

# HARPERSFIELD TOWNSHIP

## SPECIAL SESSION

Held on June 26, 2021

The Board of Harpersfield Township Trustees held a special session at 10 AM in the Harpersfield Township Administration Building. The purpose of the special meeting is to discuss the adoption of a Township Resolution opposing the selling of the Lodge and Conference Center to ODNR.

The following members and visitors were present:

James Pristov                      Edwin Spoor                      Raymond Gruber Jr                      Sharon Rohrbaugh

Jeff Lang; Peggy and Jim Bunner; Nick Ferrante; Jim and Lou Balog; Don Woodworth; Jeremy Shaffer; Jackie Spoor

### A RESOLUTION DECLARING HARPERSFIELD TOWNSHIP OPPOSITION TO SENATOR O'BRIEN PROVISION OF THE STATE BUDGET BILL THE SELLING OF THE LODGE AND CONFERENCE CENTER TO THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

WHEREAS, the Lodge & Conference Center which was built in 2004 and owned by Ashtabula County and has been operated by Delaware North; and

WHEREAS, in the past the Ashtabula County Commissioners along with other agencies in Ashtabula County have always supported the Lodge & Conference Center; and

WHEREAS, there has been no public hearing where residents of Harpersfield Township along with other communities enter into discussion in regards to the selling of the Lodge & Conference Center to ODNR; and

WHEREAS, local wineries, lodging facilities and businesses have all benefited from the Lodge & Conference Center that bring individuals from around the state and outside of our state to Harpersfield Township; and

WHEREAS, it is clear that the revenues brought in by the Lodge & Conference Center in the form of bed tax has benefited Ashtabula County and the Ashtabula County Convention & Visitors Bureau to the amount of \$451 million in 2017 including some one million visitors who stayed overnight. Many of them have spent the night at local lodging facilities in Harpersfield Township.

WHEREAS, Ashtabula County Commissioner Casey Kozlowski has stated: "without question the Lodge & Conference Center has benefitted the entire region and brings people in from all over" and

WHEREAS, there has been no appraisal of the Lodge & Conference Center to determine the true value of the property; and

WHEREAS, the current contract would give the Lodge & Conference Center to the State of Ohio in 2040 at no cost to the State. It is unclear to the Trustees of Harpersfield Township why would the State pay 13.1 million if they will receive it at no cost in 2040; and

WHEREAS, the Harpersfield Board of Township Trustees request that Section 715.20 and 343.40 be immediately removed from Sub HB #110; and

WHEREAS, this Resolution was adopted in an open meeting of Harpersfield Board of Township Trustees where the community could enter comments prior to a final vote of this Resolution.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THE Harpersfield Board of township Trustees oppose the selling of the Lodge & Conference Center to ODNR.

This Resolution was adopted on June 26, 2021, by the Harpersfield Board of Township Trustees.

It was opened to public discussion:

The main discussion was that it was brought up to be sold "behind closed doors" and most entities did not find out about until it was in the newspaper. And then it was too late to hold meetings etc. as the decision was to be made in just a few days time.

The Ashtabula County Commissioners are in support of the sale to free up revenue to build a new jail.

It was mentioned that it will affect tourism in this area of the County and that ODNR has to spread revenue to all of the State parks and our Lodge could deteriorate.

It was also mentioned that ODNR did not request or initiate the purchase of the Lodge; it was by Senator Sandy O'Brien (who was against the Lodge when she was our County Auditor).

Ray made a motion to adopt the resolution; Ed seconded; the Board voted thusly:

James Pristov	yes
Edwin Spoor	yes
Raymond Gruber Jr	yes