

**RICHFIELD TOWNSHIP
LUCAS COUNTY, OHIO
BOARD OF RICHFIELD TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

April 23, 2020

The special meeting of the Richfield Township Trustees was called to order by John Hassen at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom Virtual Meeting.

ROLL CALL: Chairman: John Hassen – present
 Co-Chairman: Andrew Bick – present
 Steve Bettinger: present

The special meeting was called to discuss fire department budget and staffing. Advertisements were placed on the website as well as the maintenance building meeting room location.

The present fire operating levy generates approximately \$104,000.00 per year, we have been operating in the past with a surplus due to the Mercy Mobile Stroke Unit paying monthly rent for a couple years. Since the mobile stroke unit left in 2016 we have been dwindling away at the surplus. In 2019 we had a lot of expenditures including purchase of new portable county wide radios, led lights, electric cots, parking lot repairs which slowly used up the surplus. On average we normally rolled over approximately \$45,000.00 yearly.

When day time staffing began we started with one full time person, we then added additional part time staff to have two people on all runs during day time calls as we were losing day time volunteers. Originally part time staff worked 2-3 days a week and then increased to 5 days a week as well as increasing from 8 hours a day to 10 hours a day; this was due to the funding from the mobile stroke unit rent. This increased the weekly cost by approximately \$1000.00 per week. The cost to run 10 hour days, 5 days a week with a crew of 2 is approximately \$104,000.00 per year.

Discussion was held placing a levy on the ballot to support staffing. A 2.0 mill levy would bring in approximately \$100,000.00 which would cost the tax payer of a \$100,000.00 home \$72.00 per year. That levy would support staffing along with benefits.

The operating levy would then be used for the operation of the department including repairs, maintenance, vehicles, etc. We need to look at the future, think about eventually moving to 7 days a week for daytime coverage which would cost us approximately

\$145,000 per year. Right now we are running a deficit exceeding our budget even with EMS billing revenue.

The county always projects we will bring in \$110,000.00 per year, recently this has been reduced to \$104,000.00.

The Mercy Mobile Stroke Unit brought in approximately \$27,000 per year, this was eliminated in 2016. Soft billing was bringing in \$29,000 per year which decreased to \$18,000.00 in 2019.

There was further discussion on volunteers in Richfield Township, the majority of volunteers living in the township are close to retirement age. The majority of the younger volunteers are from Sylvania. In the future we may have to rely on a full time paid staff.

Chief presented information on a "safer grant". This is a grant to provide a temporary stop gap method to increase safety and security of each community. It's a 3 year grant to provide staffing which is open for application now. We can apply for the grant to get at least one additional fire fighter/EMT during daytime hours this would mean 2 crew members 7 days a week. The grant would pay for year one at 100%, year 2 at 75%, year 3 at 50% of staffing. This would get us immediate funds. At year four the township would be 100% responsible for the wages. At the end of year 4 we would have to maintain that staff or pay all the money back.

The Trustees and Fire Chief want what is best for our residents. For example we had a fatal accident recently and had only 1 person available due to the recent staff cuts therefore had to rely on mutual aid. We were the last department to respond due to lack of crew.

Continued discussion on placing a levy on the November ballot. The Fire fund will be short to cover staffing until these funds are received. In our present situation we need to think about funds to get us through the rest of year. If we bring daytime crew back on we will need a plan to fund payroll for fire fighter/EMT's as we do not have volunteer staff readily available during the daytime.

Discussion on monies available to bridge the gap to pay fire fighter crew until additional funding. The garbage cost is approximately \$58,000 per year. If we stopped paying for this service and had residents pay their own garbage the funds could be used to help support fire department staffing. To help offset the cost we can reduce staff hours to 40 hours per week instead of 50 hours, this would get us through June.

Further discussion on future planning in which we are looking at 7 days a week 10 hours a day to provide coverage for our residents. We would need approximately a 3 mill levy at \$150,000.00 per year. The issue we currently have is we have an aging volunteer staff, majority volunteers come from outside of the township.

Discussion on bringing back additional part-time staff and have our full time person go back to 5 days a week 8 hours per day.

See attached Resolution 042920-01: 3.0 mill levy for fire department staffing, benefits.

Andrew Bick made a motion to resume the fire department staffing for part-time coverage. John Hassen seconded the motion. Roll call: Hassen-yes, Bick-yes, Bettinger-yes. Motion approved.

Steve Bettinger made a motion to move forward with the safer grant applicaiton. John Hassen seconded the motion. Roll call: Hassen-yes, Bick-yes, Bettinger-yes. Motion approved.

A meetig will be set up with ARS for discussion on the garbage pickup transition. A letter will be sent out to residents.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

Residents may call Norma Drennan at 419-829-6029 or 419-283-3424 to rent the town hall.

The following information can be viewed on the Richfield Township website at: www.richfieldtwp.com.

1. Trustee minutes
2. Zoning minutes
3. Zoning including: fees, applications, complaint forms, and the zoning book.
4. Meeting dates and times
5. Contact information for Trustees, Zoning Board and Board of Zoning Appeals.
6. Wolfinger Cemetery information including cemetery fees, rules & regulations.
7. Fire and Rescue
8. Town hall rental rules and fees
9. Roads and Maintenance
10. Rubbish Contractor information for garbage pickup
11. Community Links.

There being no further business John Hassen made a motion to adjourn at 7:45 p.m., which was seconded by Steve Bettinger: Roll call: Hassen -yes, Bettinger-yes, Bick-yes. Motion approved.

Richfield Township Fiscal Officer
