Special Meeting 4/27/22 – 4:45 PM

Leezer called the meeting to order at 4:45 PM

Prayer: Chairman Jim Leezer

Pledge: Steve Mazer

Roll Call: Jim – Yes Ralph – Y John – Y, all 3 Trustees Present

Motion to move into executive session at 4:46 PM to discuss employee compensation pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 121.22 (G) (1)

Leezer made motion, Horn seconded motion

Vote: Jim – Yes Ralph – Yes John – Yes

Motion to come out of executive session at 5:34 PM with no decisions made at this time

Leezer made motion to accept, Horn seconded

Vote: Jim Leezer – Yes, Ralph Horn – Yes, John Fleshman – Yes

Moved to brief Recess until 6:00 PM for Town Hall Meeting

Trustee Leezer moved out of recess at 5:58 PM and stated that Sheriff Dallas Baldwin would be in attendance with us, along with Deputy Chief Jim Gilbert about the Police Levy.

**SHERIFF DALLAS BALDWIN:** Sheriff Baldwin says we have a great relationship with the Township and this is one of his favorite places to be. Staffing and cost are issues he is aware of and supports the Police Levy in the upcoming election. He also stated that it would take about 1 year before we see increased patrols in the county and there are several calls for service.

* Trustee Fleshman stated how important this levy was and seconded Sheriff Baldwin’s comments about having police protection.

Sheriff Baldwin stated that the jail population was high before COVID, and then it dropped down. Recently we have seen that number climb again and with the projection of over 1 Million additional people in the City of Columbus over the next 10-20 years. He also stated that crime would continue to spread out across the county. Sheriff Baldwin stated while he loves the Township, his agency can not take on the role of patrolling the township. He says that it is cheaper to keep what we have right now.

* Trustee Fleshman reminded the audience about how the Temporary Levy works and how it would go away at the end of this year.

Zaniewski asked a question about the proposed levy amounts and she felt the amounts are very high in her opinion. It was explained by Fleshman that even if property values were to increase, we can not collect more than what is levied. Leezer commented about residents signing up with the citizens academy and getting a ride along with our police department.

Thomas Hoe spoke to the board about Hopkins Ave. and the amount of speeding and called it “Highway 88.” He thanked Fleshman for getting stop signs installed and also stated he is seeing some trying to stop every so often. He also stated that he liked Kidwell driving around on Facebook. He also then stated about seeing a sign about trash service is cheaper than police protection.

Follow up was discussed about how we lose officers due to not having job security guaranteed. Horn and Leezer agreed with the Sheriff’s Office about having a tough time recruiting and that we will continue to have issues as well. Horn stated he would gladly put out a bit of extra money each month to ensure people are safe.

Zaniewski spoke again about the speeding on Fisher Road and she has lived there for 22 years and still feels the levy that is being asked is too high.

Steve Mason, part of the FOP, was introduced to the audience and we have a good relationship with them allowing us to have part time officers on our streets. Steve Mason says he understands everyone is paying more for everything. Mason also commented that he represents 28 agencies in the county and the Township has great officers that care about the citizens of the community. Mason wants this to be sustainable for everyone.

Chip Tate spoke up and said that he is willing to pay more to help keep their family safe despite being on a fixed income. He has had experiences and understands what it takes to keep the department going. Fleshman says we try to stretch every dollar as far as we can.

Chaplain Snodgrass stated he is on a fixed income as well and having a police department gives us hope and security. Leezer said if this levy fails, we would have to come back with the same millage again.

Patty Riley spoke up about how important it is to pass the levy and does not care what it would cost.

Jan spoke up about being involved in an incident in her neighborhood and a police officer came to her door and she has done several ride alongs.

Fleshman said that those who attended tonight should share it with others. Glibert said that having our own department is important to have that personal touch.

Chip asked about the Sheriff’s Office having to finish a priority outside of the township first before they come here to the Township.

Robyn Watkins showed support for the levy and attended the academy. She commended the department for doing what they can to help her.