

**MINUTES OF THE HOWLAND TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Howland Township Board of Trustees held their regular meeting on November 10, 2021, at 6:00 P.M at the Howland Township Government Building, 205 Niles Cortland Rd. NE, Warren, OH 44484.

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

Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to excuse Trustee Rick Clark for personal reasons.

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to suspend the reading of October 13, 2021 meeting minutes and accept as written.

**Roll Call:** Matthew Vansuch -yea  
Dr. James LaPolla -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. (attached payment listing)

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-123:

Approve dues assessment for Trumbull County Emergency Management Agency for calendar year 2022 based on the 2020 Census.

19,042 @ \$0.21 = \$3,998.82

There is a decrease of \$13.44 from 2020

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-124:

Transfer out:	General Fund 1000-910-910	(\$102,463.76)
Transfer in:	Police District 2081-931-0000	+ \$102,463.76

**Unused Lodging Tax Money Received in 2019 budget for 2020:**

Transfer out:	General Fund 1000-910-910	(\$6,202.84)
Transfer in:	Police District 2081-931-0000	+ \$ 6,202.84

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

A motion was made by by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-125:

WHEREAS, the following properties have been cited during the month of November 2021 in violation of the Howland Township Zoning Ordinance Section 8.01, B, H, Howland Township Resolution 2003-58 (Abatement, Control or Removal of Vegetation, Garbage, Refuse or Other Debris), and Howland Township Resolution 2002-93 where Garbage Refuse and debris are present on the exterior of the property.

WHEREAS Howland Township has received complaints from neighbors of said property that the condition interferes with the reasonable enjoyment of use of the property, and high grass and/or garbage, refuse, or debris poses a safety and health threat to the neighborhood. The unsightly appearance of the property is detrimental to the aesthetic value of the neighborhood and would cause a depreciation of property values; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Office has not heard from any of the property owners by telephone or mail.

WHEREAS, At least seven days before providing for the abatement, control, or removal of any vegetation, garbage, refuse, or other debris, the board of township trustees shall notify the owner of the land and any holders of liens of record upon the land that the owner is ordered to abate, control, or remove the vegetation, garbage, refuse, or other debris, the owner's maintenance of which has been determined by the board to be a nuisance.

WHEREAS, if that vegetation, garbage, refuse, or other debris is not abated, controlled, or removed, or if provision for its abatement, control, or removal is not made, within seven days, the board shall provide for the abatement, control, or removal. Any expenses incurred by the board in performing that task shall be entered upon the tax duplicate and become a lien upon the land from the date of entry.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Howland Township declares and finds the following property's to be a nuisance.

<u>Address</u>	<u>Parcel ID</u>
1166 Niles Cortland Road NE	Parcel ID#: 28-538800
2915 North Road NE	Parcel ID# 28-334200

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-126:

The Howland Township Trustees approve the sale of the following Fire Department item on auction site GovDeals. The item is unneeded, obsolete or unfit personal property.

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-127:

The Howland Township Trustees approve to re-schedule their Wednesday, December 8, 2021 meeting to Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 @ 6:00 PM.

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

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Matthew Vansuch to vote on Resolution 2021-128:

Approve to schedule a Special Howland Township Board of Trustees meeting for Tuesday, December 28, 2021 @ 8:00 A.M. to finalize 2021 Township business.

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

**Summary of Meeting:**

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

I will make one comment for the record that I did have a resident call my office pertaining to hunting in Howland Township. They identified a hunter up on Orchard which is across from the mall on top of the hill. Howland Township does have acreage at this preservation. That area is 100% not allowed to be hunted. It was understanding we found tonight there is a hunting app that mentions that as public hunting areas owned by a township a public entity. That area is not. We have now posted new signs there. The person was discussing a report by the county sheriff and our police department. So, we'll let people know for the record, that particular property is not available for public hunting. All public hunting in Howland Township, that's owned by the township, must have authorization in written form by the Board of Trustees. I just wanted to put that in the record that that area is 100% non hunttable.

I want to congratulate Matt on his reelection.

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

Same to you Jim. The community tree lighting is on Sunday the 28<sup>th</sup>. It begins at 4pm this year. Jessica went all out and got a 15-foot-tall Christmas tree and so hopefully the Public Works Department will be there to handle that. And I think it should be coming in pretty soon because Thanksgiving is early. The new company is going to put lights on and do more than last year as we will have more lights than last year.

**Trustee Dr. James Lapolla**

I understand that the committee was not happy with the previous tree lighting/ park lighting company.

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

So, they went and found a different one to do more for the same price. So great.

The other thing is, a couple of residents asked me about street signs at the end of streets, those are the poles with the street names on them and particularly in medians. I think it's a good thing that the neighborhoods and subdivisions are wanting to spruce up the median areas. They're putting up hanging signs. There's one on Altura and there's one at the bottom of my street, and the question was about the location of the pole sign. I advised the residents that I did not have the unilateral authority to move those and that there are some legal issues involving street signs. So, I'm going to be asking our law director to take a look at that to make sure if we are able to move them out of the median. And if we need to establish a policy for when those need to be moved out. Can those be moved out of the median and what would be the sightline conditions that we would need to do that? We just can't, willy-nilly pick up a sign and move it to a different place. There's a lot of safety issues involved in that. So, I want to talk to Jason about that.

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

If a developer wants to put the street name within a decorative sign that could be a possibility.

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

There are standards on all sorts of signs and things but they're asking for the location not to be moved. Generally, when you're driving by you expect to see the street sign in the middle of the street, not before or after. So, I want to talk to him to make sure that we're covered and we're not having liability issues moving things around. That's all I have to say.

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

Bob, you have the stage.

**Fiscal Officer Robert Costello**

I got an email from the county auditor a couple of weeks ago. Trumbull county is updating their photographing database showing the front exterior of every residential and commercial building in the county and I know I saw it in the newspaper but I just wanted to mention that again. Workers are in a White Dodge Caravan marked with I Look About company logo, and will be driving along and taking pictures of every house and commercial building. They did the Southern Tier. I believe now they are now in the northern tier of the County.

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

It is time to clean up your front yards because it'll be forever be documented.

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

People are calling about gas bills. They are concerned about the price of gas this winter. The township has several years now been brokering a gas rate for township residents and the past couple years we have joined with Trumbull County and we have had one gas rate which is currently with Constellation Energy. It's \$3.09 per MCF. So, I have been in contact with our broker. The county and the township use the same broker. The current gas rate runs through the end of March billing cycle. We are working on getting the best rate that we can. The gas prices have been going up. Everyone's receiving letters that's what's causing the flood of phone calls. The concern is for the price of gas. If you live in Trumbull County, you qualify for the \$3,09. If you're not getting \$3.09 or better on your own, please call Constellation Energy and tell them you want to sign up for the \$3.09 rate, because that's what it is.

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

At this time that we officially open up questions from our attendees. So, if you do have a question, please stand up state your name and address for the record and we'll do our best to answer your question.

**Ken Sanders – 8941 Kings Graves**

I'd like some wisdom from the four of you. I've called Howland Police Department about speeders on Kings Graves. There's a 40 mile an hour sign when you come past Portal down the hill. If they would only run 65. I would be happy. Semis come down through there. There's a ten ton of weight limit on that highway and I know they are overloaded. Especially when they got excavators on the back of a semi. What can we do about the 40 mile and hour speed limit?

**Dr. James LaPolla**

Normally I would tell you let our police chief answer that question for you.

**Ken Sanders**

I called the police department twice. First time they took my name and address. I told them they used to have a cruiser set up there on Silver Fox with radar and once in a while they pulled somebody over and that kind of deterred it a little bit. But now they come past here and there's a white Corvette and I know that goes to the Air Force Base out there that went past my house I know well over 100 miles an hour.

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

What I was trying to say is that we'll go ahead and increase our cruiser presence and we'll go ahead and monitor.

**Ken Sanders**

They drive up and down that road following the traffic and it is only a one-time pass. So, once he's made these passes, they come down through there from 5:00 o'clock in the morning when it is dark out, and they're probably buzzing up through there now. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll making a pot of coffee and you can all come down and we'll sit at my front window and you can watch them go and see what the problem is.

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

We will ask the chief to have somebody there and we'll let them know that you're going to let them sit in your driveway.

**Ken Sanders**

This is a big problem because they fly down through there. They run faster on Kings Graves than they do on Rt. 82 bypass.

**Trustee Dr. James Lapolla**

We had a similar complaint about streets over here and that's what the police chief did. So, what I'm trying to say is that he will go ahead and put a cruiser down there to monitor the speed and ticket if necessary. Sometimes that's a deterrent in itself too.

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

Has he been using the radar speed sign?

**Ken Sanders**

They don't have that because it doesn't work. Because I asked him about it. I said you could put it in my front yard slow people down.

There's a guy across the road from me who's got two college age girls, that are in and out of there all the time, but they live on the other side of the road and they can see better. Because where I

live if I tried to back out on the road my drive is big enough to turn around in. You have to get a running start down the hill or they will run over you.

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

I'm not going to ask you to give me your phone number publicly.

**Ken Sanders**

330-360-6112. I get calls all the time from India. It doesn't matter. My warranty is up to date. I'm not here to get immediate action, I'm just trying to get some help.

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

Absolutely. I'll have chief Roberts call you and discuss this with you.

**Ken Sanders**

If he would come down and sit in my driveway we'll stand out there and shoot the breeze. I'll buy him a coffee and he can come into the house to watch. I don't know how to slow them down unless you put speed bumps there. I know on 46 out here, they cut the hill years ago because up that way there was hill there they said was bad.

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

Anyone else?

**Leonard Davis – 8686 Old Orchard**

We really appreciated it when the township bought that property up on Old Orchard. Why can't you maintain the ditches? I mean there's drainage ditches on the property. When you bought the property, you didn't put them there. I've been down here two different occasions and asked somebody to try and come and look at it. One guy came up one time. I mean, are you allowed to go on to that property?

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

Are you talking ditches or catch basins?

**Leonard Davis**

There's a drain the gas company put there. It's about an eight-inch round. When I put mine in they said I had to put in 12-inch round. Why would they get away with a little eight-inch round pipe through a main drain area, where we are required to put a 12 inch. It's been like that for 20 years.

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

Where on the property are you talking about? The ditch along the road?

**Leonard Davis**

No, it's actually a well road that comes right off the end. The well road was right off the end of our street because our street dead ends. It goes up about 200 yards and then it turns 90. When they cross it, it's a natural run off into all the ditches that run down our road. So, what happens is that backs all up and so the township came up about 20 years ago and they dug a ditch from where that small pipe is all the way across to the one I paid to have behind my property. So, I was trying to redirect the water around me because it comes down on top of you. I try to maintain the ditches. I go up there, I tried to cut the weeds out and clean them. I keep the grass mowed down and there's an area that it overflows and when it overflows it comes right down in my house. It goes right through my backyard when you get a serious rain. 90% of the time it isn't an issue. It just needs to be stripped out.

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

Where does the ditch empty into?

**Leonard Davis**

It eventually runs down to 46 where the big culvert is. Okay, that's where it comes out. It goes back in and it starts and it crosses into an area just beyond where the township bought the property. It drops way down and it goes way back down into that creek area. It's a natural drainage. I mean this was done. The township agreed to do it because it helps alleviate the water on the street because there was always an issue with the water on the street. So, if I knew what they did and connected to what I did the water comes down behind all the properties because there was nothing back there. So that's why they agreed to dig it and I was grateful for them. I've asked numerous times if someone could come up and take a look at it.

It was an existing district. When you and Rick came up after you bought the house, I walked you down one day.

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

I remember. We can clean out the ditch. I can talk to David about that. We can clean that out but when we talk about natural waterway that's a whole different ballgame.

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

It's a preserved area. My confusion is how much can we do on something that's preserved?

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

That's the first time I've heard that so we'll make sure that gets that cleared out.

**Leonard Davis**

I mean there's water laying in the ditch and I was up there this weekend cleaning the ditches and to me, I think there's oil in the water. There's an oil well there and it leaked a couple of years ago.

**Matthew Vansuch**

Do you know who the owner is? Well, what I mean is that on the Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management, there's a map and if you put your address and it will show all the oil wells in the state and you put your address in and it'll zoom in and you click on the little dot it'll tell you exactly who owns it and it gives her phone number and all of that stuff.

**Leonard Davis**

It's on your property. Well, one wellhead on your property the other was still down on Frank's property because they joined together. The tank sits on your property just above my house. It an oil tank. Two years ago, it completely rotted out. So, then they ended up coming in fixing that. We all have well water on our street. We have well water, we don't have city water so all that oil will eventually get in our water.

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

Do you have photographs of that? Could you email them to us?

**Leonard Davis**

No, I don't have any.

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

I have to admit I've never been up there. I should get up there and make a trip for myself personally.

**Leonard Davis**

You guys actually put a 16-inch culvert pipe across the section of the well road after which you dug the ditch to connect it to the 16-inch culvert and I believe that it's been in for quite a while. It looks to me like it's rusted out and it's starting to cave in. So, when you're up there you can look at it. The drainage is a lot better than it ever was. If it just could be cleaned out once in a while I would appreciate it.

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

Anyone else have any questions?

**Ed Palumbo – 201 Sanctuary**

Looking at the lodging money, that's a nice hunk of change there. How long has this been transferred to the police department. Is it transferred to the other three? Road, Police and Fire?

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

It's not transferred to the road. When the trustees put the bed tax on in the 90s, at that time, they would split the tax between the police and the fire department. So, since that time, it has been split equally between the police department and the fire department.

The fire department and police department each gets the same amount of money of bed tax. The fire department's money will be transferred because in the past under the old accounting system the money was a line item collected in the general fund. This is a little bit confusing but simply by law the money comes into the general fund not in the police or fire fund. So, the police and fire departments have been spending the bed tax out of the general fund. So, you have line items in the general fund specific to police and fire. The general fund would split the money, put it in the line items for the police and fire and then they would spend it out there. Under the new accounting system, they're saying after you collect your bed tax, you can transfer it to the police department and the fire department. So, we just got our last payment and the total is like \$200,000 that was collected. So, what now we're doing is we're transferring it to the police department and to the fire department. The way you budget money, the only way we could do it this year is to transfer it to the police. We can transfer it to the police department because we were over budget and had enough money in our budget. January we will transfer the fire departments over to them. They can still spend their money, they are just spending out of the general fund. But in January we're able to transfer this over. Then next year we will be able to budget it so that at the end of the year both amounts can be transferred to them. You don't transfer it over until after you collect it all.

**Ed Palumbo**

So, you can just transfer the whole amount and won't have to pull it out of the general fund and then transfer it to their account.

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

Yeah, we will still do that next year. It'll be done at one time. It will be the same time for both of them next year.

**Ed Palumbo**

It will be just one transfer rather than a draw every time they wanted something.

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

It's been like that since the 90s but it's their money. When the bed tax comes in. It's always been their money and it goes in line items in the general fund. But what makes it confusing for them as budgeting and when they're spending. You have all these line items in the general fund and its police and fire money. So, they have to budget money they're spending it out of the fire fund and



they're spending it out of general fund, spending it out the police fund and are spending out of the general fund. That was under the old accounting system. But, as you come to all of our meetings, so you see this whole transfer, under UAN accounting system and so it allows you to move it over to that.

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

So, when you come to the budgeting meeting in March, you'll see it different. Instead of police having four different sheets of paper, it'll be three because they don't have this in the general fund. It'll be under their police fund. Literally when I stopped in yesterday, Vanessa had been on the phone with the UAN people for hours trying to figure out and work out how to get this thing done. So, when you come in March, the budgeting process for all the department heads is going to be so much easier because of the system that that we adopted.

**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

Anyone else? Go ahead.

**Pat Dobozy – 8753 Old Orchard**

First of all, I would like to thank the township for putting these signs up to stop people from going up there. The thing is if someone goes up there who do we call?

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

I had a conversation with Martin Cisine who is the game warden. We had a nice conversation about this. So, you can call police department and also call the game warden. But please call. What we established is we cannot give verbal permission. I understand that the person who is on the property said he had permission from me to be on the property. We all know that's not true. But he was throwing my name around like he had my permission to be on there. No one does. So, what we establish with the game warden is that we sign the land owners signature form on their license that needs to be signed. So, anyone that's out there, just call them and Marty has the power to cite them and cite them in the court and so does our police department. Several years ago, couple guys did the same thing. They didn't know my name they just kept saying that lady in Howland. So, the court called me and said we have a couple of guys that are in court and they're carrying on that they have permission. I said do they have written permission and they said they can't produce it. I said then they get fined.

**Teresa Davis – 8686 Old Orchard**

We did call the police and they came. About the time they came the guy had been up there for like three hours. You know you see a truck sitting off your property for three hours because we live on that in the corner. When the police came, she said to us, who's the property owner?

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

She's one of our newest Officers.

**Teresa Davis**

I guess I want to know why isn't she in the service? Why doesn't she know a little more about the community she's serving? Because all she did was wait until he came walking out. Then went up to him and said, Sir, I guess maybe you're not supposed to be on this property. Have a nice night. And that was it.

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

No, she took a report because I have this name.

**Tereasa Davis**

Okay, that's good. But I'm just saying by the time we get the police up there half the time they've been up there for three, four hours because this has happened other years. And then I feel like nothing ever happens. I've never known anybody to ever get fined or ever get told anything but just don't come back. And the thing with that guy, he came back. My husband and I saw him after she told him to never come back. He drove back up in there again and was up in there for maybe 15-20 minutes. And then pulled back out, turned around in our driveway and pulled back out again. My husband wondered if he had gotten a deer and went back up to get it.

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

It is public property. People are allowed to go on and walk on it.

**Teresa Davis**

I understand. That's fine. The people that come up to walk their dog, they go up there they walk their dog they're up there for maybe half an hour. My husband's out late in the evening doing our leaves and he's up there with a high-powered bow. And my husband sticks his head in the door and says to me Tereasa did you see that white truck up there? I said, Oh my gosh, they're still up there. I said I saw that truck go up about quarter till four.

**Trustee Matthew Vansuch**

Now that we've talked to the game warden and now that we have some new officers it's good opportunity to talk to all of them and have Nick talked to all of them about where people can be hunting, where people are not allowed to be hunting, what they can ask of them what they can do, and we'll use this as an opportunity to make sure all of our officers are up to date on public hunting.

**Teresa Davis**

I appreciate it because you know we're in our backyard we don't have a fence or anything. We love being bordered by the woods. We don't want to take an arrow in the head because some guys up there hunting and didn't know any better.

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

If you get the license plate, then the game warden will follow up.

**Teresa Davis**

Okay we do see the people and then we feel like we're the ones that are trying to police it. I don't like being put in that position. But now with the hunting sign at least that's something that shows that there is no hunting because everybody always looks at us like what are you talking about?

**Administrator Darlene St. George**

I will talk to Marty about this app. I didn't even know that these apps existed. So, I'm going to ask him whether or not I can contact the company that does the app to see whether or not they can mark that property no hunting. So that the hunters who were pulling this up know that there is no hunting on that property. I will have to talk to him about that because I'll be honest with you, I don't know anything about hunting apps and I didn't even know there is such a thing.


**Trustee Dr. James LaPolla**

Anything else before we call it a day?

A motion was made by Matthew Vansuch and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:45 PM.

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

Approved by:  Dated: 12/8/21  
Robert M. Costello, Fiscal Officer

Approved by:  Dated: 12/7/21  
Dr. James LaPolla, Co-Chairperson-Trustee