess Howard Electric Company for work along West Broad Street for the street lighting and associated electric services along that corridor and asked the Board to authorize the Road Superintendent to use them on an as needed basis for these services. The price list he shared is for the 2023 calendar year, and he noted the rates are the same as 2022, with the exception of the

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minimum going up from \$109.00 for one hour, to \$175.00 for one hour; the regular hourly rate for an electrical journeyman went up from \$70.00 to \$75.00; and the Saturday, Sunday, Holidays and Emergency hourly rate increased from \$120.00 to \$150.00.

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Comments/Issues: A resident asked for an historical average of what the Township has paid to this vendor. Mr. McAninch didn't have that information readily available.

Ms. Schmelzer moved that the Board authorize the Road Superintendent to utilize Jess Howard Electric for lighting and electrical services, as needed, along West Broad Street at the rates presented.

Mr. Pritchard seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

GRSC Phase 3.1 Change Order #2 : Mr. McAninch recommended the Board approve Change Order #2 for the GRSC Phase 3.1. This change order was for a variety of additions and non-performed items. The net result of the change order was a reduction to the original contract, in the amount of \$126,662.00.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Pritchard moved that the Board approve Change Order #2 for GRSC Phase 3.1 and authorize the Chairman to sign the Change Order. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

GRSC Pay Request #6 : Mr. McAninch recommended the Board approve pay request #6 for the GRSC Phase 3.1 in the amount of \$105,728.92 and asked the Board to authorize the Fiscal Office to issue a check in this amount on January 26, 2023.

Comments/Issues: None

Mr. Pritchard moved that the Board approve Pay Request #6 to Trucco Construction Company in the amount of \$105,728.92, and authorize the Chairman to sign the pay request, and authorize the Fiscal Office to issue a check on January 26, 2023. Ms. Schmelzer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

A resident asked about a recent water main break in her area and if there is a problem with the water line? Mr. McAninch said yes, the water line is old. He said that the Franklin Co Engineers didn't want to participate in replacing the lines and unfortunately, water main breaks are a common occurrence in the winter.

Tony Self of 372 Fernhill Avenue asked for the results of the speed bump survey. Mr. Jewell reported that at the last meeting, the Board approved the purchase of 4 radar feedback signs—two will be placed on South Grener and two will be placed on Fernhill

Commercial Building and Zoning Department

Ms. Armentrout said she had no Commercial Building and Zoning topics for tonight's meeting but would take questions.

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Voytek Zaleski of 4756 Hilton Avenue asked for an update on Galloway Village. Ms. Armentrout reported that the property was declared a nuisance and abated at the last meeting. Further, the Township Road's department has hauled away over 22 tons of trash at a cost of ~\$4,300. Legal counsel is engaged and preparing legal actions against the property owner.

Administration

Mr. Jewell gave the Administration's report.

Nuisance Resolutions : All addresses presented were declared tonight—none were removed from the list.

Address	Parcel Number
193 Buena Vista Avenue	240-000717
4589 Annhurst Road	240-003455
400 Fernhill Avenue	240-002416
240-002418 Fernhill Avenue	240-002418
80-160 Old Village Road	240-006829

Ms. Schmelzer moved that the Board adopt Resolution NU-03-23, "A Resolution declaring nuisance and ordering abatement at properties with refuse and debris." Mr. Pritchard seconded the motion. The roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

A second resolution was read for Galloway Village Only:

Address	Parcel Number
4820 Medfield Way	240-004847
4960-4982 Medfield Way	240-004837
4984-5006 Medfield Way	240-004838
44 Sturbridge Road	240-004839

Ms. Schmelzer moved that the Board adopt Resolution NU-04-23, "A Resolution declaring nuisance and ordering abatement at properties with refuse and debris." Mr. Pritchard seconded the motion. The roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Mr. Self asked for an update on 400 Fernhill. Ms. Armentrout reported the property had been cleaned up, with the exception of some tires, and they are working to get those cleaned up.

2023 Hometown Hero Banner Pricing : Mr. Jewell asked for the Board's guidance on pricing for this year's Military Hometown Hero Banner Program applicants. In February 2022, the Board approved a price of \$100.00 per banner however we began working with a new vendor (Wolfe Pak Inc.) in March 2022 and that brought the cost of the banners down to \$75.00. Wolfe Pak Inc. quoted us \$90.00 for the price of banners this year, a \$15.00 increase from last year due to higher prices in materials.

Comments/Issues: Trustee Schmelzer asked what the township paid for them in the past.

Ms. Schmelzer moved that the Board approve a set price of \$ 90.00 per banner for the 2023 Hometown Hero Banners. Mr. Pritchard seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr.

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Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Celebrating Resident 's 100th Birthday (Res, 04-23) : Mr. Jewell asked the Board to formally approve Resolution 04-23, a resolution celebrating Mary Alice Wharton's 100th birthday. This resolution addresses the many accomplishments and volunteer opportunities that Mary participated in throughout her lifetime. She had a birthday celebration on Saturday, January 21st and her official birthday is today, January 25th.

Comments/Issues: Ms. Schmelzer offered thanks to the Fire Dept and the Sheriff's office for meeting her at Mary's house on Saturday, January 21st, where Cathy presented a copy of this resolution.

Ms. Schmelzer moved that the Board adopt Resolution 04-23, "A Resolution celebrating Mary Alice Wharton's 100th birthday and honoring her as a dedicated resident to Prairie Township". Mr. Pritchard seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Clarke Property Clearing : Mr. Jewell asked the Board to approve moving forward with clearing the 19 parcels off Emmet Avenue that the Township received from Larry Clarke. The CIC plans to pay for the clearing of these parcels estimated to cost \$28,000.00. The cost of clearing the property will not be paid for by Township funds—it will be paid for by CIC funds.

Comments/Issues:

Ms. Martinez asked if Mr. Jewell was able to speak with a conversation expert about the clearing project. Mr. Jewell said he had left messages with three different departments at OSU no one had called him back. Mr. Jewell also said that he has a meeting with Franklin Soil and Water next week to help identify which trees to take down and which to leave standing.

Ms. Martinez expressed her concern for protecting the environment and the wildlife she's seen on the property, including a red fox. She also mentioned that she saw an eagle last year. She's also concerned clearing the property will lead to erosion and affect the sound barrier. She asked if she could join Mr. Jewell next week when he walked the property with the Franklin Soil and Water representatives. Mr. Jewell said yes.

Mr. Zaleski asked if the rights of way would be cleared as well and Mr. Jewell said that the intent is not to clear the rights of way but to stay to the east of the creek—everything between the creek and the ODOT right of way.

Ms. Schmelzer moved that the Board approve moving forward with the CIC clearing the 19 parcels, as presented.

Mr. Pritchard seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

FC Engineer - Safe Routes to Schools Projects : Mr. Jewell presented the proposed Safe Routes to Schools Projects from the Franklin County Engineer's Office, and said the three projects would be

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covered by funding the Engineer's Office is applying for. He asked the Board to approve a letter of support of these projects.

Comments/Issues: None

Ms. Schmelzer moved that the Board to approve a letter of support to the Franklin County Engineer's Office for the Safe Routes to Schools Projects funding. Mr. Pritchard seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Open House for Proposed Park : Mr. Jewell asked for the Board's approval to move forward with an Open House on Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 6 p.m. for community discussions on the proposed park at Hubbard Road and Dellinger Road.

Mr. Jewell said there are drawings on the website and the plans would be reviewed at the open house for residents to question and provide input. Mr. Jewell and Mr. McAninch both said the Community Center would be a good place to hold the open house.

Comments/Issues: None

Ms. Schmelzer moved that the Board approve hosting an Open House on Wednesday, March 15 and 6 p.m. for the proposed park at Hubbard Road and Dellinger Road at the PT Community Center. Mr. Pritchard seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Right Of Way Drop : Mr. Jewell asked the Board to approve sending a letter to the Franklin County Auditor dedicating parcel 240-000125, owned by the Township and located in front of McDonalds, as a road right-of-way. If donated, it would be dropped from the County's tax. The Township is currently paying \$2,000 a year on this parcel. There is no reason for the township to own this as it is a road.

Comments/Issues: None

Ms. Schmelzer moved that the Board authorize the Township Administrator to sign and send a letter to the Franklin County Auditor dedicating parcel 240-000125 as a road right-of-way and dropping it from the County's tax. Mr. Pritchard seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Mr. Pritchard, Aye; Ms. Schmelzer, Aye. Motion passed.

Old Business

In response to the Board's advice to her from the January 11, 2023 meeting, to bring forward a proposal for her request to build Community Gardens on parcels 240-001252, 240-001317 and 240-000968, Ms. Martinez said that she doesn't know where to start and asked to explore the idea together because she cannot do it alone. She asked for more specifics on what the Board wants to see in order to allow the project to move forward.

Ms. Schmelzer suggested she engage other residents in the community for help, and bring back to the Board a written proposal outlining her ideas. She also suggested that Ms. Martinez visit some other community gardens to get ideas for her proposal, and mentioned those in Grandview and Genoa Township might be good places to visit.

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Mr. Jewell suggested Ms. Martinez present a proposal that includes outline of what is wanted, what the gardens will look like, what structures she intends to build and what materials will be used for building, an estimate of how much it will cost, and how she will cover the costs.

Mr. Zaleski spoke up in support of Ms. Martinez's idea, and said he'd like to see a resolution by the Board giving permission to Ms. Martinez and her people to use a portion of the parcels for community gardens. He suggested the resolution could include limits on the structures used to build the gardens, such that they must be able to be removed within 24 hours.

Mr. Pritchard said that at some point, the Board would need to have a discussion with the community about the various properties and what to do with them, including those Ms. Martinez is considering for her proposal. He reminded everyone that something will need to be done with the Clarke property after it is cleared and raised liability to the Township as a concern. He, stated that the Board is starting to do just that with the open house they are planning for March 15 at the Community Center, to discuss the property at Hubbard and Dellinger they intend to turn into a park. He said they are starting with the Hubbard/Dellinger property because it has been on the books for a long time.

Mr. Self asked when the building on Postle will begin. Ms. Armentrout said there all the variances are in place, but there are some financial issues the builders are working through. Once those are cleared up and they begin building, they intend to build 3-4 houses at a time.

Azee Raghbat, 4875 W. Broad St., said he intends to come to the Board meetings every two weeks to ask the Board to approve his request for food truck. He described himself as persistent and said he will continue to come until he gets an answer because he very much wants to be part of this community, someday hopefully, as a restaurant owner.

New Business

None

Public Comment

Cheryl Cornelius, 203 Sturbridge said she thinks the township as a whole should focus on why we have the reputation we do, before we launch a rebranding project. Mr. Pritchard said conducting a SWOT analysis, which is an exercise to identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, is part of the process. The output from the SWOT analysis would allow for plans to be made to address specific things.

A resident said the Township needs another police car.

Announcements

None

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

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Chairman Doug Stormont

Fiscal Officer Natalie McKay