

RUSSELL TOWN HALL

December 15, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Trustees Mueller, Port and Rambo were present. The Board Administrator Melissa Palmer and Fiscal Officer Karen Walder were also present.

The following Department Heads were present: Fire Chief John Frazier, and Police Chief Tom Swaidner.

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

SWEARING IN CEREMONY: Chief Frazier gave a summary of firefighting history, and how it has changed over time into what the Fire and EMS roles are today.

Chief Frazier lead the swearing in ceremony for Assistant Fire Chief Nick Sambula, and Assistant Fire Chief Sam Brown before a crowd of about 60 guests, firefighters, and police officers.

ACCEPT DONATION *Mr. Rambo made the motion to accept the donation from Junction Auto Sales, Inc. of \$1,000.00 to the Fire Department. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Mr. Rambo made the motion to approve the use of the \$1,000.00 for the Fire Department at the discretion of the Fire Chief. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ADMIN SECURITY DIVIDER: *Ms. Port made the motion to authorize security improvements including the installation of a secure door & a cashier's window for the Zoning Department offices as indicated on All-Seasons Remodeling estimate dated December 12, 2022, for an expense not to exceed \$8,100.00. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

ACCEPT DONATION *Ms. Port made the motion to accept the donation of \$300.00 for benefit of the Road Dept employees, from Robert Starrett of Munson Twp, who appreciates the Road Department staff's efforts taking care of the Russell Township cemeteries. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Ms. Port made the motion to approve the use of the \$300.00 for the Road Department at the discretion of the Road Superintendent. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

2023 ROAD PROJECTS – VARIOUS ROADS: *Ms. Port made the motion to approve Resolution 2022-25, a Resolution of Convenience and Necessity for the Improvement of Various Roads in Russell Township (as indicated in the resolution: Blackford Dr, Birchmont Rd, Clarion Dr, Fernwood Rd, Hazelwood Dr, Laurel Rd, Sylvan Rd, Hillbrook Dr)) which authorizes the Geauga County Engineer to prepare engineering plans. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

2023 ROAD PROJECTS – DINES ROAD: *Ms. Port made the motion to approve Resolution 2022-26, a Resolution of Convenience and Necessity for the Improvement of Various Roads in Russell Township (Dines Rd: TR-0144, from County Line Rd to Caves Rd) which authorizes the Geauga County Engineer to prepare engineering plans. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

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EXIT CONFERENCE: POLICY MANUAL: PUBLIC RECORDS: Mrs. Walder advised the Board that the State Auditor's Office recommends that the Townships Public Records Policy be added to the Townships Personnel Policy Manual.

Mr. Rambo made the motion to update the Township Policy Manual/Handbook with the Township Public Records Policy per the recommendation of the Auditor of State at the December 6th, 2022, Audit Exit Conference and per ORC 149.43E(2). Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

AOS ENGAGEMENT LETTER: AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to authorize Karen Walder to sign the Auditor of State's Letter of Engagement for the audit period 2020-2021. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

AOS 2020-2021 AUDIT: FUNDS: *Ms. Port made the motion to authorize funds in the amount of \$5,781.00 as indicated in the December 6, 2022, letter to Fiscal Officer Karen Walder for the Auditor of State audit: 2020-2021. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

RESOLUTION – TAX ADVANCE REQUEST: *Ms. Port made the motion to approve Resolution 2022-24, a Request for Advance of Taxes Collected. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

BANK RECONCILIATION & FINANCIAL REPORTS: *Ms. Port made the motion to acknowledge receipt of the monthly bank reconciliation and financial reports for November 2022, as submitted by Fiscal Officer Karen Walder. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

The Fiscal Officer advised the Board that she will be adjusting her staff's salaries by the 2.75% increase that the Board approved for Salary Schedule 36 to keep with parity between all departments, and that will be in effect January 1, 2023.

Mrs. Walder advised the Board that she is still waiting on the updates to the new Reserve Study and hopes to have the updated copy by the end of the year. She will send the study to the Trustees as soon as she receives and reviews it.

The Fiscal Officer updated the Trustees that she is still waiting on the final payment request for Karvo Paving, and that will be presented to the Trustees once the request is received.

Mrs. Walder advised the Board that year end procedures are underway. The fiscal staff attended year end UAN training and the UAN update ready to install. Some departments have already submitted 2023 requisitions. The fiscal office will continue to work with Departments to close out 2022 purchase orders. Mrs. Walder also advised the Board that she will prepare a Resolution for the next meeting to implement recommendations from the recent Audit regarding blanket certificates.

The Fiscal Officer advised the Board that she is working with our insurance broker to prepare a letter for all employees that will list out the benefits for 2023.

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The Fiscal Officer updated the Board on the team building/communication training that the Fiscal Office staff had been attending. She advised the Board that it has been very beneficial, and she will be presenting a quote to the meeting in January hoping to continue the training.

Mrs. Walder also thanked everyone who provided feedback, suggestions, or criticisms to the Board in 2022, as these help to improve the Township's operations for the benefit of all residents.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC WERE RECEIVED.

CITIZENS' PARK 511: LEASE AGREEMENT: Mr. Rambo updated the Board on his review of the Lease Agreement, which were communicated back to the 511 board and incorporated into the Lease. The new Term is six years (2023-2028)

Mr. Rambo made the motion to approve the Lease Agreement between Russell Township Citizens' Park District and the Russell Township Trustees, entitled "Lease Agreement" dated December 15, 2022. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed.

The vote: Mr. Rambo – Yes, Ms. Port – Abstain, Mr. Mueller – Yes.

TRUSTEE AUTHORIZATION: *Mr. Rambo made the motion to authorize Trustee James Mueller to sign the document entitled "Lease Agreement" dated December 15, 2022, between the Russell Township Citizens' Park District and the Board of Trustees. Mr. Mueller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

TOWNSHIP MEETING ROOM: The Board Administrator advised the Trustees that they need to make a decision whether or not to go with the design-build process. The township's APA previously approved a design-build legal ad which the township used when advertising for the Storage Building project so the trustees could go that direction. The trustees also could go the direction the township ended up going in actuality with TC Architects for the Storage Building which was using the standard architect's contract for professional services and then going out for competitive bid by separate construction companies for the lowest and best bid. She asked the Board to pick the direction they wanted to go with this project so that way it keeps moving forward. The Board instructed her to advertise for bids, as they know the bid process and are comfortable with it, and they are not comfortable with the design & build process as they have many unanswered questions and do not wish to go that route. They instructed the Board Administrator to prepare and place the bid advertisement.

OTARMA ELECTION BALLOT *Ms. Port made the motion to approve the candidacy of:*

Joyce Fetzer-Martin, Perry Township in Stark Co

Bradley A. Herman, Paint Township in Wayne Co

as the two candidates nominated by the Russell Township Board of Trustees, to the OTARMA Board of Directors, term 2023 – 2027.

Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION: *Ms. Port made the motion to move into executive session to discuss the employment and compensation of a public employee pursuant to ORC 121.22(G)(1). Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

The meeting moved into executive session at 6:50 pm.

Mr. Rambo made the motion to return to regular session. Ms. Port seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting moved into regular session at 7:20 pm.

PURCHASE ORDERS AND BILLS WERE APPROVED AS ATTACHED.

Mr. Mueller made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Rambo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 pm.

James Mueller, Chair

Karen Walder, Fiscal Officer

Recorded by: J. Dorka