

## **Parkman Township Trustees**

### **Regular Meeting February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Parkman Township Trustees was called to order at 7:00pm by Joyce Peters, township trustee chairperson.

In attendance were Trustees - Joyce Peters, Henry Duchscherer, and Lance Portman, Fiscal Officer – Denise Villers, Administrative Assistant – Stacey Urbanowicz, Fire Chief – Mike Komandt, Assistant Zoning Inspector – Mark Strumbly, Residents – Brandon Reed, Roger Anderson, Lynn Schiffbauer, and John Augustine, Russell Spencer and Dylan Diemert of the Parkman Township Fire Department.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and an agenda was made available.

### **Meeting Motions and Resolutions:**

Lance Portman made a motion to approve the January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, regular meeting minutes and Joyce Peters seconded the motion. All voted yes, motion carried unanimously.

Joyce Peters made a motion to approve the purchase of four sets of firefighter turnout gear from MES Warren Fire not to exceed \$13,000.00. Lance Portman seconded the motion. All voted yes, motion carried unanimously. (Resolution #042-2024)

Joyce Peters made a motion to approve having all of the locks at the Community House rekeyed and new master keys made for up to \$1,000.00. Henry Duchscherer seconded the motion. All voted yes, motion carried unanimously. (Resolution #043-2024)

Joyce Peters made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:31pm. Henry Duchscherer seconded the motion. All voted yes, motion carried unanimously. It is necessary to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official. They came back into Regular session at 9:32pm. (Resolution #044-2024)

Joyce Peters made a motion to hire Owen Napier onto the Parkman Township Fire Department as a Firefighter/Paramedic. Lance Portman seconded the motion. All voted yes, motion carried unanimously. (Resolution #045-2024)

Lance Portman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:33pm, Henry Duchscherer seconded the motion. All voted yes, motion carried unanimously.

## Departmental Reports

### Fiscal Officer

- Approve the minutes for the January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, regular trustee meeting. See *Motions and Resolutions*.
- The BWC grant that was “taken back” in November has been returned to us (thanks to follow-up by Chief Komandt).
- 2023 year-end process continues.
- When we close fiscal year 2023, the transfer of funds from the CARES Act back to the Fire Department will be processed internally and the county will adjust/transfer within the 2024 budget that was previously approved.
- Cemetery deeds received from Angela Fox (Assistant Sexton) - Needs signatures of the trustees.
- Public Official Directories have been updated for 2024.
- Completed our annual “True-up” with Ohio BWC (resulted in premium increase) *Denise Villers said that we had higher fire department payroll than the previous year.*
- Submitted our annual PERRP 300AP to the Ohio BWC.
- Received notice from County Commissioners that they approved to *Improve the Embankment of the Bundysburg Road Bridge. (Structure #BR-0038-03.080) in Parkman Township.*
- Received an annual report from *Claridon Community Helps* for 2023.
- I will be attending the 2024 OTA Conference in Columbus along with Joyce Peters (February 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>)

### Zoning

1. Zoning received from planning - Division of land application E-23-070 & E-23-075. Included were legal descriptions and survey maps for property held by Henry Frey parcel 25-012000 & Enos Frey parcel 25-190003.
2. Also received copies of executed and approved deed for application 23-057 in the form of a Division of Land just over 57 acres located on Tavern Road held by Mark & Ruby Byler. This was in the form of a quick deed to Allen & Martha Miller. *There’s a party interested in building an Amish community youth center on Tavern Road. They are actively seeking to do this. It was asked why they are looking in Parkman instead of somewhere like Middlefield township, where there is no zoning. Mark Strumbly said the only thing he knows is that they looked in Middlefield and it was turned down. It’s unknown who or what level it was turned down at. They have to get the property surveyed first. Mark will explain to them that the septic system will have to be engineered as commercial-use.*
3. To further speak of item 2 the committee in charge of building a community center for the advancement of the Amish youth asked to meet with Zoning and bring forth their

new plan. Zoning is meeting with them tomorrow at 4:30 at the Zoning office and we also invited David Dietrich (from County Planning) to get some of his input.

4. Going back to Planning Applications E-23-069 and C-23-072 contained survey maps that Zoning had reviewed in December of 2023 on property held by Beverly Gates and Shane Nelson. The deeds maps coincide with documents on file at the Zoning office.

5. Mark performed an onsite review of the US Euro Car Lot on Main Market Road and found that they were in compliance with their Conditional Use Plan that is up for renewal next week at the office. Their renewal application was completed and received at the Zoning Office. Mark at this time gave the trustees an auto update. *It was found that they bounced between 24-30 cars for sale. They have about 20 parked cars in the back without motors that they're using for parts. Henry Duchscherer said that they can't have non-working cars like that just sitting. They all have to go.*

6. Zoning called Century 21 Representative Kathy Lutz and gave them a heads up on the Bundysburg Road parcel that is being advertised as commercial property whereas it is residential use.

7. Zoning received a phone call from Marty Szabo representing Keystone Surveyors out of Pennsylvania. They had questions on the 2.56 acres owned by the group from Middlefield. They did not indicate who or what they would do with the land.

8. Byler Business Services completed an application on behalf of Aaron Miller of 17126 Newcomb Road. He is planning an in-law suite. All paperwork was good, and a permit was issued.

9. Non-compliant letter sent out on the following:

- Brian Trendle of 15852 Old State Road. Brian is overseeing his father's property at 17126 Old State Road. There seems to be a lot of cars that may not be in running condition or with up-to-date tags.

- non-compliant letter sent to Joy Requa & Cullin Mitchell of 185 South Cedar St. Geneva, OH in Ashtabula County. The complaint is about their parcel on Norton Road. There seems to be a collection of trash. The letter is to make them aware of the trash problem. *The owner doesn't know who is putting the trash there. It appears that the trash has been there for a long time. They are actively trying to sell the property. Henry Duchscherer asked if she was responsible for cleaning it up. Mark Strumbly said yes. Joyce Peters suggested placing a "No Trespassing" sign up as a start.*

**Zoning Discussion** – Any discussion was held during each section.

## Fire

- Ohio Ambulance grant financial report completed and closed out.
- Request approval for 250 uniform patches to be purchased from NuThreadz in Chardon for \$5 per patch. Total \$1,250. *Mike Komandt said that the Fire*

*Association purchased them over 10 years ago last time and the company is no longer in business. Mike said that they're down to their last 5 patches.*

- Training invoice turned in.
- Fuel turned in.
- Sam.Gov has been updated for 2024.
- Appointment of new hire after executive session. *See Motions and Resolutions.*
- Received correspondence in reference to Ohio Issue 2 laws from some residents in Geauga County. The township has already acted on what the letter was requesting the township do.
- Ohio BWC grant was completed for two sets of fire gear this year. This will fully expend (\$15,000.00) BWC funds for this grant until 2026. \$5200
- AFG (Assistance to Firefighters Grant) grant has been started. Cost for the requested program has gone down since the last application, we anticipate an application near the amount of \$75,000 with 5% of the federal award to be funded by the township. *Mike Komandt said that this is to help pay for the exhaust removal system. He will also add two sets of firefighting turnout gear.*
- Door Works was out on Monday to replace a door seal on the bottom of a garage door. *Was dry rotted from being 12 years old.*
- FDIC conference discussion. We have a few personnel that are interested in attending the conference for some national training courses in Indianapolis. *Joyce Peters said no, as it would be too expensive.*
- Planning to send one person to a hybrid course at the Ohio Fire Academy this fall (Aug-Oct) for Fire Safety Inspector. This consists of three trips to the academy for orientation, practical evaluations, and testing. \$300 plus travel, boarding and dinners. *Mike Komandt said that the cost of the class will be reimbursed with a training grant. Breakfast and lunch are provided there.*
- Ohio EMS Grant application has been completed. *All reimbursements have been accepted on grant from last year.*
- VFIS renewal questionnaire was returned with no changes to current coverage for 2024 quote.
- Two personnel attending the fire course at Howland in March. MAY need an additional physical prior to class start. Still working with UH to utilize their prior physical that was completed a few months ago.
- Will be going to two of the Amish Safety Committee meetings.
- Need approval to purchase four sets of turnout gear not to exceed \$13,000.00. *Joyce Peters asked if they were for the three newest hires and one for the potential hire. Mike Komandt said yes, and that he doubted that they weren't going to want to hire the newest applicant. Joyce asked if any of it was covered under the grants. Mike said that once the purchase is approved, when the grant is approved, then he can order right away. See Motions and Resolutions.*
- Asked to check insurance to see if the cadet program is still covered. There were questions on re-establishing the program.



**Fire Department Discussion** – Any discussion was held during each section.

**Roads**

- We were finally able to get out and grade and drag the roads. As long as the weather holds, we will be doing the same throughout the week. Some roads are worse than others so they will be given a little more attention. We are aware of the condition of Hosmer Road, and I have spoken to Lance. We will try to fix a few spots which have drainage issues to help the road drain.
- We will be working on berming and ditching of some of the roads that will be getting chip and sealed. I have reached out to a couple of locations where we have dumped dirt before. However, if anyone asks, we will be in the area of Hosmer and Farley Roads as well as the Payne and Rutland Road area if anyone needs fill. Please, if you talk to anyone who asks, let them know we do not drive through fields, yards, or pastures to dump. This only happens on a case-by-case basis, and it has to be a super dry summer and solid ground. *Lance Portman said that they were out berming today. Henry Duchscherer stated that he thinks that the trustees should “bite the bullet” and move Hosmer Road up on the list to be chip and sealed. Joyce Peters agreed. They said it’s the road that they get the most calls about. Lance Portman said that Nash Road between 528 and 168, where they’ve already been chipped and sealed, has big deep potholes in the middle of the road already. Joyce spoke about a loan program, which gives no interest (OPWC) to possibly get Hosmer Road and other roads done sooner.*

**Roads Discussion** – Any discussion was held during each section.

**Community House/Overlook Park**

- We have 4 bookings for February; in March we have the Pancake Breakfasts on Sundays, and a primary Election on March 19th.

**Overlook Park:**

- We have an Easter Egg Hunt on March 30<sup>th</sup>.
- The Polar Bear Club is requesting to open the park this weekend. Lynn Schiffbauer said that she wouldn’t de-winterize it. *Lynn Schiffbauer notified them that there were no porta potties available.*
- There was a request from David Miller. He requested the rear/east ball diamond every Tuesday from May through August for the Amish softball league.

**Community House/Parks Discussions** – Any discussion was held during each section.

**Cemetery**

- January 26 we had a full burial at the cemetery.

**Cemetery Discussion** – Any discussion was held during each section.

## **Old Business**

- Road dept Job – Lance Portman wanted to see if either of the other trustees wanted to sit in on the interviews. Joyce Peters said that she doesn't want to delay them. There are three applicants now. Lance will set the interviews up. Joyce Peters said that she would like to see the Road Department employees doing service type things in the township when they're not working on the roads. Lynn Schiffbauer said that the gazebo park needs to be picked up more frequently. Joyce Peters said that they should also start figuring out who's going to take care of Veteran's Park. Discussion was held on various things, such as who takes care of mulch.
- Life insurance trustees – The plans were approved at the last meeting. Whoever wants the insurance needs to fill out the forms and turn them in.
- CH Keys – The trustees have looked into putting in keyless entry on the doors vs. rekeying the locks. Joyce Peters got prices for the keyless entry doors. One double door would cost \$2,828.00, and a single ADA door would cost \$2,449.00. The cost of re-keying all the doors and new master keys would be \$875.00. The concern is that people have keys to the Community House that no longer work for the township or were given keys for work projects. The trustees, at this point, don't know how many keys are missing. *See Motions and Resolutions.*
- Light bulb distributions – Will be given away at the Pancake Breakfasts, which are for four hours for four Sundays and on Election Day for any leftover lightbulbs.
- Elevator/Fire Inspection report – Henry Duchscherer said that the last bit of electricity was connected today, and it should be ready to go in the next couple of weeks. Joyce Peters stated that she wasn't happy about how the floor of the elevator was done. Because of how they glued it in, the glue has been tracked out to the dining room. Mike Komandt stated that when the state inspector comes back, Eric Mathews will have to shut off the commercial power to make sure the elevator runs on the generator. Joyce Peters said that Mike Komandt did the fire inspection. There are a few things that needed attention. Solutions were discussed.
- Salt dome update – Henry Duchscherer said that there's a new representative for the property. Henry said that the purchase contract should be ready in a few weeks. They are doing an environmental check on the property. Joyce Peters said that they won't sign anything before the environmental check is done.
- HB 315 – Joyce Peters read off the list of the many things in this bill that will benefit townships if it passes.
- Part-time FD benefits/hours currently worked – *(For clarification there is a law that part-time firefighters have to stay within 1,500 hours per year per person. It is the FLSA law).* Joyce Peters said, "that she doesn't think it's going to work for them. It's very pricy to cover three people with health insurance, and then possibly, even though currently our employees do not want to take the insurance, we would have to offer it to everybody, and they can take it, and we'd

have to give it, and we'd be locked in." It's a risk in that regard and it would double their costs and they would still be paying other firefighters to fill in all these other hours. Joyce said that they're looking at tripling their budget, Lance Portman added "debt so to speak," and Joyce said would definitely require a levy, and they can't risk it. She said that that leaves us with the problem of the number of hours left to schedule. She said that some of the people will run out of hours in six months if they keep working at the rate they're going. She said that she understands that they have a possible new hire tonight, so do more spreading out of those hours. Mike Komandt asked Joyce to prioritize what the trustees want. Joyce said that the fire department has to stay within the 1500 hours per person per year. Mike Komandt asked the Board to, "prioritize what they want. Do you want they employees under the 1,500 hours or do you want the 80% coverage rate? Because you can't do both right now." Joyce Peters said that "it has to be under the 1,500 hours because they can't afford to go..." then she was cut off by Mike Komandt who then stated, "we're going to go right back down to the 30% coverage rate." Joyce then said, "not with the people you have now." Mike said, "Oh yeah." Joyce continued, "and the new ones coming in." Then Mike continued, "yes we will, because now you're going to limit them from 48 hours a week to 24 hours." Joyce said that in 12 months, 1,500 hrs comes down to 125 hours/month. Mike said that's basically one day a week. Joyce Peters told him that they can only go with what the budget will allow, unfortunately. Russell Spencer asked what the cost of insurance would be. Mike Komandt said \$8,000.00/year per person. Joyce Peters said that it would also bring the wages up. Mike Komandt said that he didn't understand how it brought the wages up. Joyce told him it would be because they would be working more hours. Joyce told Mike that if he would've sent the spreadsheet like she asked him to yesterday, which he told her he no longer had. Mike said that he didn't save what he had before, but he sent her the template so she could put in her own figures. Joyce said that wasn't what she asked for. She said that she asked for his spreadsheet. Mike said, "as I explained." Joyce said, "you didn't save it, which I don't believe for a minute." Mike said, "I'm sitting right here putting the numbers into the same spreadsheet that I sent to all four of you!" as he typed on his computer. Joyce said, "and you could've done that and sent it to me." Joyce said that regardless of that, we're stymied by the 1,500 hours. We can't risk having to pay 6 or 8 employees' benefits, which the law would require. We aren't permitted to say that only those three people can have the benefits because they worked over the 1,500 hours. Russell Spencer asked if it was only people who go over the 1,500 hours that would be eligible to get the benefits and if it was three people that would go over the 1,500 hours. Joyce Peters said at this rate, yes. Joyce also said that there's still plenty of hours to work that other people can fill in. Russell said that a lot of the people they're hiring already have full-time jobs. Joyce said that you can't do a budget based on maybes. Joyce Peters said again, it's not an affordable plan for our fire department. Mike Komandt kept saying that he thinks it can be done with the current financial state that the fire department is in, especially with the CARES funding (a one-time payment). Joyce asked, "so that's why you brought this up, because of the



CARES funding? Mike said no, "it just came up because Joyce said 'why do we have these people', and this law change at the end of the year when we had to revert back to 1,500 hours, and I said I can't make this decision, but if what we're trying to do is maintain 80% with the current pool of employees, we can't do it without doing it like this. If we get additional employees over the next 3, 4, 5 months, then we're not at 1,500 hours. Or the 1,500 hours might be in September, October, November. But I worry that you cut employee's hours in half." Joyce said, "Oh, no, no. Don't call it cutting them in half. They've never worked these kinds of hours before. Not in this township. These kinds of numbers have never been turned in before the last couple of months." Mike said, "Oh yes they have." Mike then named a few past employees that had worked at Parkman Fire Department. Joyce said that she wasn't here. She didn't know what the rules were then. She said that during the current trustees' tenure, it had never happened, and Mike agreed that since the laws have been 1,500 hours, it hasn't happened. Mike continued to argue that his plan is the most cost-effective route for the fire department. Joyce said if his premise is correct, that's only talking health insurance. It's not including when it gets to full-time hours. Joyce said once they work past the 1,500 hours, then they would legally become a full-time employee, even though they were hired as part-time employees. She said that's a legal opinion that they should definitely have before they even think about this. Joyce said that they can debate all they want, but the fact is they have to stay within budget and the 1,500 hours. Mike then asked again what the Board wants him to do with the employees who are on pace for 1,500 hours before the year is out. Joyce said that they need to get their hours within the 1,500 hours. Russell Spencer stated that he can't understand how it doesn't fit in the budget. He stated that he remembers Mr. Duchscherer saying that they wanted 80% coverage. Then the guys at the fire department achieved it. Now Russell is hearing that hours need to be decreased. Joyce Peters said that they have to do what is within the budget. She always said to recruit people. Joyce Peters asked Mike what the data was for calls overnight. Mike said, "you and I already went over the data. There's no data to support not covering at night. We went over the data in summer when we talked about cutting back to 12 hours because we didn't think the budget would support continuing 24 hours." Joyce said, "I don't know what else to say. I just know we can't do this now." Mike said, "So you want us to tell people you can only work one day a week." Joyce said, "You can work 1,500 hours a year." Mike said, "On average you can only work one day a week. Joyce said again, "I'm saying you can only work 1,500 hours a year! You figure the rest out." Lance Portman asked the more people we have, the more coverage we have. Stacey Urbanowicz said, "The law is that each person has 1,500 hours to work each year, that's it." Henry Duchscherer asked if they have to offer to everybody. Joyce Peters said yes, their budget has to be based on everyone in that department. Mike Komandt said that it's only for people who would work over 1,500 hours. Joyce asked him if he's going to prevent someone from working over the 1,500 hours if they want to. Mike said that they physically can't if those three people are there already working them. Mike said that you don't have to budget on people who have full time jobs



because he says that they're not going to want benefits. Joyce again said how do you know that they won't decide that they want benefits. Mike said that we don't have that right now. Joyce asked what gives us the right to limit benefits to three people, how does that choice get made? Mike stated, "Because you're the governing body." Joyce said that you can't discriminate. Joyce said there was something that she wanted to go back to, "In the last year, on several occasions, I'm concerned about this person going over their hours, and you would say 'no, no, they're not going to go over, I'm watching it'. Mike tried to interrupt Joyce, but Joyce said, "no, don't tell me what I was concerned with, because I know what I'm concerned with. I would bring it to your attention, and you would say 'no, that's not going to happen, I'm watching it.' And then the next month, I thought you were watching this, so you know, so I keep getting these kinds of answers. Last month I said to you, this is way too high. 'No, they're not gonna get over.' Then all of a sudden you bring this proposal and we have even more hours here. What made you think it was OK to schedule those kinds of hours when I on multiple occasions told you it was too many hours?" Mike said, "You're concerned..." Joyce said, "DO NOT TELL ME WHAT MY CONCERN IS! Tell me what your answer is to my question." Mike said, "all the e-mail traffic between you and me was about one person working so many hours in a two-week period. And every time I explained we do not have to pay them overtime because they're not over the FLSA exempt requirements for overtime." Joyce said that they're going to get there. Mike said that they're not because he was limiting to 106hrs per pay period last year. Joyce said that she was concerned about the 1,500 hours last year before it was increased. Mike said that he tracked it, and Joyce said that he told her he tracked it, but yet the hours go up and up and up. Joyce said again that we are not going to pay benefits. And Mike keeps trying to say the same thing over again. Joyce told him to stop. Mike said that four weeks ago Henry Duchsherer said that we needed full time people and that they need to put on a levy. Joyce said Henry needs to respond to that. Henry said that they need more people. Joyce said that is still their focus and always has been their focus. Lance Portman asked how many working hours there were in a year. Mike said 17,250-ish, divided by 10 people is around 1,700 hours. Lance Portman said that basically the fire department needs a minimum of 12 people for the hours to be spread out easily without worrying that anyone will go over.

**Old Business** Discussion – Any discussion was held during each section.

### **New Business**

- Policy Manual update meeting dates – Mike Komandt said he needs three available dates from the trustees that they can meet to work on the township employee manual with a city law director. Joyce Peters and Lance Portman will come up with dates.
- Gazebo roof – The gazebo needs a new roof. Mike Komandt said that it's cedar shingle and should be able to be replaced. Henry Duchscherer will look into it.

- Geauga County CRA Tax Incentive Council appointees – Requested to appoint two representatives for tax abatement. This is for a three-year term. Joyce Peters and Lance Portman will do it. Denise Villers will turn it in.
- Website – Joyce Peters has been receiving comments from people that the website isn't user-friendly and that it looks out-of-date. She has spoken to a Parkman resident who is willing to build a new website at a low cost and is willing to work with Cory Anderson, the current owner of the Parkman website. Roger Anderson said that Cory's equipment and software is greater than 20 years old. Joyce Peters said that she doesn't think that the donations that the township had given Cory was enough for everything that he has done to keep the township website going and for doing the Parkman Paragraphs. Joyce is also wondering if Cory is willing to give or sell the website to Parkman Township because she thinks that the township should own the website. Discussion was held on different ways to go about maintaining a website. Joyce Peters said that she hopes that they don't have to hire a company to maintain their website once they get everything figured out.

**New Business Discussion** – Any discussion was held during each section.

### **Public Comment**

- Resident Roger Anderson said that the left turn traffic light going southbound on 528 seems to skip a turn every other cycle. Henry Duchscherer said that he will look into it.
- Mark Strumbly asked Mike Komandt if he had a list of all the oil and gas operators in Parkman. Mike told him that he could reach out to ODNR.

**Motion to adjourn:** Lance Portman at 9:33 p.m., Henry Duchscherer seconded, all yes. Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting on February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, starting at 7:00pm.

Meeting Minutes prepared by Stacey Urbanowicz, Administrative Assistant

Submitted by Denise Villers, Fiscal Officer.

Meeting Minutes Approved by

