

MINUTES OF THE HOWLAND TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Howland Township Board of Trustees held their regular meeting virtually on February 10, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. via the Howland Township Web Page www.howlandtownship.org

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to suspend the reading of January 13, 2020 meeting minutes and accept as written.

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

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

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-010:

Howland Township Board of Trustees does hereby adopt the following Trumbull County Hazard Mitigation Plan:

WHEREAS natural, technical, and man-made hazards can affect Howland Township; and

WHEREAS significant structural, historical, and economic losses could result from an occurrence of a natural, technological, or man-made hazard events; and
WHEREAS undertaking mitigation projects during pre-disaster periods could decrease the total losses Howland incurs as a result of said hazard occurrences; and

WHEREAS the Howland Township Trustees have a strong interest in reducing losses from future hazard occurrences; and

WHEREAS the hazard mitigation plan is a federal and state requirement to maintain eligibility for hazard mitigation funding, and, by that requirement, must be updated a minimum of every five years; and

WHEREAS a cooperative, joint effort is a proven, efficient way to plan for and reduce hazard susceptibility in all government jurisdictions in Trumbull County, Ohio.

THEREFORE, the Howland Township Trustees have partnered with the county to update the existing *Trumbull County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* in an effort to further identify, define, and characterize the hazards affecting the Township as well as to continue identifying and prioritizing projects that could lessen hazard vulnerability.

NOW BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Howland Township Trustees does hereby adopt the updated *Trumbull County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* this 10th day of February 2021.

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

A motion was made by Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution 2021-011:

Approve the 2021 Conservation Appropriation with Trumbull Soil & Water Conservation District for the amount of \$6,064.45.

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-012:

Approve to appoint Administrator Darlene St. George and Fiscal Officer Robert Costello to the Trumbull County Planning Commission's *Tax Incentive Review Council* and attend their annual meeting March 19, 2021 at 10:00 AM.

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

A motion was made by Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution 2021-013:

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George, approve to participate in the 2021 Scrap Tire Grant Program.

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-014: **VOID**

Approve to renew the Township's membership with Trumbull County Council of Governments (COG) for the year 2021 for a fee of \$300.00

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

A motion was made by Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution 2021-015:

Per the recommendation of Darlene St. George and Fiscal Officer Robert Costello, approve Howland Township to enter into a three-year contract, 2020-2022, for \$600.00 with accounting firm Julian & Grube to assist Howland Township in preparing the regulatory cash-basis financial notes. (complete contract attached)

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-016:

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George and Fiscal Officer Robert Costello, authorize to rescind Resolution 2018-34 and terminate Lease Agreement/Contract # 212598000 with PNC Equipment Finance, LLC on the Fire Department's Pierce Enforcer 107' Aerial Ladder Truck-VIN# 4P1BVAF8KA019837.

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-017:

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George and Fiscal Officer Robert Costello, authorize the Declaration of Official Intent to refinance the Fire Department's Pierce Enforcer 107' Aerial Ladder Truck-VIN#4P1BVAF8KA019837 with Huntington Public Capital Corporation. (full resolution attached in its entirety)

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

A motion was made by Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution 2021-018:

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George Fire Chief James Pantalone and, approve the Fire Department to apply for the 2021 FEMA – Assistance to Firefighters Grants known as AFG for the following:

- #1 – Equipment Grant - Replace the aged SCBA filling station and associated equipment
- #2 – Vehicle Grant - Replace an aged ambulance and associated equipment

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-019:

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George, approve to renew the Client Services Agreement between Medicount Management, Inc. and the Howland Township Trustees as Howland Township's Emergency Services Billing Agency. Per the agreement, Medicount shall receive a base rate fee equal to 7.25% of the gross amount collected.

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

A motion was made by Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution 2021-020:

The Howland Township Trustees approve the sale of the following police department vehicles on auction site Gov-Deals.

2008 Ford Expedition Police Vehicle: Vin# 1FMMK16538LA58770

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-021:

Per the recommendation of Township Administrator Darlene St. George, approve to hire Justine Bartko as a part-time Farmers Market Manager effective February 11, 2021. Justine will receive \$12.00 per hour with no benefits and scheduled on an "as needed basis".

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

A motion was made by Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution 2021-022:

Approve the Board of Trustees to schedule a special meeting on Wednesday, February 24, 2021 @ 6:00 PM. The meeting will take place virtually via the Howland Township web-page www.howlandtownship.org. The purpose of this meeting will be for department budget hearings and additional financial transactions as needed.

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-023:

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George, approve to appoint Trustee Dr. James LaPolla to represent Howland Township at the Trumbull County Health Board meeting on March 11, 2021 at 7:00 P.M.

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-024:

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George, approve to appoint Trustee Matthew Vansuch to represent Howland Township at the Trumbull County Emergency Management Agency meeting on February 17, 2021 at 5:00 P.M.

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

Summary of Meeting:

Trustee Rick Clark

Matt, is there anything you'd like to discuss?

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

Yeah, just a couple things. The Ohio Township Association conference was virtual this year. I did not participate in any of the seminars, but I did drop into the clout meeting for the urban townships to hear and to look at their legislative priorities for this year. They were going through them and a lot of them are the same ones that we've heard each year so I'm not sure there's anything new to report there.

I do want to thank you Rick, Dr. LaPolla, Bob, and Darlene for contributing towards the Howland township scholarship that's going to be given this year at the Howland community scholarships. I don't know that we have any criteria for the scholarship, but it's nice to be able to give back to the community.

I got a request from the activities department about putting signs up along the roadway to congratulate state champions. Dave I'll be talking to you about that. I know we don't do them because it's not on our roads but we at least can talk to perhaps ODOT and Trumbull County about what that might entail. That's all I've got.

Trustee Rick Clark

I have just one question about this scholarship. Are we going to have any input on the criteria for that?

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

They do it on merit base. The students write an essay and then they score it. If we want to have any particular criteria, we can let them know. We want to make sure it's a Howland Township resident, of course. But, it's open enrollment so it's any anyone graduating in the class. I think we should at least ask that it'd be Howland township resident.

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

I thought they were always Howland residents, isn't that true?

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

Now they have open enrollment in the schools, I understand it goes to someone in the graduating class. I understand, but, there's any number of criteria that the athletic boosters and football backers use to get a football player, so we can do that.

Trustee Rick Clark

Jim, anything you want to discuss?

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

Just a minor update. I would say I definitely would support to the best of our abilities to recognize our state champion soccer team wherever we can on the road. So, can you and Dave work on that? I think that'll be a great asset and attribute to our Township, and just let people know that.

Thank you once again for sending the electrical bills in. I think we have enough so we don't need anymore. We're putting together the map and working with Ohio Edison and probably get a further update later on but right now we're still working very hard on that and more. There's more information to come, so that's just it on that program.

Trustee Rick Clark

Chief Roberts, anything to discuss this evening.

Police Chief Nick Roberts

I just want to say this past month we've taken numerous identity theft reports. I want to remind residents that if you receive a 1099 in the mail regarding unemployment benefits that you did not apply for you to contact the Ohio State Patrol. They'll take the actual theft report and forward those staff reports to their investigative unit in Columbus. I have a number for the State Patrol. It is 330-898-2311. We were initially getting inundated with these calls and we ended up working out with the State Patrol that they're going to go ahead and take the lead on these investigations since they have better access to the state unemployment system. And that's kind of where we left it.

Administrator Darlene St. George

I have a question. We did receive one. When we got on online on the unemployment site, there was a place to fill out if you received one. We did, we returned it, and then they emailed us back and told us just to disregard it. Is that enough? Or, should we still call the Highway Patrol?

Police Chief Nick Roberts

That's an option. Did anybody from the investigative unit get a hold of you? I would suggest calling just to make sure you're covered and tell them the process you went through and if it's necessary for you go ahead and file an additional report.

Administrator Darlene St. George

It comes in Ohio Job and Family Service envelope. When you open it, you have this thing that says this is for your tax returns and like ours, it was for \$189. You're thinking, that's a very small amount. But when you think of number of people that were hacked and scammed why that's a lot of money, right across the state of Ohio.

Police Chief Nick Roberts

Yes, right across the State of Ohio

Trustee Rick Clark

Does that mean all their personal information has been hacked? Social Security numbers and so forth?

Administrator Darlene St. George

Yes. It was actually Tom that received it. So, I think it's sort of a pattern. You know people who are retired. I think they are getting targeted as the majority. I would imagine, it must have hacked into something that has to do with social security.

Trustee Rick Clark

Chief Pantalone?

Fire Chief James Pantalone

As we continue with our regular adjustments for COVID the guys are working every day, with disinfecting. It's a daunting task. Ambulances are rotated regularly or we're utilizing the disinfection lights very heavily. Anytime a unit comes back with a suspected case it runs through a 20 or 30-minute evolution with a UV light. So, it's been a long year as well as with everybody else. I want to give a big shout out to the crews because it's really been an upheaval in the firehouse living style. We are used to sitting around the lunch table together and the dinner table together. We spend a third of our life with each other. Now, we're all just kind of scattered so it's definitely been a change. We have some swearing in ceremonies that we need to catch up on and Lieutenant Promotions so I hope within the next month or two we can do that.

Unfortunately, last night we did have a house fire over on Birchwood. All those occupants were displaced. Although, we did get them help with the Red Cross for a location to stay at and some financial assistance as well. Unfortunately, the house was a total loss. And there was no insurance on either side so just a really sad situation. I know that there's some social media stuff out there in the community, and would encourage anybody if they had anything or see what information is out there when it comes up, certainly consider, helping them out. It was a tough situation. The investigation is open as undetermined. But they did have some electrical problems in the house over the past few years. So, we're not 100% sure but it will remain open undetermined at this point in time.

Trustee Rick Clark

Is there a GoFundMe page or something out there?

Fire Chief James Pantalone

I have not seen a GoFundMe page or anything as of yet. I know that in some of the community, people were asking some information about sizes of the kids and some different things to kind of help out with some different stuff, but at least we did get them some assistance. Everybody got out, saved all the occupants, and no firefighter injuries. In the meantime, while we were dealing with that we did have three other additional calls in the township that our neighboring communities stepped up and helped out. I think that our social media posts helped as well. We had response from Warren city, Niles City, Vienna Township, Bazetta Township, Lanes and Weathersfield Fire Department. We pretty much hit all four corners of the township last night while we were on the fire so huge shout- out to all of our neighbors for the help.

Trustee Rick Clark

Thank you. Any questions for the chief? David our Public Works director.

Public Works Director Dave McCann

I don't have a whole lot to report on except for the fact that we're just controlling our ice control and taking care of the roads. We've been having steady, normal snow events. Which unlike last year last year was not typical but we've had a typical winter here and we're just maintaining the roads as we have to. We've gone through a little more than 1,200 ton of salt, which is about standard about this time of year. So, we're, we're just doing normal stuff.

Trustee Rick Clark

You're doing a good job. Any comments or questions for Dave?

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

No, people are very happy with the roads Dave, so you and your crew do a good job. So, hats off to you.

Public Works Director Dave McCann

I appreciate that and I'll extend that to the guys. Thanks guys.

Trustee Rick Clark

Planning Director Kim, any report tonight?

Planning Director Kim Mascarella

I just wanted to remind the public that there's a couple ODOT projects here in the township that are out for public comment. One here at Howland corners will be extending some or adding in some exclusive right turn lanes and extending some left turn lanes. That is going to increase the efficiency of the intersection, reduce some queuing and reduce the occurrence of sideswipe accidents. So, it's all good improvements there. The other project is on State Route 82 and Howland Wilson Rd. Both projects are important to the safety of the traveling public. We encourage people to comment. That's all I have for tonight. Thank you.

Trustee Rick Clark

Yeah, I was a little behind the curve on the Howland Wilson project because up till this point I had thought that they were closing that intersection off completely. But I think in response to safety forces, it has them turning right in both directions. At least that's what their preferred alternative plan looks like at this point.

Planning Director Kim Mascarella

ODOT was really responsive to the township, Chief Pantalone and Chief Roberts concerns about accessing that part of the township so ODOT was excellent in responding to them.

Trustee Rick Clark

Any questions for Kim? Dan in Zoning.

Zoning Director Dan Morgan

Yes, since our last meeting we have issued 10 permits. Three of those permits are for new houses, with a total project cost of \$730,000. One of the new homes is on Castillion. It is basically a replacement for the home that burned several months ago.

We are still working on updating the property maintenance code and going through it to ensure that everything is looked at. We're preparing for the busy building season here just in a few months when the weather starts warming up. That's all that I have.

Trustee Rick Clark

Good. Any questions for Dan?

Trustee James LaPolla

Have you heard anything updated on development on 46 in the old Kmart building or anything of that nature in that neck of the woods?

Zoning Director Dan Morgan

Yes, we have had contact with Meijer. We are expecting them to submit plans here in the near future.

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla

Thank you. Good.

Trustee Rick Clark

I would like you to know that I talk to Dan all the time about complaints he gets. I'd like to shout out to Dan, what a great job he's doing following up these complaints and handling things. Some problem areas that we've had in the township, you know Dan's on top of it and getting them cleaned up so we appreciate that.

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

I concur.

Trustee Rick Clark

Bob any correspondence?

Fiscal Officer Robert Costello

No, I don't have anything tonight, Rick.

Trustee Rick Clark

Okay, thank you. At this point, anyone care to address the board or any questions for the department heads. Mr. Gump?

Bruce Gump -1441 Springwood Trace

Good evening. Yes, thank you very much. The issue that I want to speak about is the ODOT effort, on Howland Wilson Road. Personally, I live south of Route 82 and coming up Route 11 to get to my home. Once this is completed, I will have to go down the hill to 46, go through the traffic light at the bottom, go underneath 82, go through the traffic light at the next exit, go in front of Lowes and Sam's, go through the traffic light there, and then try to enter the swerve lane and cross two lanes of traffic. If it's not backed up because of all the traffic lights to climb Howland Springs Road and unless the project to reroute Howland Springs road to come down at Dawson and place a traffic light there happens first. I anticipate that there will be a tremendous amount of problems with all the left turn traffic. Furthermore, many people avoid turning left off of Howland Springs Road onto southbound 46, and to do so they oftentimes will go over onto 82 and go down that process that I just explained in order to avoid the dangers of turning on Route 46. As that is cut off, it will force more traffic to come down Howland Springs Road. And again, if it isn't rerouted with a traffic light at the bottom before this project is completed, I think that there are potential problems that could arise. Of course, this is also on top of; I still anticipate there will be a diverging diamond intersection placed in there that could change a whole lot of things. Also, by the way I found the diverging diamond, I just happened to go through when visiting our son down in Kentucky, I love it, and it's great. It really makes the intersection a lot easier to traverse, so long as you're staying on that street or, turning onto the freeway. But with Howland Springs Road right there, it kind of complicates that whole process. So, again, what is the timeframe that the Howland Springs reroute, which I think was anticipated some time ago, is that scheduled will it happen first? If not, how, how am I going to safely get to my home?

Trustee Rick Clark

I will defer to Darlene and Kim on Howland Springs, because I've not heard any discussion about it lately. To be honest with you I've not heard any talk about it at all.

Administrator Darlene St. George

It's on the radar screen, but it's not a set project yet. I think that their plan is to do these other projects, and watch the traffic. And, you know, we keep bringing that intersection up and we keep bringing Howland Springs up to ODOT as a safety concern. So, we're hoping that they will find money in their safety, to be able to reroute that road as well but it hasn't, it's not on any plans yet for that to happen.

Bruce Gump

You know school buses have to come up that hill to get to Howland Springs? You might want to place an ambulance somewhere nearby.

Trustee Matthew Vansuch

I'm telling everybody that I can, this is your chance to let ODOT know. I think the more people that are in your position are able to talk about that. We've supported that and, we want to have that addressed. Unless the schools are going to respond and put comments in and let them know about the buses turning because of the school that's up there. We can voice as much as we can but this time, it would be nice to have public comments, specifically on people who live in that area, that would be able to testify to that.

Bruce Gump

I did that yesterday actually.

Administrator Darlene St. George

ODOT has been extremely receptive to everything that we have been talking to them about they're not dismissing us or dismissing our concerns. They were from the very beginning. I've been doing this a long time Bruce and this is the first time ever that we have been at the table in Akron with ODOT almost right from the drawing board. Jim Kinnick from East Gate brought this diverging diamond to our attention, as soon as he became the director of East Gate. Once it started moving through ODOT they invited us to come to the table, and with their consultants, all through the planning stages. And like someone mentioned earlier, when Chief Roberts and Chief Pantalone were there, they were extremely receptive to the safety concerns of the township. They are going to do some widening out in front of the police and fire department here, as well as part of the East Market Street and 46 expansions. So, they've also been listening. We've had several meetings there and they've adjusted their plans to accommodate the fire station, and the police department as well. So, sharing your concerns and having other people that you know share their concerns with them is extremely important. They're very receptive.

Bruce Gump

You know, one of the things there's a confounding factor and that is people turning from northbound 46 into Sheetz right there. Just south of where the traffic light is, that backs traffic up sometimes in that area.

Administrator Darlene St. George

People are watching all of the traffic throughout the township and you'll see them out every day. You'll see different markers and you'll see different people sitting in their trucks watching the traffic pattern of the traveling public here in this area. So, they're trying to stay on top of it. Share your concerns with them. They're extremely receptive to our concerns.

Bruce Gump

Being a State Route, does one have any say on whether or not left turn barriers might be erected on northbound 46 to prevent issues?

Administrator Darlene St. George

You know they're very receptive to our police and fire department. I don't know anything about barriers. I know that there are some legalities about things like that so I think that as this thing is being built, and we start to see people using it, and seeing how people are deciding to travel in the township, we're going to see other adjustments as well.

Bruce Gump

Okay. I'm just saying that there's a significant safety issue for me and my family. It is bad enough to have to go across that intersection 82, I get it. It's a dangerous intersection. I've always been very careful crossing there. But I don't think we're making it better by forcing all of that traffic to come down Howland Springs and 46.

Administrator Darlene St. George

I don't disagree with you. We're just saying, keep the conversations going. That's all we can ask people to do, keep the conversation in front of ODOT. That's what we will do as well on our end.

Bruce Gump

You know, there was a phone number to call the person in charge; you'll do that in addition to filing the comments?

Administrator Darlene St. George

Absolutely. Yeah, I know other folks that have done that.

Trustee Rick Clark

Anyone else could address any of us, but if no further comments I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to adjourn the meeting at 6:48 P.M.

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

Meeting is adjourned. Thank you for your masks and socially distance.

Approved by: Robert Costello Dated: 2/17/21
Robert M. Costello, Fiscal Officer

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