

MINUTES OF THE HOWLAND TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Howland Township Board of Trustees held their regular meeting on March 13, 2024, at 6:00 pm at the Howland Township Government Building, 205 Niles Cortland Rd. NE, Warren, OH 44484.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch – Present
Dr. James LaPolla – Present
Frank Dillon - Present

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to suspend the reading of the meeting minutes of February 14, 2024, and February 20, 2024, and accept them as written.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James LaPolla -yea
Frank Dillon -yea

A motion was made by Frank Dillon and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to authorize Fiscal Officer Thomas Krispinsky to pay all outstanding invoices incurred and approve all warrants issued.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James LaPolla -yea
Frank Dillon -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-039:**

Authorize the Fiscal Officer to establish the following Fund, establish Revenue/ Appropriation accounts, and request an Amended Certificate from the Trumbull County Auditor to increase the budget by \$150,000.00. The money is awarded from OPWC for the 2024 Venice Ht., Rosewood Dr., Bayhill Dr., etc. Road Improvements

Fund 4401 – OPWC 2024 Road Improvements - **Fund Total \$150,000.00**

Revenue Budget:
4401-538-Local Public Works Commission **\$150,000.00**

Appropriation Budget:
4401-330-730-2100-Improvement of Sites (OPWC Grant) **\$150,000.00**

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James LaPolla -yea
Frank Dillon -yea

A motion was made by Frank Dillon and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution **2024-040:**

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George and Police Chief Nick Roberts, hire James Lampkin as a full-time Patrolman effective March 1, 2024. James will begin employment with 120 hours of paid sick leave and be paid 100% of the Patrolman's current hourly rate. He will receive all benefits as per the Township Policy, Police Contract, and Regulations as per the Howland Township Police Rules & Procedure Manual.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

Trustee Matthew Vansuch gave the Oath of Office to Patrolman James Lampkin

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-041:**

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George, increase part-time maintenance employee Leone Dicesare's hourly rate to \$11.00 per hour effective April 1, 2024.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-042:**

Authorize Fiscal Officer Thomas Krispinsky to pay Roderick Linton Belfance, LLP \$25,426.72 – Invoice # 21784 dated 12-15-2023 for Niles annexation attorney fees.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-043:**

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George and Fiscal Officer Thomas Krispinsky, approve ARPA money out of Fund 2902-Local Fiscal Recovery Fund for the following project.

- 1) St. Rt. 46 Sidewalk Project (engineering fees) up to \$34,000.00

Attorney Rodgers from Baker/Dublikar Attorneys of Law has opined the project is an appropriate expenditure of ARPA funds. (full resolution attached)

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

A motion was made by Frank Dillon and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution **2024-044:**

Approve to amend Resolution 2024-036 -Schedule a Joint Work Session with the Howland Local School District Board of Education and the Board of Commissioners of the Howland Township Park District with the following additions:

Explore collaborative strategic planning initiatives that continue to foster a shared community vision of leadership among Township and school officials centered around:

Agenda Topics:

- 1) Introductions between the public officials
- 2) Responsibilities of the boards
- 3) Prior and current interactions between the boards, like Orwig Park (school-township) and Howland Township Park (school-park board)
- 4) Current issues between the boards
- 5) Future opportunities for collaboration
- 6) Lines of communication between the boards and the public
- 7) Relationships that cultivate a collaborative culture to foster a shared community/school officials, constituents, businesses, and agencies;
- 8) Community-driven data, interests, and ideas related to current and future goals and community planning initiatives;
- 9) Collaborative communications that continue to build bridges, transparency, and trust among all stakeholders;
- 10) Development of a solution-based collaborative paradigm for problem-solving

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-045:**

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George and Planning Director Kim Mascarella approve the \$15,000 grant award from the Eastgate Regional Council of Governments for the development of the East Market Street Corridor Plan. The total cost outlay this fiscal year will not exceed \$43,850.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

A motion was made by Frank Dillon and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution **2024-046:**

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George and Planning Director Kim Mascarella approve to accept the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) Development Assistance amount of \$119,798.00 through ODOT. There is no local match.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-047:**

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George and Planning Director Kim Mascarella approve application to the Trumbull County Board of Commissioners for \$62,750.00 in ARPA funds for Bolindale Food Pantry Improvements. There is no local match.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

A motion was made by Frank Dillon and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution **2024-048:**

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George and Fire Chief James Pantalone, apply for the FEMA FY 2023 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG)

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-049:**

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George and Fire Chief James Pantalone, hire Nicholas Waldo as a part-time Firefighter/EMT effective March 16, 2024. Nicholas will receive the current Firefighter/EMT rate and will be scheduled on an as-needed basis with no benefits.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

A motion was made by Frank Dillon and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution **2024-050:**

Approve the 2024 Annual ODOT Township Highway System Mileage Certification for 80.539 miles. There is no increase or decrease from 2023.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James LaPolla -yea
Frank Dillon -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-051:**

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George and Fire Chief James Pantalone, accept the resignation of Fire Instructor Randy Richman effective February 16, 2024.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James LaPolla -yea
Frank Dillon -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-052:**

WHEREAS, the Howland Township Board of Trustees ("Board") offers a 457(b) deferred compensation plan ("Plan") that is administered by the Ohio Association of Professional Fire Fighters;

WHEREAS, pursuant to R.C. 148.061, the Board may offer the Plan to all of the full-time officers and employees of the Township;

WHEREAS, pursuant to R.C. 148.061, the Board may establish a designated Roth account feature within the Plan;

WHEREAS, the Board has identified that a designated Roth account feature within the Plan may provide those who participate in the Plan with possible tax advantages and additional flexibility in saving for retirement;

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes the benefit of the Plan as a means of saving for retirement and wishes to offer the Plan to all of the full-time officers and employees of the Township;

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes the benefit of a designated Roth account feature and wishes to offer a designated Roth account feature within the Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Township's Fiscal Officer or other appropriate officer(s) will review and execute any documents that may be necessary to offer the Plan to all of the full-time officers and employees of the Township and any documents that may be necessary to offer a designated Roth account feature within the Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Howland Township Board of Trustees shall offer the Ohio Association of Professional Fire Fighters 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan ("Plan") to all of the full-time officers and employees of Howland Township.

The addition of a designated Roth account feature within the Plan is hereby approved.

The Township's Fiscal Officer is authorized to review and execute any documents that may be necessary to implement this resolution.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James LaPolla -yea
Frank Dillon -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-053:**

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George, apply for the "More" (Managing Ohio Risk Exposures) Safety Reimbursement Grant in the amount of \$1,000 through OTARMA.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James LaPolla -yea
Frank Dillon -yea

A motion was made by Frank Dillon and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution **2024-054:**

Approve to accept the resignation of Township Administrator Darlene St. George effective April 1, 2024. Darlene's last day of employment is March 31, 2024.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James LaPolla -yea
Frank Dillon -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-055:**

Per the recommendation of Township Administrator Darlene St. George, accept the retirement of Fire Chief James Pantalone effective April 1, 2024. James' last day as Chief is March 31, 2024.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -yea
Dr. James LaPolla -yea
Frank Dillon -yea

A motion was made by Frank Dillon and seconded by Dr. James LaPolla to vote on Resolution **2024-056:**

Per the recommendation of Township Administrator Darlene St. George, hire James Pantalone as the Township Administrator effective April 1, 2024. James will receive \$51.92 an hour with all benefits as per the Howland Township's Policy for full-time salaried employees.

James will carry over to his new position, township seniority, all vacation and sick leave accrued per the Township Policy.

Roll Call: Matthew Vansuch -abstain
Dr. James LaPolla -yea
Frank Dillon -yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-057:**

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George and Fire Chief James Pantalone, approve to promote Raymond O. Pace to the position of Fire Chief effective April 1, 2024. Ray will receive \$45.26 an hour with an annual uniform allowance of \$1,125.00 and all benefits as per the Howland Township Policy for full-time salaried employees.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-058:**

Approve the Board of Trustees to schedule a special meeting on Monday, March 25, 2024, @ 8:00 am. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss department budgets, 2024 Permanent Appropriations, and additional financial resolutions as needed.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

A motion was made by Dr. James LaPolla and seconded by Frank Dillon to vote on Resolution **2024-059:**

Per the recommendation of Administrator Darlene St. George, approve the appointment of Trustee Dr. James LaPolla to represent Howland Township at the Trumbull County Health Board meeting on March 20, 2024, at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call:	Matthew Vansuch	-yea
	Dr. James LaPolla	-yea
	Frank Dillon	-yea

REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS:

Trustee Matt Vansuch: I want to thank Darlene for making the Township a better place to live because of her motto: "to do what is right for the township not for yourself." Please include the article that was in the newspaper about Darlene describing what she has done for the Township during her time as our Administrator in the notes from this meeting.

Trustee Dr. James LaPolla: I would like to thank both Darlene and James for their many years of service. I've been blessed to raise my family here. We have the best Township in the county because of you, Darlene. We have the best Police, Fire, and Road departments in the county.

I would like to welcome James Pantalone to our team as the new Administrator. I feel the reason we are a world-class community is because we work as a TEAM.

The Township free Garage Sale will be on the weekend of May 16-18. The Limb and Branch pickup will be starting on the Eastside on April 15 and Westside on April 29.

I sit on the 911 board for the county, and after discussion, there will probably be an increase in fees coming to local government agencies. I sit on the County Medical board, and I want to let you know they will be doing a review of the local hospitals. Steward Health has two in the area, with Hillside being in our Township.

Trustee Frank Dillon: When we went from the previous Administrator to Darlene St. George, it was very easy to get along with her. I would like to thank her for everything she has done for the Township.

Fire Chief Pantalone: With the nice weather, we are ahead of schedule for spring cleaning of the stations. We also have two Firefighters who are now certified as Fire Inspectors.

Being the fire chief has been a great job, and we have been training the person behind you so that when the time comes for the employee to advance, it will be easier. With that, Ray will be ready to take over the Chief's job, and I'm prepared to take on my new duties as the Township's Administrator.

Chief Roberts: The department is working on the required new training for all officers. The department would like to thank Darlene for all she has done for the Township and the Police Department and welcome James to his new position.

Public Works Director David McCann: I wish Darlene the very best in her retirement. James, congratulations on your appointment.

The weather has been perfect, and we have not used that much salt. Our plan is that we will not have to order any for next year. We are ahead of schedule for our spring jobs due to the weather.

Planning Director Kim Mascarella: Congratulate Darlene on her retirement and welcome James to the Administrator position.

Zoning Director Dan Morgan: I would like to thank Darlene for all her help and welcome James to the Administrator position.

Fiscal Officer Tom Krispinsky: Thanks to Darlene for all the help she gave me, and I wish James the best in his new position.

Administrator Darlene St. George: When I look at all of the employees that we have in the Township, I tell myself that I hired you. This is like my second family. We started building a team when I took my position, and I value the respect you have for me and the respect I have for you. I have worked with five sets of trustees, and they have been excellent. All the Department Heads have made up a wonderful team. I'm so grateful that James is taking over, and I look forward to seeing the Township move forward. I've been working with him this past month, and he will be an excellent fit for the Township. Thank you very much.

