

# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio

Regular Meeting

Held at 2193 Frank Road

July 13th, 2023

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Chairman Fleshman called the Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, Board of Trustees Regular Meeting to order at approximately 12:00 P.M.

Vice-Chairman Leezer led the opening prayer.

Resident Jann Legge of Brownleaf Road led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn)- yes.

## Old Business:

Meeting minutes to be approved: 6/20/23 Special Meeting, 6/30/23 Special Meeting, and the 07/07/23 Special Meeting.

Chairman Fleshman made a motion to accept the 06/30/23 Special Meeting minutes and the 06/30/23 Special Meeting minutes as written.

Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded the motion.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

Chairman Fleshman made a motion to accept the 07/07/23 Special Meeting minutes as written.

Trustee Horn seconded the motion.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- abstained, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

Before moving into the *Guest Speaker* section of the agenda, Chairman Fleshman recommended the Board of Trustees write a letter to the City of Columbus requesting that the recently relocated Greyhound bus terminal located at 845 N. Wilson Road cease and desist operations until all zoning requirements are met.

Chairman Fleshman explained that people attending today's meeting came to speak specifically on the Greyhound bus terminal. As the chairman, he can change the order of the agenda slightly to allow for public comment on the terminal.

Chairman Fleshman opened the floor for public comment specific to the Greyhound bus terminal at 845 N. Wilson Road.

*Patty Spencer, Southwest Area Commission (SWAC), Zoning Chairman*

Ms. Spencer shared information she obtained at a recent SWAC meeting about the newly relocated Greyhound bus terminal on N. Wilson Road. Ms. Spencer also explained that she obtained the information while attending a recent Greater Hilltop Area Commission (GHAC) meeting, the land at 845 N. Wilson Road was zoned commercial, so the property owners were not required to come in front of the GHAC prior to beginning operations at the site.

*Zachary Whitt of Lowell Drive* shared that he attended the GHAC meeting, as previously mentioned by Ms. Spencer. He also researched the owner of the bus terminal as Barons Bus from Cleveland, Ohio, who recently

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purchased the property in April of 2023. Mr. Whitt explained that this terminal provides 24/7 services with thirty-four (34) buses scheduled daily.

Mr. Whitt explained his concerns about safety related to the terminal. For example, there is no running water, crosswalks, sidewalks, or traffic lights for travelers to use upon their departure from the bus if they need to locate a bathroom or an eating establishment.

Chairman Fleshman shared that he has often witnessed buses parking on the residential street (Ferrell Place) adjacent to the terminal. Mr. Whitt concurred and stated that the pavement on the residential roadway of Ferrell Place is not designed to support the weight of the commercial buses. Mr. Whitt continued by saying that area businesses have expressed concerns about how the terminal's location has impacted their business.

The terminal has an estimated thousand seven hundred (1,700) travelers per day coming through. There have been five (5) to six (6) Columbus Police Department reports taken since the terminal opened on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, said Mr. Whitt.

*Mr. Hill of Lowell Drive* explained that he also has safety concerns because his wife works for the Department of Corrections. Mr. Hill is concerned that released inmates are put on and depart from this terminal; those individuals could recognize his wife's vehicle due to the proximity of Mr. Hill's home to the terminal.

*Ms. Cabus of Grimes Drive and a West Scioto Area Commission member* informed everyone that the homeless camps located off McKinley Avenue might contribute to the issues related to the bus terminal.

*Mr. Buttrick of Lowell Drive* shared his concern about the size of the terminal and that the property is not large enough for commercial buses to operate.

*Ms. Coombs of Lowell Drive* asked the Board of Trustees why the residents in the area did not get to vote on the terminal moving into a residential area near the freeway.

Trustee Horn said, unfortunately, the Township had zero knowledge of the terminal moving outside downtown Columbus. Typically, when a business this size is moving near residential areas, local authorities have meetings and conduct traffic studies. The city needs to explain how the decision was made to move the terminal out of downtown Columbus, said Mr. Horn.

Mr. Whitt shared that the bus terminal may have an agreement with the neighboring Potter House Church on Lowell Drive to allow the bus drivers to park their vehicles in the church parking lot. Mr. Whitt said he had witnessed the drivers exiting the bus, walking to the church, and entering their personal vehicle. Chairman Fleshman said he is unsure if the bus terminal has permission to park their cars at the church.

*Chairman Fleshman made a motion to compose a letter overseen by the Township attorney to the City of Columbus asking them to recognize the public concerns about the Greyhound bus terminal located at 845 N. Wilson Road, Columbus, OH 43204. Requesting the terminal close until all compliance/zoning issues are met, including traveler safety, such as establishing a crosswalk and traffic light.*

Vice-Chairman Leezer said he is 100% against the City of Columbus dumping this terminal on the Westside.

Trustee Horn is unclear on the letter's purpose and encouraged the Township to obtain legal advice before compiling a letter to the city.

Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded the motion.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – abstained.

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Chairman Fleshman asked Administrator Mazer to compile a draft letter and send it to the Township's legal team for their opinion before sending it to the city.

Trustee Horn said he feels the Township is not managing this correctly and that legal guidance is needed first to avoid a future lawsuit.

Mr. Whitt asked Administrator Mazer for the timetable of the letter. Administrator Mazer said he could not answer this question as the draft letter would be sent to the Township's legal team.

Chairman Fleshman thanked everyone for their comments and returned to the next item on the agenda.

### Guest Speaker:

*Patty Spencer, Southwest Area Commission (SWAC), Zoning Chairman*

Ms. Spencer shared that the City of Columbus is hiring for their 911 positions. If anyone is interested, they can check the employment section of the City of Columbus' website. She also mentioned that even though the audience members may not live in the City of Columbus, they are encouraged to report things they see within the city limits to the city's 311 information reporting hotline. In closing, Ms. Spencer explained that a Central Ohio Metropolitan Library representative spoke recently at a SWAC meeting and expressed interest in building a library in the area.

Chairman Fleshman thanked Ms. Spencer for the information and introduced Larry Taylor from Trebel Energy to speak.

Mr. Taylor spoke on Trebel Energy and the steps needed to put an electric aggregation on the ballot in November 2023 in Franklin Township.

Chairman Fleshman said he would get with Administrator Mazer to schedule an executive session to discuss this matter. Trustee Horn said he was uncomfortable putting a utility aggregation on the ballot. Vice-Chairman Leezer suggested tabling the topic for another time. Mr. Taylor mentioned that Trebel Energy would pay the cost to put the aggregation on the ballot, and there would be no cost to the Township.

Chairman Fleshman opened the floor for public comment/questions specific to Trebel Energy.

*Mr. Blevins of Ransburg Avenue* asked Mr. Taylor of Trebel Energy the following questions: If the Township would agree to sign with Trebel Energy, how long is the contract, and how does Trebel Energy make their money from a signed contract? Is Trebel Energy in consortiums with other Townships in Ohio? Mr. Taylor said the contracts range from twelve (12) to thirty-six (36) months. Trebel Energy is a broker and works with others for purchasing power to leverage the market.

Chairman Fleshman said the Township is not required to sign a contract with Trebel Energy; they need a yes vote to place the aggregation on the ballot for the voters. Mr. Taylor corrected Chairman Fleshman by stating that the Township must sign an agreement with Trebel Energy before placing the utility aggregation on the ballot. This agreement states that the Township would use Trebel Energy as their consultant/broker even if the ballot does not pass for a five (5) year period.

Chairman Fleshman said the Board would need to discuss this in more detail and have the agreement/contract reviewed by their legal team. Administrator Mazer confirmed that the Township has no resolutions on file committing them to Trebel Energy at this time. Chairman Fleshman said work still needs to be done before a decision can be reached. Mr. Taylor apologized, as he had the impression that the Township had already signed an agreement and was ready to move on to placing the aggregate on the ballot.

Chairman Fleshman thanked Mr. Taylor for his information.

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## Police Department:

Byron Smith, Chief of Police, said he had nothing to report.

Vice-Chairman Leezer commended Officer Roger Myers and Sargent Pollock for being the second on the scene at the I-70 and W. Mound Street shooting recently. Vice-Chairman Leezer said he received positive comments about the officers at the scene from the Franklin County Sheriff's Office and the Columbus Police Department.

Chairman Fleshman asked Chief Smith if he had received updates from the City of Columbus on any recent police activity at the Greyhound bus terminal on N. Wilson Road. Chief Smith said that he had not received anything recently but that there is a mutual aid agreement if the Township is needed.

Deputy Hamilton from the Franklin County Sheriff's Office was not present to provide a report.

Administrator Mazer read the following **Resolution 2023-130** approving 80 hours of injury leave for David Ratliff from July 5th, 2023 – July 28th, 2023, per the employee's MOU.

Chairman Fleshman made a motion to accept the resolution as read, and Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

Trustee Horn asked Fire Captain Todd Broecker to update the audience on the status of 945 Jackson Road. Captain Broecker shared that the property has been submitted to the county prosecutor's office. Captain Broecker stated that he attended a hearing regarding the property in February of 2023 and that there was another hearing scheduled in May with Franklin County Zoning, and that the judge may have given the property owner extensions to come into compliance.

A resident on Jackson Road spoke about how the property at 945 Jackson Road is causing flooding every time it rains, and the elements on the ground, such as gasoline and oil, are running into the storm drains. Captain Broecker said that one of the challenges with the property is that half of it is in Franklin Township and half is in the City of Columbus.

Audience members from Jackson Road continued to share that there is questionable activity at the property, and they are concerned for the safety of the children who wait for the school bus in the proximity of the said property.

Chairman Fleshman explained how if the Township had Home Rule, they could act on this property owner and not depend on other departments.

Chairman Fleshman asked Police Chief Smith if the current traffic grant funds would allow the police officers to focus on this area. Chief Smith said he could move officers from higher priority areas to this area. The Jackson Road residents expressed concern about how this company can remain in business without permits and that something needs to be done as their property values are dropping due to the impact from 945 Jackson Road.

Vice-Chairman Leezer and Chairman Fleshman asked the police chief to see if the traffic grant could be used and if the Franklin County Sheriff's Office could assist.

Chairman Fleshman thanked Captain Broecker for his update.

## Fire Department:

Robert (Bob) Arnold, Fire Chief, deferred to Administrator Mazer to read a resolution.

Administrator Mazer read **Resolution 2023-131**, approving EMS funds to purchase a new chassis for Medic 193.

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Chairman Fleshman made a motion to accept the resolution as read, and Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

Chief Arnold asked the Board to accept the resignations of Joseph Smith and Jacob Hawkins.

*Chairman Fleshman motioned to accept Jacob Hawkins's resignation effective July 20th, 2023. Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.*

*Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.*

*Chairman Fleshman motioned to accept Joseph Smith's resignation effective July 22nd, 2023. Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.*

*Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.*

Chief Arnold explained that with the two resignations, he needed to replace these two positions with new employees. Chief Arnold asked the Board to approve hiring Andrew Schmidt as Firefighter I and Collin Dotson as Firefighter V.

Administrator Mazer read **Resolution 2023-133** approving the hiring of Andrew Schmidt as a firefighter I, effective August 16th, 2023.

Chairman Fleshman made a motion to accept the resolution as read. Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

Administrator Mazer presented **Resolution 2023-132** approving the hiring of Collin Dotson as a firefighter V, effective August 3rd, 2023.

Chairman Fleshman made a motion to accept the resolution as read. Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

### **Road Department:**

Road Superintendent, Jim Stevens, was not present for the meeting.

Administrator Mazer read **Resolution 2023-134** authorizing the service rates for services rendered under House Bill 505.86 and House Bill 505.87.

Chairman Fleshman made a motion to accept the resolution as read. Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

Chairman Fleshman asked Administrator Mazer to inform Mr. Stevens that the property next to the animal hospital on N. Wilson Road needs to be addressed.

### **Fiscal Department:**

*Robyn Watkins, Assistant Fiscal Officer, read the motion to approve accounts payable from June 16th, 2023 – July 13th, 2023, in the amount of \$206,480.91, and payroll paid on June 23rd, 2023, in the amount of \$173,570.67, and payroll paid on July 3rd, 2023, in the amount of \$6,302.49 and payroll paid on July 7th, 2023, in the amount of \$181,744.24 for a combined total of \$68,098.31. From check numbers 69212 to 69287 and electronic vouchers 1005-2023 through 1178-2023.*

Chairman Fleshman accepted the motion as read. Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.

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Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

### Administrator Report:

Administrator Mazer read Resolution 2023-135, obligations approved by the Township Administrator from June 16th, 2023 – July 13th, 2023.

Chairman Fleshman made a motion to accept the resolution as read. Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

Administrator Mazer read Resolution 2023-136 to proceed with the removal of a structure at 1053 Brown Road, Columbus, OH 43223.

Chairman Fleshman made a motion to accept the resolution as read. Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

Administrator Mazer read Resolution 2023-137, letter of engagement amended #4 from the Auditors of the State totaling \$13,9640.00 for the audit period of 2017 – 2019.

Chairman Fleshman made a motion to accept the resolution as read. Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

Administrator Mazer read Resolution 2023-138, adopting the annual road district tax millage for the year beginning January 1st, 2024, and to submit to the budget commission.

Chairman Fleshman made a motion to accept the resolution as read. Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

Administrator Mazer read Resolution 2023-139, accepting a grant from the Ohio Department of Public Safety in the amount of \$20,607.83.

Chairman Fleshman made a motion to accept the resolution as read. Vice-Chairman Leezer seconded.

Roll Call: John (Chairman Fleshman)- yes, Jim (Vice-Chairman Leezer)- yes, Ralph (Trustee Horn) – yes.

### Trustees Report:

Chairman Fleshman had nothing to report.

Vice-Chairman Leezer had nothing to report.

Trustee Horn introduced the new fiscal officer, Linzie Justus.

Trustee Horn explained that plans were passed for re-zoning at 2304-4200 Shoppers Lane in the rear of the old Westland Mall property. Horn said the redevelopment plans include housing, retail, and other businesses.

A member of the audience asked Mr. Horn if the property would remain in the Township. Mr. Horn said the property has water and sewer and will remain in Franklin Township.

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### Questions from the Audience:

*Mr. Blevins from Ransburg Avenue* asked for an update on behalf of a resident, Mr. Youngman of Geneva Avenue, who had attended a prior meeting. Mr. Youngman had inquired about overgrown grass at a property on Wilson Avenue. He requested a guardrail be installed at the end of Geneva Avenue. According to Mr. Youngman, neither of these items has been addressed, Mr. Blevins stated.

Mr. Blevins continued by asking the Board if anyone had attended a Columbus School Board meeting as indicated in a prior meeting over the traffic issue on Rae Avenue as well as if the Township has incurred any additional late fees or penalties due to the instability of maintaining a Fiscal Officer in the Fiscal Department.

In closing, Mr. Blevins asked why the Board did not wait to have the presentation on the redevelopment of property on Harrisburg Pike in the regular meeting versus having the presentation in a special meeting at 9:00 A.M. on July 9th, 2023. The buyer owns a junk yard near Valleyview in the Township, an industrial dumping ground. Blevins is worried about what will happen on the property at Harrisburg Pike near neighboring homes.

Vice-Chairman Leezer said he did visit the property on Wilson Avenue when it was initially reported, and the grass was not high enough for the Township to act. Vice-Chairman Leezer said he would speak with the road superintendent on the status of the guardrail. Chairman Fleshman said no one from Franklin Township attended a Columbus School Board meeting. Chairman Fleshman said the redevelopment on Harrisburg Pike was not presented as a junkyard.

Chairman Fleshman and Vice Chairman Leezer asked Administrator Mazer to schedule the buyer of the Harrisburg Pike property to attend a regular meeting to explain to the residents his redevelopment plans.

The Assistant Fiscal Officer explained that the Township had incurred late fees and penalties due to the inconsistency in the Fiscal Officer position. The Township has had five (5) Fiscal Officers in five (5) years; it is challenging to stabilize the department, said the Assistant Fiscal Officer.

*Ms. Legge of Brownleaf* thanked the police and fire for their service and updated the Board that the chop shop across from her home has slowed down.

*Ms. Coombs* of Lowell Drive asked the Board if the Township was still receiving money from the casino annexation. Chairman Fleshman said yes, but not what was initially promised.

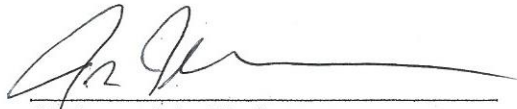
*A resident of Jackson Road* asked the Board why they could not do anything about the gray house on Jackson Road. Chairman Fleshman said that this property is in court based on his understanding. The resident asked if it would be effective if the neighbors signed a petition. Chairman Fleshman recommended the neighbors attend a city council meeting to express their concerns.

An audience member asked the Board to explain the new junkyard previously mentioned moving on Harrisburg Pike. Chairman Fleshman explained that the property would not be a junkyard and that the Board would have the owner come to a future meeting.

*Ms. Leggs of Brownleaf* asked if the Board considered placing Home Rule on the ballot and how it would be publicized. Chairman Fleshman said Home Rule will be on the agenda at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

With no further questions or comments, Chairman Fleshman adjourned the meeting at 2:15 P.M.

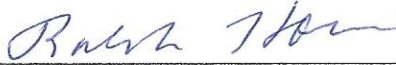
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Chairman John Fleshman



Vice Chairman James Leezer



Trustee Ralph Horn

  
Fiscal Department

*Audio of meeting available by public records request*

*Full resolutions available by record request*