

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Blendon Township Board of Trustees Meeting

Meeting

DAYTON LEGAL BLANK, INC., FORM NO. 10148

Held December 18

20 24

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chairperson Heichel. She welcomed everyone in attendance.

Trustee Heichel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Present

Chair Heichel, Trustee Shinaberry, Trustee Ciamacco, and Joann Bury, Fiscal Officer.

Also in attendance were John Belford, Police Chief; Matt Newman, Service Department; Pat Myers, Administrator; and Brian Miller, Westerville Fire Chief.

Public Comment

Time was permitted for meeting attendees to make comments.

Trustee Comments

Trustee Ciamacco— Trustee Ciamacco discussed how Adam Sears (Code Compliance Officer) and herself drove through Cleveland Heights along with Matt Newman (Service Director) last week. They saw a lot of debris, overgrown fields, unkept alleys, non-compliant businesses, and some homes that were boarded up. The goal is to start cleaning up the area. We are looking into grants and other ways to get funds to help, but they also need help from the residents. If you live in the Cleveland Heights area and would like to help with this initiative, please contact either Trustee Ciamacco, Adam Sears, or Trustee Heichel. On December 18, 2024, Adam heard back from Josh Adams with Franklin County Municipal Court, who manages the Community Clean Up Program. and he confirmed a crew would be in Cleveland Heights December 21, 2024 to start cleaning up streets & alleyways and hope to continue this cleanup effort on an ongoing basis in the future.

Trustee Ciamacco continues working with Adam to update some of our outdated zoning codes.

This week, Trustee Ciamacco spoke with the attorney who took an interest in the Aqua water fight. She sent him some of the hardship letters and bills provided by the residents. They discussed a plan, and he is going to investigate it further before getting back to her. She asked that everyone continue to send her their bills and hardship letters and encouraged everyone in the township who has Aqua Water to do the same.

Trustee Ciamacco did a quick Google search and found Ohio offers several utility assistance programs, including:

- The Dollar Energy Fund: Provides grants of up to \$300 per utility or \$600 for both gas and electric. Grants are based on need and are limited to one per utility every 12 months.
- Save the Dream Ohio - Utility Assistance Plus (UAP): Provides up to \$10,000 in assistance for utilities, property taxes, and other housing costs. Local nonprofit agencies administer this program.
- Ohio Home Relief Grant: Provides assistance with utilities, rent, and mortgage. You can apply online or through a local Energy Assistance Provider or Community Action Agency.
- Home Energy Assistance Program: (HEAP) A federally funded program that provides a one-time benefit to eligible Ohioans. Eligibility is based on income. Neighbor to Neighbor Program A partnership between AEP Ohio and the Dollar Energy Fund that provides utility assistance grants to low-income AEP Ohio customers.
- Utility Fuel Fund: A one-time payment of up to \$250 per heating season from Columbia Gas. Customers do not need to be disconnected to qualify.
- You can also contact PUCO (Public Utilities commission) for additional utility assistance programs. You can apply for energy assistance programs online at development.ohio.gov. You must use a PC with Chrome, Firefox, Safari, or Microsoft Edge to apply. There are most likely qualification documents needed & maximum grant amounts so please review their websites carefully.

Lastly, Trustee Ciamacco wished everyone a safe and festive Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

Trustee Shinaberry— Trustee Shinaberry discussed an update on HB315 that she has been reporting on. HB315, the Township Omnibus Bill that bundled multiple township efficiency & funding provisions, was passed by the Ohio Senate on December 11th with a unanimous vote of 31-0. However, since several amendments were made after it passed in the House, it had to go back to the House for a vote again. The Ohio House voted no on concurrence with the Senate's changes to the bill so that it will go to a Conference Committee made up of three members from both the House and Senate to determine the final version of the bill before being sent to the Governor to sign. She stated they are eager for this bill to be signed; as an example, one of the 14 provisions updates the requirement for townships to place notices in a printed newspaper and instead will enable the township to place notices online, which will save time and money.

Next, she met with Sheri Chaffin, principal at Huber Ridge Elementary, on November 7. In talking with her, Trustee Shinaberry found there were some ways our senior center could support and come alongside the students. She shared these with Valerie Shaw, our Senior Center Director. First, Huber Ridge Elementary had its own coat drive, but it still needed coats in larger sizes for the older students. Valerie was willing to promote this community outreach to our Seniors, so the Senior Center collected and delivered coats on December 13 to help with that need; thanks go out to our seniors! Second, the principal said she would love to develop a pen pal project that would help the student's writing skills and, at the same time, help them learn about things from our seniors. Again, Valerie embraced this pilot project, which could possibly expand to the other elementary schools in our township in the future, and Trustee Shinaberry was happy to report that up to 75 third graders will be writing back and forth with our seniors, culminating in them getting to meet each other in May.

Next, she has talked several times about the America250-OH project for our country's semi-quincentennial in 2026. She had applied for our township to be designated as one of the official AM250-OH communities and was pleased to report that a resolution will be presented tonight to finalize that Blendon Township will be one of the designated communities to help celebrate and commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States of America! You will be hearing more about this in 2025.

Lastly, Trustee Shinaberry wished everyone a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year.

Trustee Heichel— Trustee Heichel shared that after tonight's regular meeting, there will be a Zoning Hearing at 7:30 PM. Following the hearing, she will hold an informal Q&A regarding the recent State Auditor's findings. Lastly, she wished everyone a Happy Holiday.

Fiscal Officer Report - Introduced by Chairperson Heichel

Minutes—Trustee Heichel asked the other Trustees if they had reviewed the Regular Minutes from the December 4, 2024, meeting. Trustee Shinaberry made a motion to approve the Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes on December 4, 2024. Trustee Ciamacco seconded. All voted yes.

Approval of Purchase Orders—Trustee Heichel asked the other Trustees if they had reviewed the Purchase Orders presented. Trustee Shinaberry moved to approve Purchase Orders as presented. Trustee Ciamacco seconded. All voted yes.

Bills—Trustee Heichel asked the other Trustees if they had reviewed the bills presented. Trustee Shinaberry made a motion to approve the bills. Trustee Ciamacco seconded.

Discussion: Trustee Heichel shared that the Trustees go to the office independently, several times a week to review bills that have come in. If there are any questions they have, they discuss with the Fiscal Officer.

All voted yes.

Resolution 2024-35 Establishing appropriations for the year ending December 31, 2025— Joann Bury stated that she sent the Trustees information regarding the 2025 appropriations. The significant changes shown are a 3% increase for the non-union staff and a 3% increase for police, but they will be negotiating their contract so that changes may come later. There were other staffing changes such as going from two part-time Drivers to one full-time Driver and adding a Code Enforcement Assistant. Lastly, other changes are reallocations, which are to use the restricted funds first. Trustee Heichel moved to approve the resolution as presented. Trustee Shinaberry seconded. All voted yes.

Resolution 2024-36 Tax Advance Payments— Joann Bury explained that this is an annual resolution. When Franklin County auditors collect taxes, they do so in two distributions during the year: March and August. They will send the township what they have collected up to the official dates in March and August, by doing a reconciliation of what the township received versus the remainder of what they collected. She stated that most townships and villages pass this resolution annually. Trustee Heichel moved to approve the resolution as presented. Trustee Shinaberry seconded. All voted yes.

Blendon Township Board of Trustees Meeting

December 18

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Administration

Resolution 2024-37 Declaring the necessity for levying a tax exceeding the ten-mill limitation and requesting the County Auditor to provide certain information pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 5705.03 (B)— Administrator Myers explained that this is a resolution to levy a tax for police funds. If approved, it will be sent back to the Auditor. The Auditor will certify and send it back to him with the millage needed to raise the money. At that point, there will be a resolution to proceed, and if that passes, it will be taken to the Board of Elections by February 5th and be on the May ballot. Trustee Shinaberry moved to approve the resolution of necessity for a Police Levy as presented. Trustee Ciamacco seconded. All voted yes.

Resolution 2024-38 Taking action to dissolve the CIC (Community Improvement Corporation) - Administrator Myers stated that he is asking for approval to start the process of dissolving the CIC. Joann Bury explained that the CIC has been dormant for a number of years, and no board exists. When they reviewed the purpose of the CIC, it was determined that they don't need a separate organization to function as the CIC. The funds will be moved into the general fund, which is the same purpose as what the CIC was established for, and the Trustees will determine how to use those funds appropriately. Doing this will prevent an additional audit from being performed and the costs associated with the audit. Administrator Myers discussed that he has a Zoom call with MORPC, and he has reached out to the OTA to see if there are different grants to apply for. Trustee Heichel stated that the CIC was a wonderful program she enjoyed offering residents. She also shared that OTA and MORPC have a better program. Trustee Heichel moved to approve the resolution as presented. Trustee Shinaberry seconded. Discussion: Trustee Ciamacco stated that she talked with Administrator Myers and Joann Bury, and she is comfortable with this and thinks it is wise. All voted yes.

Resolution 2024-39 Fire Agreement with the City of Westerville—Administrator Myers requested authorization from the Board to execute the contract with the Westerville Fire Department. Trustee Heichel moved to approve as presented. Trustee Shinaberry seconded. All voted yes.

Resolution 2024-40 Authorizing the sale of the Township's interest in real property located at 4079 Executive Parkway pursuant to O.R.C. 505.10(A)(6)— Administrator Myers requested authorization from the Board to move forward with the purchase agreement. Trustee Heichel read the following: Resolution 2024-40 authorizing the sale of the Township's interest in real property located at 4079 Executive Parkway pursuant to O.R.C. 505.10(A)(6), whereas the Board of Trustees of Blendon Township (the "Board"), Franklin County, Ohio, on behalf of Blendon Township (the "township"), has an interest in title to real property, specifically Franklin County parcel number 110-005861 and 110-005890, by virtue of a deed of conveyance of record as instrument number 202112300233579 records of the Records Office, Franklin County, Ohio, (hereafter the "Premises"); and whereas, the Board desires to sell, transfer, and convey the Township's interest in the Premises to Academia Medical Institute, LLC (the "Buyer"), pursuant to its authority under Ohio Revised Code Section 505.10(A)(6); and whereas the Buyer has offered to purchase the Township's interest in the Premises; and whereas, the Township desires to accept, transfer, and convey the Premises to the buyer based on the certain terms and conditions set forth within a real estate purchase agreement (the "agreement") currently on file with the Township; and it is in the best interest of the Township and its residents to do so.

Trustee Heichel read the details of the resolution and moved to approve as presented. Trustee Shinaberry seconded. All voted yes.

Resolution 2024-41 Now therefore, be it resolved that Blendon Township hereby endorses America 250-OH and their mission to educate, preserve, innovate, and celebrate every Ohioan in every county; and it is further resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Blendon Township Board of Trustees and America 250-OH Commission—Trustee Shinaberry presented the resolution to the Board. Trustee Shinaberry moved to approve as presented. Trustee Ciamacco seconded. All voted yes.

Eric Moore Retirement—Administrator Myers requested that the Board accept the retirement of Part-Time Detective Eric Moore, effective December 31, 2024. Trustee Shinaberry moved to accept the retirement as presented. Trustee Ciamacco seconded. All voted yes.

Human Resources

Administrator Myers discussed the annual fraud training that all staff took.

Maintenance/B&G/Parks/Cemetery

None to report.

Police

None to report.

Fire

Chief Miller thanked the Board for continuing the contract and said they take pride in serving all of the residents. Lastly, he wished everyone a Happy Holiday and said they are collecting toys through Christmas Day.


Announcements

Thursday, January 2, 2024, will be the next Board of Trustees Meeting at 6:30 PM at the same location, 6330 Hempstead Rd., Westerville, Ohio, and live streamed on YouTube.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, Trustee Shinaberry made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 PM. Trustee Ciamacco seconded the motion. All voted yes.

Approved by: 
Jan Heichel, Chairperson

Approved by: 
Joann Bury, Fiscal Officer