

MINUTES OF THE HOWLAND TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

PUBLIC HEARING (Immediately following regular meeting)
Proposed Re-Zoning of 697 Howland Wilson Rd (Parcel ID #28-129300) in Howland Township.

The Howland Township Board of Trustees held their regular meeting virtually on January 13, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. via the Howland Township Web Page www.howlandtownship.org

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch – Present
Dr. James LaPolla - Present
Rick Clark - Present

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A motion was made by Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Rick Clark to suspend the reading of December 31, 2020 meeting minutes and accept as written.

Roll Call: Dr. James J LaPolla -yea
Rick Clark -yea
Matthew Vansuch -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Rick Clark to turn over the meeting to Fiscal Officer Robert Costello for the purpose of reorganization.

Roll Call: Dr. James J LaPolla -yea
Rick Clark -yea
Matthew Vansuch -yea

A motion was made by Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to appoint Rick Clark as Chairperson of the Board of Trustees for fiscal year 2021.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James J LaPolla -yea
Rick Clark -yea

A motion was made by Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Rick Clark to appoint Dr. James LaPolla as Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Trustees for fiscal year 2021.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James J LaPolla -yea
Rick Clark -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Rick Clark to authorize Fiscal Officer Robert Costello to pay all outstanding invoices incurred and approve all warrants issued.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James J LaPolla -yea
Rick Clark -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-001:

Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees for 2021 shall be scheduled as follows and posted on the Township bulletin board located at the Township Administration Building, 205 Niles Cortland Rd. NE.

2nd Wednesday of the month @ 6:00 P.M.

Work sessions will be held one-half hour preceding each public meeting, special meetings will be scheduled as needed, and notification will be given to the Tribune Chronicle and anyone requesting notification.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James J LaPolla	-yea
	Rick Clark	-yea

A motion was made by Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution 2021-002:

Authorize the Fiscal Officer to purchase all necessary office supplies and/or equipment for 2021.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James J LaPolla	-yea
	Rick Clark	-yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-003:

Approve the Trustees; Fiscal Officer and Administrator attend the State of Ohio Trustees and Fiscal Officer's Association Convention, the National Convention, the Trumbull County Township Association meetings, and any other meetings, seminars, workshops, schools, training, conferences or conventions that are necessary for the betterment of the Township.

The Township will reimburse allowed expenses incurred as per the Township Policy and gas mileage to be reimbursed at \$.56 per mile, approved rate by the IRS 2021.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James J LaPolla	-yea
	Rick Clark	-yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Rick Clark to vote on Resolution 2021-004:

Authorize the Township employees and Zoning Board members to attend job related seminars, conferences, schools, training or conventions for fiscal year 2021, after a

formal request has been approved by the Department Heads, Administrator and/or a Trustee.

The Township will reimburse allowed expenses incurred as per the Township Policy and gas mileage to be reimbursed at \$.56 per mile, approved rate by the IRS 2021.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James J LaPolla -yea
Rick Clark -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Rick Clark to vote on Resolution 2021-005:

Adopt a resolution of Howland Township's intents to dispose of surplus, unneeded, obsolete, or unfit personal property through the use of internet auctions on the Township website and links to Gov-Deals for fiscal year 2021 (resolution attached in its entirety)

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James J LaPolla -yea
Rick Clark -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Rick Clark to vote on Resolution 2021-006:

Per the recommendation of Darlene St. George, approve to continue service with GPD Group as the Townships Architects, Engineers and Planning Service for the fiscal year 2021.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James J LaPolla -yea
Rick Clark -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Rick Clark to vote on Resolution 2021-007:

Approve to contract Grace Services Inc. to provide weed control in Township ditches, retention ponds, and cemeteries at a cost of \$2,245.00. The cost has increased by \$200.00 from last year.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -abstain
Dr. James J LaPolla -yea
Rick Clark -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Rick Clark to vote on Resolution 2021-008:

Approve to accept the resignation of Cara Kalogerou from the Howland Township Board of Zoning Appeals effective December 31, 2020.

Approve to appoint John Rubesich to the Howland Township Board of Zoning Appeals to fill the remainder of Cara Kalogerou's term through December 31, 2024.

Approve to re-appoint Patricia Gilmore to the Howland Township Board of Zoning Appeals for a second term beginning January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2025.

Roll Call:
Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James J LaPolla -yea
Rick Clark -yea

A motion was made by Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution 2021-009: (See Summary Below)

Should the City of Niles submit a formal application to have the 208 Plan amended, to allow it to provide sewer coverage for that area that we authorize to submit a formal objection to that plan to the East Gate Regional Council of Government and to support the City of Girard in opposition to the effort.

Roll Call:
Dr. James J LaPolla -yea
Matthew Vansuch -yea
Rick Clark -yea

Summary of Meeting:

Trustee Rick Clark

Anything that you would like to discuss to this point?

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

Yes, Mr. Clark. I wanted to let everybody know that I sent a letter to Diane Yeager at 945 Altura Drive at the end of the year to thank her for organizing the neighbors on Altura Drive to beautify and improve the appearance of their gateway into their neighborhood. They cleaned up the landscape and they also put a brand new Heatherwood Estates sign there. It looks nice and I just wanted to make sure I recognized her and her neighbors at tonight's meeting. Beyond that, I do not have any further comments.

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

I would like to give a summary of the electric survey that I put on over the last couple of months or so. I did ask through my Facebook and through other means, for people who have, Niles's electric to submit their bill, take away their personal information off it, to see what the average bill is that they are paying in Howland Township from Niles electric in comparison to Ohio Edison, we got back 73 responses. And they ranged from all over Howland basically from the Bolindale area to across the street here from some businesses to so small homes. Anyways, the average wintertime billing was about \$140 a month for these Niles electric usage on the Niles electric bill itself, the consumer is paying 11.28 cents per kilowatt hour, there's a fuel cost adjustment of 60.6 cents per kilowatt hour and then every household has a surcharge and they call a customer charge of \$4.30 so if they use one kilowatt hour or they use 1000 kilowatt hours that customer charge stay the same throughout, which basically brought the average monthly bill to Howland residence get Niles electric to 12.25 cents per kilowatt hour. Ohio Edison is 10.1. The way I came up with that number, I just took the total usage divided by the total sale, I did not go line surcharge that might add to one theme divided and got those two which is about 25% difference in costs for those residents. Also, every single resident that responded to the survey, all wanted the option of moving to Ohio Edison, and way from, Niles electric. I did some extrapolation is purely extrapolation. The last population or census, Howland townships had 19,000 people. If you average four people per household, come down to about 4800 households. If you conservatively say 25% of those people

are getting Niles electric, then 73 responses not enough to really get a 100% concrete data information but it gives us a rough idea. Anyways, and if you basically average \$125, per month, about \$1.5 million per year goes to now city electric company from Howland residents, and to take it down to \$100, a month summertime or spring usage, even that is a million dollars so quite a bit of money does go to the city of now Electric Company somehow in resonance. So, based upon the response, I just want I want to make a comment I know we are doing this to continue working with Ohio Edison, to see when we can have the availability of our residents move their electric from Niles electric to Ohio Edison and so that is my report on the usage fee and usage cost.

Trustee Rick Clark

Thank You.

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

Your welcome

Trustee Rick Clark

Any questions for Jim?

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

I do not think I am not participating in that conversation.

Trustee Rick Clark

I got you. Okay. I just said one thing I want to I want to talk about. I do not want to say convoluted, but I'll say that it looks like the city of Niles may have fired a shot over the bow. Not necessarily our bow, but the bow of one of our allies that ultimately would affect us at some point, I believe. I have a couple of copies of a couple of letters I am not sure how I have them but the first one's dated June 5, 2020 to the Trumbull County Commissioners from the mayor of Niles. I will just read the first paragraph to you. This letter is to notify you that the City of Niles is officially seeking your support for the proposed Stillwagon development project to be fully annexed into the city of Niles. The property, almost 50, acres, currently sits in Weathersfield Township. Although the property owner has expressed a desire to fully incorporate the land into the city for the purpose of benefiting from city services, which I will mention is Sewer Service. That was from June and I think since there has been some turmoil in the sanitary engineer's office. I do not think anything's happened for a period of time until January 7. There is a letter to Jason Altobelli, who is a property owner from the Gary Newbraugh, the deputy sanitary engineer, saying that after reviewing the attached feasibility drawing and a June 5 letter from the city of Niles. The Trumbull County engineer's sanitary engineers have been terminated may be operationally feasible to provide sanitary sewer service to the property located at the southeast quadrant of Niles Vienna Road, Stillwagon Road intersection, as depicted on the attached drawing, so forth and so on. And although this property is completely in Weathersfield, if they extended sewer service to them and annexes to Niles that would make that property adjacent to property in Howland, and possibly property in Vienna. Also, any sewer line that is extended any residents, that is within 200 feet of the sewer line would have to tap in which would make them have to annex to the City of Niles. Also, Mrs. St George and I had an extensive conversation today with the property owner Mr. Altobelli and we sympathize with his position. He is just a property owner, trying to get services to his 50 acres there, so it can be developed. That is unfortunate that he's sort of stuck in the middle. I do not believe that Niles under any circumstances is willing to withdraw that ordinance that they enacted a year or so ago to make it mandatory to annex if you receive services from Niles. The property owners willing to sit down with all the players has assured us that he's not filed any application to annex, and he wants to sit down with all the players and work on an amiable solution if he can players being Howland, Niles, Weathersfield, Girard and possibly Vienna. And so, I am just letting everybody know, and I think you all do know that it's incumbent upon us. If this moves

forward that we would fight this possibility of annexing this property to the city of Niles, we realize there are other ways to do annexations type two annexations. JEDS, although, Mr. Altobelli has said that this is going to be primarily residential project. Single Family and condos and so forth and not commercial so we could not JED it. But Matthew will jump in here. He did a TIF I think two he proposed Yeah.

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

Yeah, I would like to jump in, I know that. We had a lot of conversations with Niles last year, and we have done a lot of legwork and we told our residents that we've done a lot of legwork, so this is not a surprise to the township, and we're prepared for it to get into a little bit more of the technical details, the county is divided up into what's called facility planning areas. And those are governed by federal law and the facility planning areas dictate what entity is going to be providing sewer service in a particular area, and currently the area that is the Stillwagon area is under the Girard facility planning area, Niles is a facility planning area stops. I do not know the exact distance but it's close to that area, but it does not reach it, and the Mosquito area, Mosquito Creek facility planning area is adjacent to that as well. So, there are a number of players I know that the city of Girard has invested significant funds in upgrading their wastewater treatment plants so I do not believe the issue with Girard is that Girard can't provide the service and doesn't have the capacity to provide the service. So, what concerns us and an issue that we raised specifically with the city of Niles last year, during our discussions with them was that we would oppose any change of the facility planning areas to allow Niles to encroach upon either the county's service areas or Girard's areas. And while Niles has submitted this letter to the county and the county is responding back that it could be technically possible, Niles has not taken the steps to change the configuration of those areas to make it possible for them to provide sewer service in that area under federal law. This has nothing to do with the annexation laws, this has everything to do with federal law, it is called a 208 Plan. And we stand ready to oppose that plan. One of the documents that was provided to us, showed that Niles is preparing to take an area for instance sewer plan that would go all the way up to Springs Road. So, that's significantly larger swath of area than that little corner, it does directly impact our township properties. And then once the creep of Niles touches more properties, it opens more properties to future annexations. So, it has always been our position that we're always willing to talk work which we did last year, but we're also realistic about what our options are. And when we told our residents that we were prepared to fight that fight is not always had in court that fight is through the East Gate Regional Council of Governments that government governmental entity controls the 208 Plan. And we, along with our neighbors, and the other entities that sit on those governing boards, we will use all power available to us and politics available to us, to ensure that plan does not change and to protect that area for the existing current sewer providers. We do not want to see Niles come into that area, and then force our residents to have to annex in because they now must tap in the Niles sewers. If one domino falls, they all fall. So, we stand with Girard, we support Girard in that we stand with Vienna, we stand with Weathersfield in that area. The initial request from Niles to the Trumbull County Commissioners back in June specifically, did not specifically mention Howland, and just mentioned Weathersfield but when you look at the map, it's very clear that that property that township property lines go down below Niles Vienna Road. So, I would like to make a motion that should the city of Niles submit a formal application to have the 208-Plan amended, to allow it to provide sewer coverage for that area that we authorize our administrator to submit a formal objection to that plan to the East Gate Regional Councils of government, and to support the city of Girard in opposition to that effort.

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

I'll second that.

Trustee Rick Clark

All right. Mrs. St. George any comment.

Administrator Darlene St. George

No, I think that anything that I say would be redundant.

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

Yeah, I do want to add one thing that I did forget to mention, when we talked with the city of Niles, it is always been the city's position that they will not repeal or amend their ordinance. That is correct, we have we have asked, and asked, and asked, they have effectively not enforced it. Which is good, but they have not repealed it, and they have not amended it, and in my last conversation with the mayor, many months ago, he was adamant that that was not bad it was option was not on the table to repeal or men so I'm not sure how any future conversations can go if that still is going to remain on the table and that's going to be their negotiating position, but we have always come to the table to talk and we will be willing to come to the table to talk. Going forward, but that is our position and I sense from both of you that that position will not change either.

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

Just for your information, based upon the 73 we got we did get a few respondents from Mines Road which isn't all that far away, that does get Niles electric so again if they do what you say or have the option to pipe it in that pipeline is that it's only a hop skip and a jump to the Niles electric, people so I mean that could also fuel an expanded annexation too I think you should like to bring that up.

Trustee Rick Clark

Just a follow up that we are still willing to come to the table, the property owner. I think is willing to have us all come to the table and he assured us today, that, that he would not move forward unless we all were sitting at the table, whether or not we would come to some resolution I do not know but he's also willing to, to discuss it.

Administrator Darlene St. George

The other thing I want to clarify is that not only could Niles initiate a change to the plan, but the county could also initiate a change to the plan if they would so choose to do that.

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

The county is the secondary provider for the, I guess you would call it the backup. I guess for both Niles Girard, and they are the primary provider over the mosquito. So yeah, the county has a stake in this as well and it is disappointing to see where some of the commissioners have taken their position on this issue. Specifically, Commissioner Fuda. I think that he has made his position very clear as to where he stands and I'm very disappointed that he's taking the side of forced annexation over our residents.

Trustee Rick Clark

Well, I believe that because Commissioner Fuda has been involved in some of these negotiations at these meetings that he should recuse himself when the vote if would come up in front of the commissioners for an annexation. I do not think it's appropriate at all for him to be part of the discussions on an issue that he's ultimately going to have to vote upon.

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

No, and I would also say that I think oftentimes the counties forgetting what its obligations are under its federal loans for those sewer systems that have put in with tax dollars that all of us paid as federal taxpayers. There are protections in place to protect the county sewer lines and the county commissioners have an obligation to us as taxpayers and to the federal government to make sure

that they enforce those obligations and if they don't, there are serious consequences for failing to do so.

Administrator Darlene St. George

Matt, are you going to mend your motion to include sending a letter to the county as well?

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

Yes, I would also include should, let me rephrase my motion or amend my motion so that should the city of Niles or Trumbull County file for an amendment to the to await plan with the East Gate Regional Council of Governments, that we authorize our administrator to file formal objection to that plan with the East gate Regional Council of Governments.

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

Okay, that's a motion. I will second it.

All right motion passed resolution 2021- 009 approve Matt's motion.

Trustee Rick Clark

Call the roll please.

Fiscal Officer Robert Costello

Dr. James Lapolla - yes

Matthew Vansuch - yes

Rick Clark – yes

Trustee Rick Clark

The motion is carried. Just one other one other note, which really does not have any to do with this because this is turns out to be a residential project which we weren't sure of till today we thought it was going to be mixed use some commercial in some residential, but we hope going forward. You know, if anybody did want to do commercial development in a township, it would be infill rather than new development I mean we have the Eastwood Mall and all the commercial property along Route 46, we would hope somebody wouldn't want to do commercial development that they would go in that direction, rather than attempting to do certain development somewhere else where it's not already zoned for that type of development so that I asked you Darlene, did you have anything to comment on?

Administrator Darlene St. George

In general, or specifically to what you are talking about?

Trustee Rick Clark

no general.

Administrator Darlene St. George

I do, last week, Mr. Palumbo, I believe you are on the call. So, last week Mr. Palumbo asked two questions and I would like to address them tonight. The first question that he asked was, what is Howland townships carryover from 2020 going into the 2021. So, our carryover this year is \$2,868,400. So, yes, I want to commend the department heads on their carryover balances. And we do have a nice carryover. But I would like to explain the carry over. It is not like we have two \$2,800,000 and additional dollars that we can throw around. We need to carry over to carry us through January, February, and March, until our we collect our new tax dollars. And those estimated expenses for January February and March, are about \$2,400,000.

So, this keeps the township from the need to borrow money. Sometimes townships finish the year, they must go to the bank and borrow money to get through these three months. The township department heads have done an outstanding job of carrying over the money they need. Some might argue that the government accounting system says you only need to budget for two months. That may be true in some places but last year, for example, Howland Township did not start receiving our new tax dollars, until the end of March. So, we had to have money to operate January, February, March. This year with the COVID continuing, and loss of jobs and the unemployment, we are not sure about our tax collection for next year, and we're not sure when they will start sending us our new tax dollars, but we do have enough money to make it through the three months. So, if you take that \$2,400,000, and you deduct it from the \$2,800,000, we have about \$400,000 divided among four departments to this "quote unquote" maybe extra dollars going into the year, but that is still great. And it is still good for the taxpayers because Howland Township will not be in debt and borrowing money.

The second issue that Mr. Palumbo asked me about, is he asked me how much the township has received, in Cares Act Money. The township received \$927,670 in revenue from Cares Act. We have spent 99.67% of that money. That is \$924,560. We have \$3,110 left in the Cares Act Money to spend. So, I hope that answers M. Palumbo's questions and when we get to the public comment part if he wants any if anyone wants further explanation, I certainly can provide it.

Trustee Rick Clark

Very good. Thank you. Any questions for Darlene, Matt or Jim?

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

No question.

Trustee Rick Clark

Chief Pantalone, you have a report this evening?

Fire Chief James Pantalone

Good evening. As our first meeting here in 2021. Fire Department finished up strong, little, short in call volume, last year, little over 3700 calls EMS runs although we were involved heavily entrenched in COVID-19. We still had a shortfall EMS runs around 220 calls. So yes, you know, we were seeing around the nation high volumes and the surges but it within our community we believe that people listen to us when we talked about, primary care physicians and those things dealing with the pandemic, so we did have a little shortfall on call volume from last year but to hinge on Mrs. St George's information about the Cares Act. Some may have seen in our social media we are putting into service this week, a new ambulance purchased with Cares Act dollars. Along with that, power cots. This ambulance actually comes with a power load system that helps load the patient and lock them safely into the back of the ambulance. These power cots are phenomenal. They will certainly help in loading stability, as well as decreasing potential injuries for our firefighters and medics as well so, yes, we the EMS did take a portion of those Cares Act dollars as we were out there doing things. We are very appreciative of the trustees and Mrs. St George for working with us with those items as all the other department heads as well, but we were able to capitalize on it and really get equipment that is being utilized every day by our staff and our medics. So, certainly, we thank you very much and so the community's new ambulance will be going into service within the week as we finish up some training and stuff, so I do not have any further stats on the year. We will try to get some new information out on our social media pages as well, any questions on anything.

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

Nope, I don't have any.

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

Are the features on the bus the same type that we have, as the other ones?

Fire Chief James Pantalone

It is the same manufacturer; it is a Ford cabin chassis with a Brawn back end. And the caveat to a Brawn unit on the back which is purchased under state cooperative purchasing pricing. We will be moving forward when we do replace some of our older ambulances. We will, do a refurbishment of that box, and only put a new cabin chassis underneath it. So, in essence, we could see about a little over 20 possibly up to a \$30,000 savings, because we already own the box, and it has been maintained very well so yes uniformity of the fleet is very important not only for daily operations but moving forward with maintenance issues and recharging those trucks.

Trustee Rick Clark

Very good. As an old ambulance jockey, Chief I cannot imagine how nice those power cots are.

Fire Chief James Pantalone

Yeah. You know, Chief Sapp and I are a little bit of the older years 20 plus close to 30 years and we used to lift cots, you know, two hands down, you know on your side so yes, we hear you there, Rick. Very nice. We have got three of them now and we have another fourth one will be slated with our own funding this year.

Trustee Rick Clark

Very good, thank you. Chief Roberts anything from the police department.

Police Chief Nick Roberts

Yeah, just our 2020-year stats, our call volume calls for service were 10,047. Our officers conducted 14,55 traffic stops. We issued 365 citations, we documented 1406 incident reports. We had 434, non-injury crashes 159 injury crashes, which is a total of 593 crashes. They made 377 arrests. And we had 47 overdoses for the year. A little bit less than last year but COVID jumped into pull that volume away from us. But I just want to commend our officers for doing an excellent job. They have Howland Township and our residents at heart. And we have a good crew, and I could not say better words about our officers.

And just the reminder we have had some car break ins in a North Road area. Laurelwood, Willard and I am sorry, Willow in the Bolindale area. We have this person on video in several places walking through yards pulling on door handles, seems to be the same person. And we think we have identified, but we are not 100% sure yet. So, please, lock your valuables up inside your home, do not leave anything out in plain view in your vehicles. And because what they are doing is for one instance, someone had the purse on the passenger seat of the vehicle, they smashed the window and took the purse. So, if you can bring your valuables inside, we would appreciate it. We are aware of it; we are out there and we're trying to catch this person that's destroying this property and stealing these items. So please call us if you hear something, you know, let us know.

Trustee Rick Clark

Good. Any questions for the chief?

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

How is the impound lot going for the department?

Police Chief Nick Roberts

Okay, I do not have any numbers in front of me right now but obviously during the time of COVID in the precautions we've been taken, it's kind of slow right now.

Trustee Rick Clark

Okay. Chief I am going to bring this up. I am going to spring it on you. We have had several calls about the road being blocked at Chick Fil A. Yeah, that's a big business at particularly lunchtime, people that are trying to get up to their homes and businesses beyond Chick Fil A aren't able to get through, and I know you were you were working on that. Do you have any comment on that?

Police Chief Nick Roberts

Yes, I actually went down and observed for myself there right around Christmas time there was a lot of congestion down there. I have not gone down yet this week. I did speak with some of the residents that live up behind the Holiday Inn. And I have also spoken with the owner of Chick Fil A and their general manager, and they are working with the Holiday Inn and other businesses to see if we can have other options as far as overflow traffic where they can put people. He gave me his general manager's cell phone number and encouraged me to have whoever's complaining to call him direct and he'll let them know the progress that he's making down there so we're all aware of the situation and we're going to keep on top of it.

Trustee Rick Clark

Yeah, good thanks for checking on that I mean people were calling. I have driven down here it's a mess, you know, cars backed up the onto 46 when you get chicken. Thank you, David report from public works department.

Road Superintendent Dave McCann

Yeah. Can you hear me? I was having some problems but good. Okay, very good. Yeah, really quick, just that, this winter season seems to be. I mean, we had a bout of pretty, rather good wintertime scenario in the Christmas time but it's been it's been relatively calm and make it out to be very similar to last year right now as it stands and the amount of call out to the amount of salt, we've been using so you know I'm not saying that 2021 is going to be the same as 19. As far as last year going into this year but it right now it is relatively calm. I am glad to say that we're not using as much salt as we normally would use. Guys are working half shifts right now as you guys know, I have got half the guys working first part of the week and the other half working the other half the week so you know we're getting as much done as we can as the season permits. We're still doing our Christmas tree pickup. We are going to continue that throughout the month of January and certainly we'll do it several weeks in the February. We have had times where we've picked up Christmas trees till the end of February because some people keep their trees up, so we'll be doing that throughout the month of January and February. So just wanted everyone to realize that and you know we are doing our pothole repair and just trying to stay busy as we can until we get through the season.

Trustee Rick Clark

Very good. Any questions for David?

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

Do you have a response back from GPD on Deer Creek yet?

I do. They put a package together, a three-project scenario for me to look at and I am examining whether or not it's a feasible thing to do. It's something we may be able to bid out in the early spring. I am still looking at that.

Trustee Rick Clark

Great, thanks for the update. Planning, Kim Mascarella

Planning Director Kim Mascarella

Yeah, a few things I wanted to bring everyone's attention to a project that is currently being designed in collaboration with the Trumbull County Engineer's office. It is a small sidewalk improvement project here on High Street in front of the administration building and down on Willow Street. It's a sidewalk project about 800 linear feet of sidewalk. It is going to fill the gaps in between some sporadic existing sidewalks in the vicinity. And, right now the County Engineer's accepting public comment. So, on our website there is some contact information to the person leading the effort of the County Engineer's office so if anybody has any comments, I wanted to direct people to our township website to then go ahead and give them a call. It is set to be constructed in the fall of this year, so it was moved up a year. And, and we are glad about that.

Also, I wanted to give a shout out to WRTA and their effort to establish a transit plan for Trumbull County, that involves Howland Township. They are currently gathering information through a survey. The survey link is on our township website. It is really important that we hear from community leader's agency leaders in the residents at large to help WRTA and their consultant, inform the plan it's a five-year plan going forward as to how to best meet the needs of the people here in Howland Township and the businesses in Howland Township. I would encourage people, again, to go to the township website and select the link for the survey. I took the survey it took less than 10 minutes. Real easy intuitive survey. And I would encourage people to go there and participate in that. So, we have a transit system that is relevant to our situation and relevant to the conditions here in the township.

Also, the Howland Farmers Market is still online and going well. The orders are picking up. I think the farm vendors that are participating are really happy with the turnout, and the ability to keep their businesses afloat during the pandemic. And so, I think they are very happy about that. The scope building and the facility and the grounds are working out really well to keep the curbside contactless curbside effort going. We have been getting really good support from the Howland National Honor Society. Students are volunteering to help distribute the food to the curbside shoppers. It took three minutes to kind of skill them on how to do it, and they enthusiastically show up every Saturday to help out. So, I want to give a shout out to those members who have come to help out. It has really been helpful. I think that is all I have.

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

Kim what is the funding source for the sidewalk project.

Planning Director Kim Mascarella

The funding source is through East Gate Regional Council of Governments is the transportation alternative program. I believe it is an 80% funding on their part coming through the state of Ohio ODOT and then 20% local match.

Trustee Rick Clark

Anything else for Kim? Good. Thank you, Kim.

Dan Morgan zoning director.

Zoning Director Dan Morgan

Thank you, since our last meeting the zoning department has issued five permits. The property owners have put in those five permits, a total project cost of \$311,000 back into their property to improve it. Currently we are doing a comprehensive review and update of our property maintenance code. The property maintenance code was last approved 16 years ago, and it was due for some updates.

We are also working with Iworq, who is our software vendor for the online portal for zoning applications to put an additional application on for businesses that are requesting temporary and permanent signs. That way it will kind of streamline the process. They are able to actually still

apply online right now, but this will put it into a separate realm where it'll be more specific as to the requirements.

We also have been busy, removing signs from the public right away. I would like to remind any businesses that they should not be placing temporary signs in the public right away, or a residence should not be placing in the garage sale signs in the public right away. And if there are any questions, they can contact the zoning office. And that is all I have.

Trustee Rick Clark

Any questions for Dan?

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

I have one small question. I noticed there is a lot of property either for sale or has been sold down North River Road. Any big businesses or banks or offices, going that way, or have they been sold for a while and sitting there waiting to be started.

Zoning Director Dan Morgan

We have had no contact about the intentions of what the property owner has for those properties.

Trustee Rick Clark

Dan, you said we are working on the property maintenance code update, whose we?

Zoning Director Dan Morgan

That would be myself, the planning Director Kim Mascarella, and eventually our law director will get involved, just to review the requirements.

Trustee Rick Clark

The Commissioners are not involved in that at all right?

Public Comments:

So, at this point we will open up the meeting for any comments from the public, anyone care to address any of us or any department heads with any issues.

Mr. Palumbo. You are muted there Mr. Palumbo. There we go.

Ed Palumbo – 201 Sanctuary

For Darlene. So, if I look at that number correctly words that were a million over from last year's carryover?

Administrator Darlene St. George

Yes, that is correct.

Ed Palumbo

That is pretty good. The Cares Act money, does that also include what we get from the state, or is that separate?

Administrator Darlene St. George

That is all the COVID cares money that we have received.

Ed Palumbo

Thank you. Could I ask a question please? Kim that money that you get from East Gate, is that something like Safe Walks Program.

Planning Director Kim Mascarella

I'm not sure. I'm familiar with Safe Walks Program, but the program that I'm referring to is a funding program that comes around every other year. East Gate Regional Council of Governments used to be called transportation enhancement. It's transportation alternative. What it allows communities to do, is enhance existing projects that they have in terms of making the roadways accessible to all user's multimodal improvements, which means bike lanes bikeways, pedestrian improvements. There is a whole list of criteria and potential projects that can be funded through that source. Because the township has a big focus on pedestrian safety we have been going after that pot of money for sidewalk improvements.

Trustee Rick Clark

You might have been talking about the Safe Routes to School.

Planning Director Kim Mascarella

Oh yes. That might have been. Yeah, thanks for that clarification. We do have a Safe Routes to School plan that was approved quite some time ago. And we have implemented, nearly all the recommendations highlighted in that plan. We do have one sidewalk project that was recommended in that plan that includes sidewalk in the neighborhood behind the middle school, which is Heatherwood, Laurelwood, and that neighborhood. That is the only real hard engineering project that was identified in that plan that has not been implemented. So, we will be looking at that. I know there was a new round of Safe Routes to School funding. Notification released just recently, and so the township will be looking at that. That is a unique funding source because there's zero local match. right, That's very beneficial if you can if you can tap into projects that have a zero match.

Ed Palumbo

Thank you.

Planning Director Kim Mascarella

You're welcome.

Trustee Rick Clark

Well, I think we use transportation enhancement grants 25 years ago to put the sidewalks up old 82. I think we did it five different phases, you know, but that is the money we use for those. Anyone else have any comments or questions for any of us. Mr. Gump?

Bruce Gump

Yes, good evening. First, I, like Mr. Palumbo, would like to offer congratulations to the township for some really excellent planning here. It's wonderful to be able to say that we can afford to continue working just fine for the next three months. That is great. That is always a good thing. Second, I would like to point out, regarding Mr. Fuda that because he lives in Niles and if Niles was to lose the Howland township income, then Niles will undoubtedly have to adjust the rates to their city residents. Therefore, he would have a financial interest in trying to avoid that so there could be another issue that might be helpful. And finally, I would like to ask Dr. LaPolla and say thanks very much for collecting that data. I understand that you have only got about 75 or so, do you need more? Is there a plan to get more? Would neighbors canvassing neighborhoods be helpful? And, is there some plan to get more?

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

Good question. We got 73 respondents. I think this is a good number to get to get an idea of the fact that City of Niles will lose significant amount of revenue from the loss of the electricity. I will

probably talk to the other trustees to find out if we do need a larger sampling. If that would help, possibly speed up the time for if it is even available from Ohio Edison or whomever. But, at this point, I think we have enough information to at least get the ball started. I am more than happy to utilize your services if I do need a larger result or turning off the bills to get a better summary of stuff. So, I do appreciate that.

Bruce Gump

Anything I can do to help just give me a call.

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

Not a problem. Thank you.

Trustee Rick Clark

Thank you. Anyone else? Please state your name and address please.

Douglas Wilcox – 8001 Raglan Drive

Yes sir. I have a question for Mr. Dan Morgan.

We talked about that 3935 Florrie allowed to get the camera on to any update as to the building permits as to that. That whole home that caught on fire that we had discussed previously.

Zoning Director Dan Morgan

Yes. We got the gentleman to clean the trash up, and he secured the house. It was the recommendation of our Law Director, that it falls back on the building permit in the building department to follow up on the inspections and to make sure that they follow through on repairing the house.

Trustee Rick Clark

You are saying the county building department, correct?

Zoning Director Dan Morgan

Yes, the county building department.

Yeah, Rick so this house caught fire like three years ago. It has been in a state of disrepair. I mean it is. Maybe 10% of the home right it is not livable. It does not have a garage door the windows. They put some mixed match windows in. You know I guess it is one of those incidents that as long as he does the minimums for however long it doesn't get properly addressed so I'm just questioning now what my next legal route may have to be Dan?

Trustee Rick Clark

You talked to the building department. Is this something we could help Mr. Wilcox, a little bit?

Zoning Director Dan Morgan

Yes, I can follow up with the building department tomorrow. Mr. Wilcox, if you want to call me tomorrow afternoon. I will find out exactly where it's at this point. And if one of the sections have been completed.

Douglas Wilcox

Yeah, I want to be honest and forthcoming right. I own several properties in that area, my tenant and I put a fence up right they had some rat infestations. So, I have probably spent \$75,000 over

there trying to make it a nice property. As a resident of Howland, we invest in Howland. And you know we set ourselves to better standards and I want to upkeep those standards.

Zoning Director Dan Morgan

Absolutely. And we will follow up with you. If you will give me a call tomorrow afternoon.

Douglas Wilcox

Thank you for your time.

Zoning Director Dan Morgan

You're welcome.

Trustee Rick Clark

Thank you. Anyone else care to address any of us? Alright, if nothing further I will entertain a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 P.M.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James J LaPolla	-yea
	Rick Clark	-yea

Trustee Rick Clark

Thank you all for your participation. Have a good night stay safe.

Approved by:  Dated: 2/3/21
Robert M. Costello, Fiscal Officer

Approved by:  Dated: _____
Rick Clark, Chairperson-Trustee