

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

**Minutes of Franklin Township
Franklin County, Ohio**

Regular Meeting

August 12, 2021

Call Meeting to Order:

Chairman Horn called the Regular Meeting of the Franklin Township Board of Trustees to order at 6:30 p.m. in person on August 12, 2021.

Opening Prayer: Led by Pastor Snodgrass

The Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Trustee Fleshman

Roll Call: Horn, yes; Fleshman, yes; Alex, yes.

Motion to Approve Prior Meeting Minutes:

Horn made a motion to approve the following meeting minutes:

- *Special meeting on July 15, 2021*
- *Regular meeting on July 15, 2021*
- *Special meeting on July 20, 2021*

Fleshman seconded the motion; with no discussion, the roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Horn: YES/ NO **Fleshman:** YES/ NO **Alex:** YES/ NO

Motion passed.

Old Business:

The Fiscal Officer recommended the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves accounts payable through August 12, 2021, in the amount of \$111,523.69 and payroll paid on July 23, 2021 for \$136,645.91, payroll paid on August 2, 2021, for \$8,616.93, and payroll paid on August 6, 2021, for \$149,029.21, for a total of \$405,815.74. From check number 66706 to 66845 and electronic vouchers from 691-2021 to 845-2021.

Horn accepted the motion, Fleshman seconded the motion; with no discussion, the roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Horn: YES/ NO **Fleshman:** YES/ NO **Alex:** YES/ NO

Motion passed

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Alex made a motion for the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution 2021-107

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING OBLIGATIONS AUTHORIZED
BY THE TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR**

WHEREAS, The board of township trustees, in Resolution 2021-083, authorized the township administrator to approve/incur obligations of ten thousand dollars or less on behalf of the township in accordance with Section 507.11 of the Ohio Revised Code; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to the provisions of Section 507.11(A) of the Ohio Revised Code, the obligations approved/incurred by the township administrator must be subsequently approved by the adoption of a formal resolution of the board of township trustees.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES OF FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP, FRANKLIN COUNTY:

SECTION 1, The obligations authorized/incurred by the township administrator as presented in Exhibit A attached hereto are hereby approved.

SECTION 2, That all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this Resolution were passed in an open meeting of this Board, and that all deliberations of this Board and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

SECTION 3, That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

Horn seconded the motion; with no discussion, the roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Horn: YES/ NO **Fleshman:** YES/ NO **Alex:** YES/ NO

Resolution passed.

New Business:

Administrative Assistant Position:

Administrator Potts provided information on a potential candidate for the administrative assistant position in the front office. Horn explained that interviews were conducted by Potts, and other Franklin Township staff and a recommendation has been made.

Alex made a motion allowing Administrator Potts to make an offer of employment to Nicole Randazzio for the Administrative Assistant position per the CBA in place for this position.

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Horn asked Potts if this position was a civil service position. Potts confirmed that this is *not* a civil service position.

Fleshman seconded the motion; with no further discussion, the roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Horn: YES/ NO **Fleshman:** YES/ NO **Alex:** YES/ NO

Motion passed.

Horn reminded Potts that the hiring would be contingent on the candidate passing a drug test.

Police Department Report:

Lieutenant Ratliff – had nothing to report.

Fire Department Report:

Chief Welch asked the board to accept the resignation of Michael Sorkin effective August 15, 2021.

Alex made a motion to accept the resignation of Michael Sorkin at the end of his shift on August 15, 2021. Fleshman seconded the motion; with no discussion, the roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Horn: YES/ NO **Fleshman:** YES/ NO **Alex:** YES/ NO

Motion passed.

Welch asked the board to approve the hiring of Elisha Smith as a FF1, effective August 18, 2021, pending passing pension physical.

Alex made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

Resolution 2021-108
Hiring of Elisha Smith as FFI effective 08/18/21
BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves to hire Elisha Smith as a firefighter 1, effective August 18, 2021 upon successful completion and passage of pension physical.

Fleshman seconded the motion; with no discussion, the roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Horn: YES/ NO **Fleshman:** YES/ NO **Alex:** YES/ NO

Resolution passed.

Welch explained that the 2010 Pierce fire engine is in the state of Wisconsin having the frame repaired as previously discussed. The cost for the repairs to the frame will be approximately \$36,000.00, said Welch. Also, it was explained that there is about \$30,000.00 worth of additional work that will need to be done on the Pierce which the funds have been appropriated per the Fiscal Department, Welch explained.

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Fleshman asks Welch how many more years does he anticipate that the Township will get out of the Pierce after these repairs. Welch said he hopes to see at least ten (10) more years if not more.

Welch shared that Potts listed the fire chief position on the Township's website and on social media two weeks ago and currently they have only received one (1) application from an internal candidate. Welch asked the board to consider having a meeting to sit down with the internal candidate. Welch said he was hoping to have someone in place by September 15, 2021.

The board agreed to have a special meeting before the regular meeting on August 26, 2021.

Road Department Report:

Road Superintendent Jim Stevens reported that the drain work that was performed off of Hopkins Avenue appears to be operating well during all of the recent heavy rain.

Horn asked Stevens if he was able to review the alleys in the Township. Stevens said the road crew have accessed the alleys and picked up tires and other items. Horn reminded everyone of the tire collection drive on Saturday, August 14th here at the township hall.

Snodgrass asked if he paid for it, would the Township put down chip & tar in an alley near his home. Stevens said the Township does not have the equipment to do such a job.

Trustee Report:

Alex – had nothing to report.

Fleshman asked the board what they wanted to do with the movement of a “No-Knock” Ordinance. Alex said the Township will have to have dedicated staff to report it to and track the issues, there is a lot of work involved. Fleshman suggested the topic be tabled until appropriate staff is identified to fulfill the requirements of operating the ordinance.

Horn – had nothing to report.

Fiscal Department Report:

Fiscal Officer Nick Dunn presented a resolution for supplementation appropriations due to a recent notification from the Ohio Department of Taxation related to unpaid withholdings from 2020, which totals approximately \$41,000.00. PNC Bank has been notified to confirm a possible duplicate payment which might reduce the amount the Township owes. The reason for this is there were failed ACH payments in 2020. The second part of the supplementation appropriations is for Gas Tax and salaries. The third supplementation appropriation is for the fire levy and other expenditures, said Dunn.

Fleshman explained that he brought up the idea of having a separate server for the fiscal department so there would be no delay in processing. Dunn said he would look into this.

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Alex made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-109

A RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE PERIOD COMMENCING JANUARY 1, 2021 AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2021

WHEREAS, it is necessary to provide for the current expenses and other expenditures of Franklin Township, Franklin County during the year ending December 31, 2021; and,

WHEREAS, the Annual Appropriations Resolutions 2020-238 for the period from January 1, 2021 thru December 31, 2021 needs amended.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES OF FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP, FRANKLIN COUNTY:

SECTION 1, the fiscal officer is hereby authorized to increase appropriations as presented in Exhibit 1 hereto attached.

SECTION 2, That all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this Resolution were passed in an open meeting of this Board, and that all deliberations of this Board and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

SECTION 3, That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

See Exhibit A

Franklin Township	Approved Appropriations	Revised Appropriations	Revised Appropriation
General Fund (2021)	\$40,000	\$41,000	\$1,000
Public Works (2021)	75,700	75,600	(\$1,100)
Total	1,125,400	1,126,600	1,200

Fleshman seconded the motion; with no discussion, the roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Horn: YES/ NO **Fleshman:** YES/ NO **Alex:** YES/ NO

Resolution passed.

Dunn asked the board to accept a renewal of Jeff Wilcheck's engagement letter between him and Franklin Township. Dunn provided an update from the auditors. There have been issues found in 2017, 2018 and 2019. To date:

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Fiscal years 2017 & 2018 are complete and there are some outstanding items in 2019 and 2020 that Jeff continues to work on as well as keeping things in 2021 current including the monthly bank reconciliations and other items similar in nature.

Fleshman asked the board to table this for the reason that this letter is associated with a request for a \$10 an hour wage increase. We still have time with him so the board needs to sit down with him before we pay any vendor an additional \$10.00 an hour. This increase was not asked for, it was just put in the letter without a direct discussion/explanation to the board. Therefore, the board needs to hear directly from Wilcheck as to why he is asking for an additional \$10.00 an hour, said Fleshman.

Alex asked Dunn how many hours Wilcheck has left on his current engagement letter. Dunn said he believed that there are enough hours left to get through this week. Alex asked Dunn if he was good with the board scheduling a separate meeting to discuss this with Wilcheck, and Dunn agreed.

Dunn explained that the Auditors of the State have recently raised their rates so he is not sure if that is why Wilcheck is requesting an increase as well.

Fleshman said if that is the case he strongly opposes this. Just because one vendor raises their rates does mean Wilcheck should get a bigger piece of the cake as well. That is why it is important that the board meets with Wilcheck, said Fleshman.

Dunn said he had prepared a resolution to allow the Township Fiscal Officer to authorize purchase order in the absence of the Township Administrator but will table this for the time being until reviewed by legal counsel.

Dunn updated the board at a meeting held earlier in week with representatives from OTARMA. They are asking the township to implement a driving policy. Dunn explained that he sent the draft policy over to the board to review. This policy would provide guidance and procedures for all of those employees driving township vehicles. It is important to establish a policy to remain in compliance with our insurance carrier. There will be more information to come as the policy is completed, said Dunn.

Horn introduced Fiscal Officer Dunn to the audience and explained the appointment process and that Dunn's name will appear on the November ballot to retain his position.

Questions from the Audience:

Horn asked if there were any questions from the audience.

Janet Ward, a member of the audience, asked how long the Township intends to keep Jeff Wilcheck as a contracted worker when all she hears is that the Township has no money. How does the township have no money but keeps renewing Wilcheck's letter of engagement especially now that he is asking for almost \$50.0 an hour, can't we find someone cheaper asked Ward?

Dunn explained that Wilcheck was here when he was appointed into his position. The appropriations are in place for 2021 and Dunn agreed that he

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could look for someone else it would just take some time. The state auditors have been very lenient due to Wilcheck being here and helping with the audit. If Wilcheck is not here he is not sure how lenient the auditor's will be moving forward. Dunn said he was willing to stay after the meeting to discuss things further with Ward. Dunn said he is willing to look into other options.

Horn said he has asked the same question that Ward asked many times. Horn said the main auditor does not like him at all. He has not been able to get tentative answers from the auditors on when the audit will be wrapped up. Our attorney said the audit could be ending near election time. Horn believes the Township has no choice but to go with Wilcheck because of the auditors.

Ward said she doesn't understand how the auditors can dictate who the Township hires or doesn't hire.

Horn thanked Ward and moved on to the next audience member.

Jerry and Kelly Ooten, members of the audience, said that they have three items to discuss and asked the board if that was OK. The board approved for them to proceed with their comments/questions. Kelly spoke to explain that they received a letter in the mail from "craft" and asked the board if they were familiar. Fleshman said he is familiar with the letter going around.

Kelly explained that the letter brought up some interesting points about the Township Administrator like they were to secure grants so their salary would not come out of taxpayer money. Fleshman explained that the township received a grant for \$1.5 million in a CARES Act Grant back in January 2021.

Lt. Ratliff shared that this CARES grant allowed for the purchase of four (4) new police cruisers, several computers, and salaries for the police department without any taxpayer dollars being used. Fleshman said the grant also covered the purchase of a new dump truck for the road department. Jerry Ooten asked if Potts got the grant and Fleshman confirmed yes that Potts got the grant for the Township.

Fleshman said all of this was due to Mark Potts, writing the grant, submitting the grant and getting the grant for the Township.

Kelly read a statement from the letter stating the township never secured the JEDD to protect the Township from further annexation. Potts explained the JEDD is a long process and was delayed during the pandemic since we were unable to meet with businesses. Currently the JEDD is sitting at the Township attorney's office where a plan is being made to include a map. The map includes one parcel within Westland Mall. Once the plans come back then the Township will need to meet with all of the business owners to sign a petition to go into the JEDD. Once the petition is signed then a JEDD board must be created. Kelly asked what the township is doing in the meantime to protect the Township from further annexation? Alex said the City could still annex even if the parcel was inside of a JEDD. A JEDD limits annexation because the City would then have to pay revenue to the Township for the parcel(s). There is nothing stopping the City for annexing any property within the Township, said Alex. A JEDD is a good tool to stop annexation since the City would have to pay the Township revenue for about fifty (50) years. Again, there is nothing

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the Township can do to stop an annexation but to try and slow it down with a JEDD, said Alex.

Horn said he was involved with the JEDD at the infancy stage with Chief Welch as well as a previous Trustee Don Cook. The Township was under the impression that the City of Columbus would partner with them in a JEDD. When the initial JEDD was presented the City declined to partner with the Township and at that point the JEDD was put on hold.

Fleshman explained that when the casino developers came in, an agreement was made between the Township and the City of Columbus granting the Township permission to establish a JEDD. With a JEDD the Township is splitting the cost of the money of the JEDD. A percentage of the money goes to the City and another percentage would go to the Township. Then there is a JEDD board with 70% of the money coming in must be used in the JEDD area and the rest would come. There would also be residents as well as one trustee on a JEDD Board which would meet at the township hall. After a considerable amount of money was used when the Township hired a gentleman to get the JEDD through working with businesses and talking to residents, they allowed us to go through the entire process and then turned us down. The City explained that they did not promise the Township a JEDD, The City of Columbus stated that the Township could have a JEDD. We worked on the JEDD for a two (2) year period and hoped that the JEDD area would not get annexed.

Fleshman continued, with all of that said, the Township had to look for a new dance partner. The Township looked at different places that had an existing JEDD. The Township went to Grandview and we are now very close to getting everything done, said Fleshman.

Kelly asked the board if they feel the JEDD will move forward with Grandview? Alex said that he has had conversations with the Mayor of Grandview and a majority of their council members as well as Potts has worked with their development director. The Township has had verbal conversations with Grandview and they said they are good to go with this. Potts also has spoken to the business owners and we are the closest we have even been with the JEDD said Alex.

Horn agreed that the Township is very close to completing the JEDD process.

Kelly asked if there is anything that the board can do to address some of the issues that are outlined in the letter? Fleshman said these items could be addressed in the Township newsletter. Fleshman said he believes that not everyone is getting the letter and it is being sent to specific people. Kelly stated that may be it being sent to registered voters.

Fleshman said that he votes but he doesn't get a letter. Horn asked if the letter came today, and Kelly confirmed.

Kelly explained that there is a piece of property located at the curve of El Paso Drive where someone has come in and tore down a bunch of trees and left the area a mess. Kelly asked what could be done about this. Stevens explained that this mess is on private property and that he has been up there and spoken

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to them to ensure they finish cleaning up the property. Stevens confirmed that this was not a Township project but the property formally was a “tent city” under all of the trees, that is why the trees have been cut down, said Stevens.

Kelly shared that her neighbor Dusty suggested that they established a neighborhood clean-up or initiative to get the trash picked up along El Paso Drive. The trash along there is terrible, said Kelly. We could use some help to get this cleaned up. Stevens said that Franklin Township is in partnership with Franklin County where they bring non-violent offenders to help pick up trash and other needed tasks to work off community service hours. Stevens said he can add El Paso Drive to the County’s weekly tasks list.

Horn said that Trustee Fleshman needs to leave in a few minutes so we need to move on with the agenda and get to Administrator Potts’ portion.

Administrator Report:

Administrator Mark Potts stated that on Thursday, August 5, 2021, he submitted his resignation to the Franklin Township Board of Trustees. Potts explained that his significant other has found employment in the Cincinnati area and they will be moving back to an area where he grew up. Potts said he is looking forward to farming with his father again on his 200-acre farm as well as looking at some potential employment opportunities. Potts shared that his last day will be on Sunday, September 5th, 2021. He also explained that he fell and broke his foot in three (3) places and has had a rough time getting around. Potts thanked the board as well as his fellow colleagues for their understanding while he has been out using some of his sick time working remotely from home since he is not able to drive.

Potts said he has made many good friends while working at the township but is looking forward to working on the farm again.

Horn said he is pleased to have had Potts working for the Township. Fleshman recommended to the board for consideration a resolution to begin the process of searching for candidates for the Administrator position. Horn said he would be opposed to that at this time. Alex said it would be a great idea as Potts has been an amazing asset to the Township in grants and huge projects. Our Township is so much better off with Potts here as a professional Administrator. Horn said there will not be another Potts. Alex said you are correct but we hope to find someone as good as him.

Horn stated to Alex that since he had decided not to run again and we have residents asking where the money is going to come from which I have been saying all along, said Horn.

Resolution 2021-110

Begin Search for New Township Administrator

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves to begin the search for a new Township Administrator effective immediately.

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Alex seconded Fleshman's motion; with no further discussion, the roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Horn: YES/ NO **Fleshman:** YES/ NO **Alex:** YES/ NO

Resolution passed.

Fleshman asked to be excused.

Jerry Ooten thanked Fleshman for assisting him in getting rid of trash piled on El Paso Drive. Fleshman thanked all who were involved in making that happen and asked everyone not to judge him for what he doesn't do but to judge him for what he has done after they've told him.

Fleshman was excused from the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Horn said he was able to see paradise and it is in Mr. Ooten's backyard. Horn requested to place a few pictures of Ooten's yard in the next newsletter.

Kelly asked Alex to confirm that he is not running for re-election. Alex confirmed that he is not doing anything else but has chosen not to run for re-election.

Adjournment:

With no further discussion or comments from the audience, Horn adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Signature of file with original

Aryeh Alex, Trustee

Signature of file with original

John Fleshman, Vice-Chairman/Trustee

Signature of file with original

Ralph Horn, Chairman/Trustee

Attested on the 12th day of August, 2021.

Signature on file with original

Nick Dunn, Fiscal Officer