



The Board of Trustees of Bath Township met on Thursday, **November 30, 2023**, in the Township Boardroom, 2880 Ada Road, Lima, Ohio.

**Members Present:** Brad Baxter  
Mike Meeks  
Micah Hollinger

Chairman Brad Baxter called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The minutes of the regular meeting of November 7, 2023, were approved as presented. Motion by Mr. Baxter, seconded by Mr. Hollinger and passed by a roll call vote.

#### **FISCAL OFFICER'S BUSINESS**

**RESOLUTION 11-30-23-1: The Board of Trustees of Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio hereby authorizes the payment of \$1,550.00 to Howell Rescue Systems, Inc. for annual maintenance and inspection of rescue/extrication tools, to be paid from the EMS Fund.** Discussion: Chief Joe Kitchen explained this is for regular scheduled maintenance. Motion made by Mr. Baxter, seconded by Mr. Hollinger, and passed by roll call vote.

**RESOLUTION 11-30-23-2: The Board of Trustees of Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio hereby authorizes the City of Lima, Ohio Department of Utilities, to provide the labor to install five (5) new fire hydrants in Bath Township at the following locations: 1590 Findlay Road, 1304 Neubrecht Road, 2004 N. Dixie Hwy., 2280 N. Dixie Hwy., and 607 Mumaugh Road in an amount not to exceed \$7,500.00 to be paid from ARP Fund.** Discussion: Mr. Baxter explained in working with Gary Jay and Chief Kitchen, 5 high priority hydrants were identified in critical need of repair. Parts are already on hand from a prior purchase. The \$7,500 estimate is on the high end. Motion made by Mr. Meeks, seconded by Mr. Baxter, and passed by roll call vote.

**RESOLUTION 11-30-23-3: The Board of Trustees of Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio hereby authorizes the payment of \$1,623.36 to RD Holder Oil Company for gasoline and diesel fuel for the fire department.** Discussion: Mr. Baxter explained for clarity that department heads typically have leeway to make purchases up to \$3,000, but under the current financial situation the Board feels it's important for these higher expenses for the Fire Department to have Board review and approval. Motion made by Mr. Baxter, seconded by Mr. Hollinger, and passed by roll call vote.

**RESOLUTION 11-30-23-4: The Board of Trustees of Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio hereby approves the RESOLUTION TO RETAIN THE SERVICES AND REPRESENTATION OF ATTORNEY MATTHEW M. MITCHELL, OF HUFFMAN, KELLEY & BROCK, LLC. ON AS NEEDED, HOURLY BASIS AT AN HOURLY RATE OF \$200.00 PER HOUR.** Discussion: Mr. Baxter explained previous conversations have mentioned securing legal counsel. Access to reliable, as needed counsel is important in cases when the Prosecutor's Office is not available. Mr. Baxter discussed the rate, and how it is very reasonable and the confidence he has in Mr. Huffman and the resources he has access to at his firm. Mr. Meeks agreed that the rate was fair based on research he has completed. Motion made by Mr. Baxter, seconded by Mr. Meeks, and passed by roll call vote.



**RESOLUTION 11-30-23-5: The Board of Trustees of Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio hereby approves the revised Fire and EMS 2024 budget.** Discussion: Fiscal Officer Josh Luke discussed conversation had with Chief Kitchen to review the previously submitted budget for Fire/EMS. Given the additional fire levy did not pass in November, it was important to submit corrections to the Auditor's office to be more in line with expectations and cost saving initiatives that have been discussed and agreed upon by the Trustees, Chief, and the Union. Mr. Luke discussed adjustments made for a decrease in expected Personal Property Tax revenue, as well as decreases in salaries, social security, Medicare, retirement, medical expenses, and utility line items in the Fire Fund budget. In all, this represents a savings of roughly \$259,500.00. An additional savings of \$10,000 can be expected for salaries from the EMS fund. This would all still result in a shortfall, but was more in line with current expectations, and this could still change. Mr. Baxter agreed this was the right thing to do. Motion made by Mr. Hollinger, seconded by Mr. Meeks, and passed by roll call vote.

**RESOLUTION 11-30-23-6: The Board of Trustees of Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio hereby approves the RESOLUTION DECLARING AN ADDITIONAL TAX LEVY IN EXCESS OF THE TEN MILL LIMITATION NECESSARY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES, PURSUANT TO SECTION 5705.19(I) OF THE REVISED CODE.** Discussion: Mr. Baxter references previous conversations that have already been had over the last several months about the need for an additional levy for the Fire Department. He's proposing to the Trustees to put the 2.5 mill additional levy request back on the ballot for March 2024. Mr. Baxter feels the Bath Township residents should further understand the cuts the Fire Department is now realizing and the impact to services they're used to receiving that they will no longer be receiving, and the Township residents should have the decision to vote on this again in the Spring with more information. Mr. Hollinger stated he felt the same as before. Mr. Baxter offered to cover the resolution in full. Mr. Meeks stated he did not need to read the entire resolution right now and had no other discussion. Motion made by Mr. Baxter seconded by Mr. Hollinger and passed by majority rule vote (Mr. Baxter voted yes, Mr. Hollinger voted yes, and Mr. Meeks voted no).

**RESOLUTION 11-30-23-7: The Board of Trustees of Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio hereby approves the RESOLUTION DECLARING AN ADDITIONAL TAX LEVY IN EXCESS OF THE TEN MILL LIMITATION NECESSARY FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAINTAINING TOWNSHIP ROADS, PURSUANT TO SECTION 5705.19(G) OF THE REVISED CODE.** Discussion: Mr. Baxter again referenced previous conversation had at all of the previous special levy meetings where it was mentioned that the Road Department would also need a request for additional funds in Spring 2024. The time is now to make this request to ensure the availability of adequate funds for road repairs and paving, potential equipment needs, and that the Road Department staffing should return to 4 employees, especially with an aging workforce. Mr. Baxter is proposing a 1 mill levy which would generate roughly \$295,984 a year and cost roughly \$35 per \$100,000 home per year. All in all, if the Fire and Road levies both pass, taxpayers are looking at roughly \$123 per year per \$100,000 home. Mr. Hollinger agreed that with the cost of everything rising, it makes sense for the taxpayers to have access to good-conditioned roads and other services for the next several years. Motion made by Mr. Baxter seconded by Mr. Hollinger and passed by majority rule vote (Mr. Baxter voted yes, Mr. Hollinger voted yes, and Mr. Meeks voted no).



**RESOLUTION 11-30-23-8: The Board of Trustees of Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio hereby approves the proposal and contract with Ohio Township Association Risk Management Association, as the provider for property and casualty insurance for fiscal year 2024, while also using Webb insurance, Lima, Ohio as the "Agent of Record".** Discussion: Mr. Baxter explained this is a yearly process for the Township insurance coverage. Motion made by Mr. Baxter seconded by Mr. Meeks and passed by roll call vote.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

The fiscal officer reported as of November 24, 2023, the checking account balance First National Bank \$2,355,277.92; Star Ohio balance \$105,550.65 for a total amount of all funds at \$2,460,828.57.

<b><u>ARP FUNDS:</u></b>	
The ARP Funding Balances are as follows:	
Total Funds Received (2021)	\$496,457.46
Total Funds Received (2022)	\$497,135.04
Total Funds Disbursed:	<u>\$558,032.29</u>
<b>Total Available/Remaining Balance</b>	<b>\$435,560.21</b>

**BILLS FOR PAYMENT**

**Breakdown of bills for approval:**

Payroll Total:	\$32,581.52
Expenditures/Bills	\$75,784.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$108,366.11</b>

Mr. Baxter moved, and Mr. Hollinger seconded the motion to pay the November 22, 2023, bills in the amount of \$108,366.11. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Reports Emailed to Trustees: Payment Listing 11/19/23, Fund Status 11/19/23, Revenue Status 11/19/23. Mr. Baxter, Mr. Hollinger, and Mr. Meeks confirmed they received these reports.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Fiscal Officer Josh Luke explained that the account code 1000-120-190-0000 under the General Fund for "Other Salaries", did not have enough funds allocated to process the 11/22/23 payroll. \$60,000 was originally allocated, and this was nearly exhausted. To remedy this, I reduced the account code 1000-130-150-000 for "Compensation of Board Members" by \$12,000 and allocated that amount over to the "Other Salaries" account code. There is more than enough left to pay any zoning board payments that may trickle in for the rest of the year, and this will allow payroll to be completed through the end of December from the "Other Salaries" category. Mr. Luke explained as the year comes to an end, some estimates might not have been high enough when budgets were originally decided, so some things just need cleaned up or slightly moved around. Mr. Baxter agreed and stated Mr. Luke was taking proper action.

Mr. Luke stated he will be participating in an all-day online seminar on Monday, December 4th from UAN to cover year-end and year-beginning processes and procedures.



### CORRESPONDENCE

Received a letter from the Bureau of Workers' Compensation that included the 2024 certificate of coverage. Bath Township will receive the first invoice for 2024 policy year premiums on December 1st, due by December 21st. We have the option to receive a 2% discount by paying the full 12-month estimated annual premium. The total estimated payment for 2024 is \$13,430. The invoice was actually received with a due date of 12/21/23. If the full amount has been paid as in years past, the Township will receive a refund for the discount. This generated discussion on previous conversations that were had around a higher interest earning account through First National Bank and the merits of making payments instead to the BWC and allowing the money to earn more interest in the Township bank account. Mr. Luke explained that was not set in place. While previous conversations were had about it and First National Bank officials were providing information to the Trustees, that's as far as the conversation went. The trustees agreed this should be something we do. Mr. Luke explained it can be set up as a sweep account so manually moving money from a savings account to the checking would not be required, it would be automated by the bank. Mr. Luke will get the information to proceed and present a resolution at an upcoming meeting for formal approval. In the meantime, Mr. Baxter agreed we should just pay the BWC premium in full.

### TRUSTEES BUSINESS

**Mr. Baxter** had several topics to discuss. He attended an annual meeting hosted by Allen Economic Development Group where updates on several local initiatives and projects were provided. This included the demolition of the county home on 81 that was covered by grant funding. Mr. Baxter stated some new property developments were being discussed and considered for that site.

Mr. Baxter just received notice from Brosius, Johnson and Griggs, LLC legal services regarding rates for 2024. Hourly rates are not changing for 2024 and will remain at \$225 per hour. This is an as needed service the Township uses for Zoning issues. His recommendation is to put a resolution on the agenda for an upcoming meeting to continue to use this firm.

Mr. Baxter also discussed how he attended a meeting with the Allen County Engineer along with Gary Jay and Ken Meyer to discuss the county putting in a turnaround near the Bluelick Rd underpass. Discussion is moving forward on this.

Mr. Baxter and Gary Jay also met with ODOT officials to discuss traffic pattern problems with the new roundabout discussion. In addition to the roundabout that will be built at 81 and Thayer, there is also one going in at the truck entrance for P&G.

Mr. Baxter also discussed his meeting held today with Chief Kitchen, Jared Jenkins, Crystal Plumpe, and Clemans and Nelson. This meeting was held to discuss working together within the confines of the budget to find solutions, although not favorable solutions, which need to be decided and agreed upon in wake of the additional levy not passing. This needs to be a collective decision on how services for Township residents will be impacted and move forward. Looking at 6 full-time employees and a Fire Chief, salary and benefits will cost \$750,000 per year, and that's



before utilities and other expenses are considered. Mr. Baxter referenced again how the fire fund is only projected to have around \$900,000 in revenue. An option is to respond to fire only calls and what EMS services can be provided by the employees as first responders. Jared and Crystal discussed typical staffing levels for EMS calls, what a run normally looks like, and with reduced staffing to a crew of 2, explained that only basic services could be provided as first responders while they would wait and rely on someone else to provide the transportation to the hospital. Mr. Clarence Roller in attendance from the public spoke up and stated this is a catastrophe and all actions need to be taken to remedy this situation. Mr. Baxter explained if EMS services are reduced/eliminated, this will also cause a decrease in revenue normally received for the EMS fund. There are no easy decisions to be made, but the conversation will continue between the Trustees and the Fire Department. Mr. Baxter stated every effort will be made to communicate to the Township residents by everyone to make sure the public is informed and fully understands the importance of additional levy dollars for the Fire Department and the impact on services they're now going to receive. If the Spring levy passes, the funds will not be received until 2025, so the Fire Department is going to need to operate on restrictions for the entire year no matter what.

Mr. Baxter also discussed how the Township usually does not have a beginning of January meeting. The Trustees agreed a meeting will not take place on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024.

Mr. Baxter requested an executive session to "To consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotions, demotion, or compensation of a public official."

**Mr. Meeks** had no additional discussion items at this time.

**Mr. Hollinger** the previous conversation on the roof repairs and replacement for the Road Department garage. He looked at it, it is in very bad shape. Mr. Baxter commended Mr. Hollinger for lignin up a contractor that would do quality work and present cost savings to the Township.

Mr. Baxter moved, and Mr. Meeks seconded the motion to use Liberty Roofing as the contractor for repairs to the Road Department garage roof. Motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

Mr. Hollinger also revisited the previous Township sign conversation. Doesn't believe the high costs are necessary for a quality, serviceable sign when that money could be used someplace else. The Trustees equally agreed this discussion would continue and all options will be reviewed.

#### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Road Superintendent Gary Jay** mentioned the 2023 leaf program was finished. There were 55 truckloads of leaves collected in the Township. Getting ready for snow/winter. Received salt prices, and the price increased by \$0.10 per ton.

**Fire Department - Chief Kitchen** stated there were 1,478 YTD calls for service, with nothing additional to report at this time.



**Zoning Inspector/Fire Inspector Ken Meyer** reviewed his zoning report with the Trustees. BZA hearing was held on November 28<sup>th</sup> for case 328. The variance was denied. An upcoming BZA hearing will be scheduled for the Church property on Lutz Rd. 865 Kingswood neighborhood dispute is still ongoing.

### HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

There were (10) ten from the public in attendance.

Tom Burden, 1710 Lutz Rd – Asked for clarification on separation of issues for the Church property and living spaces proposed. Mr. Meyer explained what they will have to apply for, and there is still a Church with a chapel that is governed under different rules. Mr. Burden also stressed communication efforts need to be made to connect the community. Messages must be clear and received.

Clarence Roller, 3920 E. Bluelick Rd. – Stated only having 2 firefighters per shift is ridiculous. Doesn't know what the Township is going to be do, but something needs to be done.

Crystal Plumpe, 3535 N Cool Rd. – Questions specifically for Mr. Meeks. Asked what is his hangup on the levy? Is it the 2.5 mills proposed? Mr. Meeks stated it was. Crystal also asked if a lower amount was favorable, why did he also vote no for a 1 mill additional levy for the Road Department? Mr. Meeks is in favor of no new taxes, and stated he will vote no to provide his opinion because the other two Trustees will vote yes to move the issues forward.

Jared Jenkins, 3123 Sugar Creek Rd – Asked Mr. Meeks what's the plan for the Fire Department? When will the decisions be made? Mr. Meeks stated the discussion will continue at the next meeting.

Travis Fillhart, 1150 Roush Rd – Stated in all of this conversation, part-time employees are important too and need consideration.

Brenda Meyer, 1060 Prosperity – There are all of these cuts, and so much effort is being spent on signage costs for the Township! Use the insurance money to replace the sign and be done with it. People's jobs are at stake, and money should be used for what's important.

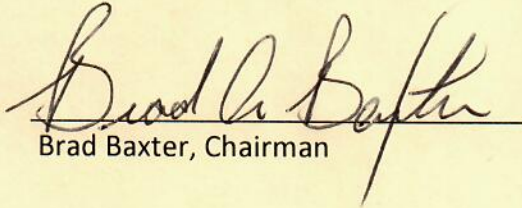
The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees of Bath Township will be held **December 5, 2023, @ 7:00 p.m.** in the Township Boardroom

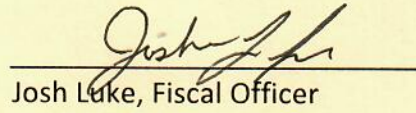
Mr. Baxter moved, and Mr. Meeks seconded the motion to recess the regular meeting at 8:55 p.m. and go into executive session at 9:00 p.m. "To consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotions, demotion, or compensation of a public official." It was determined to end the executive session at 9:19 p.m.

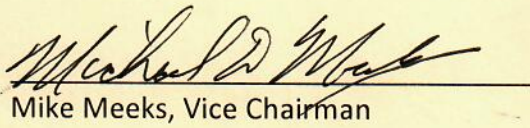
Upon returning to the regular meeting Mr. Baxter made a motion and Mr. Meeks seconded the motion to accept a revised renewal with Medical Mutual of Ohio for healthcare benefits for 2024. A resolution will be on the agenda for the next regular meeting. Motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote. No further action was taken in the regular session.

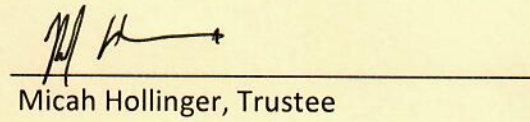


Being of no further business, Mr. Baxter moved, and Mr. Meeks seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 p.m. Motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

  
Brad Baxter, Chairman

  
Josh Luke, Fiscal Officer

  
Mike Meeks, Vice Chairman

  
Micah Hollinger, Trustee