

HARPERSFIELD TOWNSHIP

REGULAR SESSION

Held on February 6, 2017

The Board of Harpersfield Township convened in regular session from 7 PM to 8 PM in the Harpersfield Township Administration Building. Raymond Gruber Jr., Chairman, called the meeting to order with the following members and visitors present:

Raymond Gruber Jr	Present	Clifford Henry	Present
James Pristov	Present	Sharon Rohrbaugh	Present

Employees: Everett Henry; Steve Opron

Visitors: Ron Valitsky, Larry Lister, Ed Spoor, Debbie Riffle, Jeff Lang

The minutes from the regular session held on January 16, 2017 were reviewed. Jim made a motion to approve the minutes as written; Cliff seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

No Zoning report.

Steve stated that he has obtained a quote from Cope Farm Equipment to replace our John Deere zero turn lawnmower – including a trade in of \$3053.78 – the cost will be \$4600 – this is using State Bid. The decision to purchase was tabled until permanent budget is set.

Steve informed the Board that a driveway culvert is plugged on South River Road. The Road Crew has attempted to clean it and found that it is crushed and needs to be replaced. Our policy is to have homeowner pay for the culvert and the Road Crew will install. Steve does not feel comfortable asking the homeowner. The Board discussed the matter and Ray offered to go with Steve to approach the homeowner because we do not want to set a precedent of homeowner not paying for the culvert.

Everett asked the Board to renew the fees for: Fire Safety Trailer \$100; Water Rescue Support \$100; Hazmat Team \$200. Jim made a motion to renew the fees at a total cost of \$400 with the Ashtabula County Fire Chief's Association; Cliff seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

Everett commented that he received the asbestos report for the Burgett house that the fire department planned to burn for a training. The inspector determined that the house has asbestos and must be removed prior to any burning of the structure. As this is very costly, Everett does not expect that to happen so the department does not plan to pursue the burn training.

Cliff made a motion to accept the specs for the SCBA units that will be purchased with FEMA grant funds. Jim seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to accept and the bid opening will be planned for April.

Cliff made a motion to pay the bills totaling: \$12,363.04; #9445 through #9470; Jim seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

Sharon reported the following receipts: 1-2017 through #16-2017; totaling \$18,228.72.

Sharon informed the Board that she was contacted by Todd Brainard that would like to repair an ancestor's headstone in South River Cemetery. The Board agreed to waive the footer fee.

Sharon requested that we have someone look at the Zoning office computer; the Board agreed to allow this.

Cliff made a motion to hire Larry Lister as Zoning Administrator effective immediately; Jim seconded; the Board voted: Cliff, yes; Jim, yes; Ray, yes

Larry accepted the position and informed the Board that he will be in the office on Tuesday and Thursday from 8 AM to 10 AM.

Cliff made a motion to appoint Debbie Riffle as Zoning Clerk effective immediately; Jim seconded; the Board voted: Cliff, yes; Jim, yes; Ray, yes

Ray commented that the Board of Elections contacted him and stated that the State is making it mandatory to have generator back up during voting as everything is computerized. They are asking if we could bring them a generator on voting days. Everett stated that he had offered the County one of the generators we were given. County responded that they do not have the funds to convert it from military to residential. It was decided to have a meeting with Matt Rahija and Duane Feher for discussion and exact cost involved.

Ray reported on JEDD III – Tony Kosicek was approved as Chairman; Sedmak's signed the easement papers; Geneva City wants to hold a meeting for a general discussion on the TIF; Geneva City opened bids for sewer construction, only six companies submitted bids.

Ray attended the Township Assoc meeting and it was discussed that the County is attempting to resurrect the county recycling with five containers spread out throughout the county – exact locations unknown at this time.

Ray wrote the County Prosecutor regarding two issues:

Is it legal for the Township to advertise public meetings on our website instead of the newspaper?

Response:

ORC 121.22(F) requires all public bodies to establish a rule which sets forth a reasonable method for the general public to determine the time and place of all regularly scheduled meetings as well as the time, place, and purpose of all special meetings. The rule also must contain a procedure by which interested parties can obtain advance notification. The statute requires that the public body have a rule that provides for notice that is consistent and actually reaches the public. There is no requirement that notification be provided via newspaper advertisement. Our office recommends that to assure the public is notified that in addition to the website meeting information be displayed on a sign or on the door.

Can the Township use funds from the Bed Tax revenue to pay for videos promoting the township bed and breakfast, wineries, etc?

Response:

A transient lodging excise tax levied pursuant to ORC 505.56 provides: "All funds arising from such an excise tax shall be deposited in the township treasury and may be expended for any lawful purpose." ORC 505.80 specifically authorizes a township to appropriate of general fund money for "promotion of tourism". It is the opinion of this office that the video project, as described, would be a permissible use of the lodging tax funds.

Ray reported that the previous Zoning Administrator did not send the County Prosecutor any correspondence regarding the van body on the Best Motor property. Ray will take Larry to meet Catherine Colgan, Ashtabula County Assistant Prosecutor and ask her what "next steps" she suggests we follow to resolve this matter.

Meeting adjourned until February 20, 2017

Raymond Gruber Jr

Clifford Henry

James Pristov

Sharon Rohrbaugh