

## MINUTES OF THE HOWLAND TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Howland Township Board of Trustees held their regular meeting virtually on April 14, 2021 at 6:00 PM via the Howland Township Web Page [www.howlandtownship.org](http://www.howlandtownship.org)

**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 suspend the reading of March 10, 2021 meeting minutes and accept as written.

**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 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 Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution 2021-039:

Authorize Fiscal Officer Robert Costello to pay GPD Group \$11,550.00 - Invoice # 2021219.01-1, dated April 2, 2021.

**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 2021-040:

The Howland Township Board of Trustees approve the following community events:

### **Limb and Branch Pick-up**

Eastside: Everything must be curbside by Monday-April 19<sup>th</sup>

Westside: Everything must be curbside by Monday – May 3<sup>rd</sup>

### **Protect-N-Shred & Fill the Cruiser Day:**

May 22, 2021 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM at the Howland Scope Center

### **Howland Community Garage Sales**

June 3, 4, 5, 2021 – Residents may register at Township Administration Office

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

## **Summary of Meeting:**

### **Police Chief Nick Roberts**

I want to remind our residents the weather is getting nice out. We have a lot more people out and about in our neighborhoods on foot and bicycles, so if we could pay attention to the speed limits and slow it down. We will be in our neighborhoods enforcing traffic violations, so please watch your speed, and hopefully, everyone will enjoy their summer. That's all I have.

### **Trustee Rick Clark**

Any questions for the chief of police? Fire Chief Pantalone.

### **Fire Chief James Pantalone**

There are a couple of items over the past month. We continued to stay busy rounding out March with about 376 incidents. In April, we had back-to-back fires over in the Bolindale area on Athens. There was a house fire. The residents were out. Actually, they were not even home. It has been an electrical issue over there. We're working with a company to get that house refurbished. Then the next day, we had a little lawnmower fire that was in a garage. It was a mechanical problem. Those back to back are interesting, but everybody was safe, no injuries, fire department, or occupants.

I want to give a special tip of the hat this week to everybody from our national telecommunicators. Many times, our dispatchers are left in the background. This week is National Telephone Telecommunicators Week. I want to give special recognition to all our 911 dispatchers, who are sometimes forgotten about in the background. Yet, they are on the front line with us, police, and even public works, making phone calls and connecting us all. Lastly, as Chief Robert said, everybody's getting back out; it is also spring cleanup time. For the fire department that means open burning issues begin so we want to encourage everybody to pay attention to open burning laws. There's a burn ban from 6 AM to 6 PM. During those times, you should not be burning. However, after those hours, we still encourage you to burn safely, no refuse, no construction materials. We would ask that you save your limbs and branches for limb and branch pick up provided by the Howland Township Public Works and trustees. It always kicks up around this time; we understand it. We will come out and visit and give you a warning. People are usually very compliant, as we discussed with the rules but just a quick reminder that it always kicks off at this time of year.

### **Trustee Rick Clark**

Very good. Any questions for the fire chief? David, public works.

### **Road Superintendent Dave McCann**

I was having a hard time with my audio a little while ago that I corrected. When you read the motion for Resolution 2021-039, I wanted to do a correction. The \$11,550 GPD was for design fees for the upcoming storm sewer improvement projects that we have slated for Old Farm Trail, Rolling Meadows, and the storm sewer that's over on Allison between Allison and North River Road.

We started our spring cleanup. The street sweeper has been out sweeping all of the winter debris. I think we've completed almost the entire east side and will be starting on the west side very soon, probably by the end of the week. We are beginning catch basin repairs. You know we got multiple ones all through the Township that we're working on that came up over the winter. We just started some pothole repair with hot mix material. It is better than the cold mix. And of course, you know the grass has grown, and we are working steadily on trying to get the cemetery in tip-top shape

because we've had a lot of burials over the winter. Many sites need repairing, seeded, and whatnot, so we're pretty busy right now.

**Trustee Rick Clark**

It's that time of the year.

**Road Superintendent Dave McCann**

Yeah, certainly.

**Trustee Rick Clark**

Any questions for David? Mrs. St. George, you and I were out yesterday looking at some water issues over in the Bolindale area. We've talked to the park board about possibly doing some shared work with them on a piece of their roadway. We spoke to them yesterday, and then I spoke to Sean again today about that. So, I think that project will work out well. Thank you for your help on that David.

**Road Superintendent Dave McCann**

Clifton is to be paved this year. So, when we do Clifton that will be an ideal opportunity to pave that section of the park. That's why I reached out to Mr. Pompelia to let him know that it is probably an opportune time to take care of that section.

**Trustee Rick Clark**

He appreciated you reaching out to him, and we're glad to be able to work with them. We have a stretch of roadway there, so thanks. Dan, anything from zoning?

**Zoning Directory Dan Morgan**

Since our last Trustee's meeting, the Zoning Department issued 38 zoning permits. The project costs on the 38 permits combined are \$1,548,192. The most significant projects out of those 38 permits are three new homes in the Township, and Tractor Supply will be doing a complete remodel, and they're going to be adding a greenhouse in the fenced-in area of Tractor Supply.

Two zoning board appeals hearings are scheduled for tomorrow night. You can access them on the Township's website, and it is a Zoom meeting. The Meijer appeal process and a proposed medical office on Niles Cortland Road South East and Orchard are on the agenda. That is all I have.

**Trustee Rick Clark**

Any questions for Dan? Dan, I know you've been extremely busy. This is a time of year where neighbors are complaining. You're getting all that stuff, and you're doing a great job keeping up with that. We really appreciate you. Kim Mascarella, our planning director.

**Planning Director Kim Mascarella**

Yes. Hi, good evening. Yeah, just a little update on the small sidewalk project that we have going on. David and I both met with the county engineer's office today and walked the route and kind of worked through some issues. It looks like the project will be sold this summer and constructed this summer. It's a small project, and we're happy to be working with the county engineer's office on this.

I wanted to add to the community events. The community gardens have about a dozen plots available. They're free to residents. They just need to contact the Township, and we'll get them all signed up. The plots will be tilled by the first of May so gardeners can start to work their magic as soon as the beginning of May. Also, the farmer's market is still online. It's going really well. They'll move outside to Richard Orwig Park beginning May 29 from 9 AM to 1 PM and then every Saturday after that through mid-October. We'll be out in the open field again, and we'll be

following all state requirements, and try to make it as safe as we can while providing an opportunity for these farms to still stay in business. We're happy to help and help encourage people to come to the market in the summer. I think that's all I have.

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

Kim, you mentioned going back to Orwig Park, where we parked in the field. Kind of similar to the old days, just spread apart to walk from vendor to vendor. Not the drive-thru or are we still having the drive-thru car thing in the parking lot?

**Planning Director Kim Mascarella**

We're not doing drive-thru. We're going to be in the part of the park over by the bocce courts, that's where we were last year. The old way, the vendors were too close together, the pathways were very narrow, so we really couldn't accommodate the six-foot social distancing recommendation. We decided to move it into the open field. It worked out well, and we limited the number of vendors. The vendors that did participate could spread out. It looks like we're going to do that still this year, and then hopefully, by next summer of 2022, we'll be back along the pathway. You know, it seems like that park was designed just for the farmer's market. This year we'll still do that modified setup, it'll work fine. It worked great last year.

**Trustee Rick Clark**

Finally, Mrs. St George, any comments? Anything you'd want to discuss this evening at all?

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

No, nothing.

**Trustee Rick Clark**

All right, Bob Costello any correspondence?

**Fiscal Officer Bob Costello**

Yes, our investments for the Township are in Star Ohio and Star Plus. I recently received a notification that, effective May 31 Star Plus is being terminated. I transferred the money that we had in Star Plus to our Star Ohio fund. In the meantime, I was talking to Bobby Harding from Farmers National. They started a new program. It's a sweep account, and it's going to pay whatever Star Ohio pays plus .05%. So as of today, Star Ohio was paying .08% and theirs was paying 1.3%. I'm in the process of working out what we need to do to start that account. It is going to pay more money.

**Trustee Rick Clark**

Matt, Jim, anything for Bob?

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

One thing I'll say kind of goes with what the chief said about being active again is that, up near my home on Cain Drive baseball's back in action. People driving up and down Cain Drive just have to watch for the parents taking their kids to and from the baseball field behind mines. That's it on that one, but I'm happy to see that everybody's back to playing baseball again, back to our normality somewhat. That's all I want to say.

**Trustee Rick Clark**

Very good. Anyone from the public want to address any of us or the department heads, now would be the time. You need to give your name and address for the official record please. Mr. Gump.

**Bruce Gump**

Good evening. Hi, my address is 1441 Springwood Trace. I was looking to see if there had been any further progress on the relocating of Howland Springs Road, and if there are any updates regarding the annexation issues and getting first energy to be our new electric supplier.

**Trustee Dr. James Lapolla**

On the electric there has been no change since the last meeting, I can tell you that.

**Bruce Gump**

What else is needed, Doctor?

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

Mrs. St. George and I had talked and basically, they're putting together all the data, and right now it's in their wheelhouse. That's Ohio Edison and they have not come back to me and asked me for anything. If they have come back to Darlene, I'll let Darlene speak on her own behalf, but I believe they have everything they need to decide. We're just waiting on them. Darlene, do you have anything to update?

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

Jim, you're correct.

**Bruce Gump**

Okay. Thank you. Anything on Howland Springs?

**Trustee Rick Clark**

Not that I know of. I think Mrs. St George was working on the possible cost to see what it would cost the Township or cost anyone to relocate that intersection as a matter of information. To my knowledge, that's all that's happened. I don't know if she passed that information on to you or not. We had a price from years ago and I forget exactly what it was at the time. Darlene, what was the updated cost?

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

Close to \$2 million.

**Bruce Gump**

Yeah, there was a discussion about trying to reach out to the state to see if there's some support we can have for that, because of all the other changes that are happening.

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

Mr. Gump, the answer to that is that ODOT has not yet put together its responses to the public comments. I would like to see what the comments are from ODOT and use the information that they've gathered and then the next step would then be to reach out to our state legislators and state and federal legislators to then search out the funds to be able to address the issue. Once we have those comments as some back as some support for that.

**Bruce Gump**

Do we have any idea when that might happen?

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

I think they're in the process of doing that now, and I believe their timetable is in the next month or two when they finish those responses. I understand there were quite a few comments that were submitted by the public, so they do respond to those.

**Bruce Gump**

Finally, I just want to note that the streets have been swept in my neighborhood. A lot of the glass is gone. I really appreciate that, and I just wanted to say thank you very much.

**Trustee Rick Clark**

Did you hear that David?

**Road Superintendent Dave McCann**

I do. We appreciate that and will forward that to the individual that's usually doing that work and he'll be glad to hear that. We do appreciate all his effort.

**Bruce Gump**

We certainly noticed a difference, so thank you.

**Trustee Rick Clark**

Thank you. Anyone else care to address the trustees or any department heads?

**Fire Chief James Pantalone**

Mr. Clark there was one comment from Mr. Gump. Mrs. St George If you recall, I was out of the office, but I remember seeing emails that state representatives have been hearing, you know the incidents we've been having on Howland Wilson and 82. And they're listening. One of the items there was we receive notification from Michael O'Brien. They are working with ODOT, and there may be some adjustments on some light timing at 82 and Howland Wilson. Once again, what that will bring is just the adjustment of slowing traffic for stopping or delay between the cross traffic. You know it's yet to be determined how that will impact, but certainly, it could be a positive in the delay of that. I think I read that correctly Mrs. St. George.

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

Yes, that's already taken place. They have already adjusted the light at Howland Wilson, a little by some seconds, and they're monitoring. That's not a long- term fix. That's a short- term fix while they're looking at the rest of this and you're correct about that and our State Representative Michael O'Brien is also looking at this as well. Waiting for the comments from ODOT as Matt had said and is certainly willing to support the Township and efforts to support the realignment of springs as well. So, we need for them to come out with their comments, just as Matt had said, and it'll be another month or two.

**Fire Chief James Pantalone**

Hopefully, that will, in the interim, help the safety of crossing traffic.

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

It just further goes to show that ODOT listens and they are willing to. They do have some flexibility. They do listen to the public. They do listen to people who have some input into how to make that safer. Now no one wants another deadly accident there.

**Bruce Gump**

Who is charged mainly with enforcing the speed limit on 82, coming across that intersection? Is that the State Patrol?

**Police Chief Nick Roberts**

Yes, mainly the State Patrol being that it's a State Route. Occasionally our officers are up there, whether for crashes or for crossing over at 82 and Howland Wilson. And, if we get on the bypass

at that location, to head up to Elm Road. We do enforce some traffic up there, but our main priorities are residential neighborhoods.

**Bruce Gump**

Yeah, that's what I anticipated. I noticed on social media that a lot of the comments were if they would slow down at that intersection, it would be a lot safer, and there would be a lot fewer accidents. I think that that's true. I mean I've witnessed people pushing the light, running the red. It's not at all uncommon, and 55 kind of seems like the minimum speed limit through there. If maybe the state could spend a little more time in that area. I'm not sure if that's reasonable even to ask if there's a place for them to do that. But it'd be nice if I think if there was some extra enforcement. Everybody hated those and still hate those handheld speed cameras that everybody was using, especially Girard. It's hard to argue with success. The reality is that accidents in Girard did go down due to people getting a lot of tickets and Girard making a lot of money. In the end, if people would slow down and treat that intersection with a little more respect, then, yeah, I think it's probably better than changing the traffic light timing.

**Police Chief Nick Roberts**

Yeah, we were fortunate enough to run that program to see how it worked out for us, and the company paid us to have an officer sit there. Unfortunately, that program has gone away for us, so we don't have the funds to pay officers to sit there like they were before.

**Trustee Rick Clark**

Mr. Gump anything further? No. Anyone else could address the trustees, department heads, or the administrator. This would be the time. If not, 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 6:28 PM.

<b>Roll Call:</b>	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James J LaPolla	-yea
	Rick Clark	-yea

Approved by: *Robert M. Costello* Dated: *5/19/21*  
Robert M. Costello, Fiscal Officer

Approved by: *Rick Clark* Dated: *5/19/21*  
Rick Clark, Chairperson-Trustee