Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Mr. Welch, here; Mr. Flaherty, here; Mrs. Heichel, here; Mr. Estep, here.

The regular meeting of the Blendon Township Board of Trustees was called to order at 6:30pm. Mr. Flaherty moved to approve and waive the reading of the minutes, as presented, for the December 30, 2014, regular meeting. Mrs. Heichel seconded. Roll Call: Mr. Welch, yes; Mr. Flaherty, yes; Mrs. Heichel, yes. The Blendon/Westerville Fire Chief Miller and Fire Deputy Chief Ross were in attendance. The Purchase Orders and Cemetery Deeds were signed by the Board.

Administrator’s Report:

Mr. Rhoads reported to the Board, Staff and Attendees a 2014 year-end and update report: In his yearly review he discussed the economic development touching on changes such as joining MORPC as a voting member, Westerville/Blendon joint business retention meeting, creating CIC in Blendon Township, implementing a hotel tax for future growth, adopting a sidewalk replacement program and adopting a community bill of rights. Then he discussed the positive budget numbers and how nice it be in the “green” and “out-of-the-red”, because of the many programs such as JEDZ, repave roadways, grant, building and zoning fees generation, negotiating several 2015 contracts at 2014 pricing, and several Senior Center grants. The many improvements to our parks and the popularity of the shelter house at Ridgewood Park, the Community Gardens and the Farmers Market (with the hard work of Ruth Brown) show a huge increase in usage and community involvement. The events, from breakfast with Santa and the Easter Bunny, Holiday Craft bazaar, Garage Sale, Concerts in the Park, Sunbury Woods hog roast, Halloween hayride to Memorial Day and Veterans breakfast, the volume of participants and residents attending shows an inviting community and a happy to be in Blendon Township attitude. The Blendon Police Department has increased by two full time and two part time officers and a part time administrative assistant. Their burglary and robbery clearance rates are almost half of the national percentage…something the community can be proud of. The Police Department offered a heroin outreach program along with self-defense course. Several items of special attention included, amended cemetery rules, server replacement. Creating a financial committee and reserve policy, adopting new employee handbook, implementing a new employee evaluation and pay process, and increase in township senior center membership, along with a new sound system.

Mr. Rhoads also reported plans for 2015: He noted the finishing of Phelps Acre Park with upgrades to both Ridgewood and Sunbury Commons parks, such as the planning of a 5K Ridgewood Memorial Run. New homes will be coming to the Cleveland Heights area and a 2015 road resurfacing project, Westerville Road sidewalk and landscaping plan with a corridor redevelopment plan. A bicentennial planning committee is being created for a celebration in 2016.

Communications:

1. Update Reports to the Board- emailed.
3. Franklin County Recorder Fees-letter
4. FCJFS Progress Report- Mrs. Joya Neff

New Business:

1. Request to Purchase Police Vehicles- Chief Belford presented the Board with a breakdown of the purchasing of two 2015 Ford Explorer Police Cruisers by Byers Auto. Mr. Flaherty moved to approve the purchase of two cruisers as presented by Chief Belford, for a total cost of $74,968.00. Mrs. Heichel seconded.
New Business: continued...

Roll Call: Mr. Welch, yes; Mr. Flaherty, yes; Mrs. Heichel, yes. Also, Chief Belford requested seven MDT’s (Mobil Data Terminals - laptops) for upgrades and the replacement of the outdated equipment. Mr. Flaherty moved to approve the purchase of seven MDT’s as presented by Chief Belford at a cost of $24,907.00, to be taken out of the CEDA funds. Mrs. Heichel seconded. Roll Call: Mr. Welch, yes; Mr. Flaherty, yes; Mrs. Heichel, yes. Chief Belford also requested the purchase of one camera upgrade to bring all the cruisers cameras updated. Mr. Flaherty moved to approve the purchase of one new cruiser camera at the cost of $1,615.50, to be appropriated by the Fiscal Officer. Mrs. Heichel seconded. Roll Call: Mr. Welch, yes; Mr. Flaherty, yes; Mrs. Heichel, yes.

2. **Blendon Senior Center Upgrade Design Plans**: Mr. Rhoads asked the Board to approve Architectural Design and Consulting Services quote for $3,900.00 for upgrades to the Senior Center that will require ADA compliance. Mr. Flaherty moved to approve a contract with Architectural Design and Consulting Services, Mr. Bill Logan, Architect, for design and construction drawing services, at costs not to exceed $3,900.00. Mrs. Heichel seconded. Roll Call: Mr. Welch, yes; Mr. Flaherty, yes; Mrs. Heichel, yes.

Director/Staff Updates

**Chief Belford** thanked the Board for the new police cruisers, cameras and computers and plans to get a long life out of them, as in past equipment.

**Mr. Flaherty** stated that he would like to see Mr. Rhoads take his excellent and positive 2014 Report and the 2015 Plans and make them available to the public that are not in attendance for our meetings. He suggested website, social media and any idea to make sure more of our community is aware of the work and plans for Blendon Township. Mr. Flaherty, also noted that the JEDZ Board met this week and discussed the upgrade of Route 3, and also to look to our east and start above the board detail planning, developing and forecasting commercial use of the land. Fresh, creative ideas and “stepping-out-of-the-box” and perhaps a development team with Westerville to talk and ask what the owner’s want to see in future expansion to meet their needs. Tailoring this to our needs is challenging, and needs a more creative approach. The Ulry and Warner Road density is an example, and as a Board, as a Township and as a Community, we need to take a long, hard look because it is now annexed and we are looking at road expansion upgrades due to increased traffic. This shows us we need to start working from the east by New Albany toward Sunbury Road and plan accordingly, what we want that area to become, incorporating new concepts and ideas. Mr. Rhoads suggested bringing in a study of what we can do as part of our Community Plan to help prevent high-density and annexation by the City of Columbus.

**Mr. Rhoads** noted that our friends at Otterbein, who have several Community Garden Plots have given us a $500.00 grant to help with our materials and costs to maintain our garden plots. A thank you letter is planned.

**Fire Chief Miller**, along with **Deputy Fire Chief Ross** demonstrated one of the three $15,000.00 “Lucas Devices” (electronic CPR unit), that Mt. Carmel/St. Anne’s Hospital donated to the Westerville/Blendon Fire Department, with one device to be at Fire Station #112. At any time, all three will be available. This device replaces manual compressions (at 30% rate) to more accurately electronic compression (at 60% success rate). This latest technology is great for our communities and the Board is very impressed with the generosity and plan to send a thank you letter. Chief Miller also noted the Firemen Glass and Ross were instrumental in making this happen. A picture was suggested to be put in the newsletter and be very informative to the community.

**Mr. Giamarco** noted they are busy with some snow and ice, but are in “wait and see” mode to see if the weather cooperates.
Open Floor:

Boy Scout Gideon Chapin, Troop #560, 5587 Natalie Court South, thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and attend the Blendon Township Board of Trustees Meeting and to thank the Board for their service. It was one of the service requirements for an Eagle Scout Badge. He and his family attended also. The Board thanked him for his attendance and his duty with the Boy Scouts.

Mrs. Joya Neff, 3615 Stockholm, discussed with the Board the current status and progress report with attending meetings with the Franklin County Staff and the role of the County that has just received a $3M Gateway Grant. Their research is to determine “quality not quantity”. Assessments of the providers and the last minute placement of youth sometimes means placement, wherever they have a provider who will take them. The next meeting is scheduled for February 20, 2015. Mr. Flaherty suggested that, we as a Township, write a letter as a follow up and acknowledgement noting that Mrs. Neff has been reporting back to us on a regular basis. It seems that things are slow and where are they with this issue and how long is it going to take? This could take decades with the project and the system has flaws that need to be corrected very soon.

Pay Bills: Mr. Flaherty moved to pay the bills. Mrs. Heichel seconded. Roll Call: Mr. Welch, yes; Mr. Flaherty, yes; Mrs. Heichel, yes. The attached list of checks was approved for payment.

Mr. Welch noted that the next meeting is rescheduled for Tuesday, February 10, 2015, at 6:30pm at the Blendon Senior Center. Mr. Flaherty moved to change the next meeting date from Wednesday, February 11th to Tuesday, February 10th at the same time and place. Mrs. Heichel seconded. Roll Call: Mr. Welch, yes; Mr. Flaherty, yes; Mrs. Heichel, yes.

Being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:02pm.

Approved by: Wade L. Estep, Fiscal Officer

Approved by: James F. Welch, Chairman