

HUNTINGTON TOWNSHIP SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 27, 2022

President Gary Hopkins called the June 27, 2022 special meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. at the Township Garage.

Roll Call:	Gary Hopkins	Present
	Larry Kellough	Present
	John Cottrill	Present

The Board discussed Larry and Mary Cuckler’s request to keep his Township cell phone and number. Mary said that she called T Mobile and they said a new iPhone is \$800. FO Snyder said that she had called T Mobile and to replace the phone on the account would cost \$400. It was their recommendation that the Township charge Cuckler \$400 for the existing phone. Snyder communicated the information by email to the Cucklers, as well as the next steps if the Board approved the transaction. Trustee Hopkins said that he would buy the phone for \$400 and give it to Cuckler since Mary and Larry felt that was too much money. Mary started to protest, but the Board proceeded.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by John Cottrill for Hopkins to buy the phone for \$400, give the phone to Cuckler, and permit him to keep his phone number. (Hopkins then handed Snyder four \$100 bills.)

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

Discussion with the Board, Committee members, and others about how the Fire Department and Township should move forward.

Bob Newland: Concerned about the ballot issue because it won’t be timely enough to address our financial situation now.

There was concern expressed by those in attendance that the levies may fail, and then what?

Alice Kellough: Let’s give the people the chance to vote, but consider what will be Plan B.

T J Oyer: Arrived at the meeting late due to another work commitment. The meeting was held up until he arrived since he is the chairman of the committee and was the one to address the Board.

The plan offered by the committee to the Board involves 2 levys. He shared that they met last Thursday, June 16.

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First, place the existing 2 mill levy on the ballot as a replacement, as already planned, but make it a continuous levy.

Second, place an additional 1 mill levy on the fall ballot as well. This levy would raise about \$75,000 according to Snyder. Oyer said that it would be for night time coverage beyond what the existing 1.5 mill levy provides.

A short discussion about EMS billing then ensued where a review was provided about hard billing. Oyer said that 3 attempts are made by Medicount to collect, and then it is written off. Oyer also stated his opinion that Medicount is one of the worst 3rd party billers out there. He referred to a billing service in Kentucky and committed to gathering more information.

Mary Cuckler: Discussed the SAFER Grant, stating that awards would begin in July and move across the next three months. She texted Larry to find out more information. She said let's "Hope and pray that we get it".

Oyer discussed a grant writer named Mickey Smith who has written Ohio First Responder Grants. Smith asks for 5% of the award and to this point is batting 100%. He said there is too much negativity, and that we need to look forward and end the negativity.

Snyder asked what the goal of the committee was regarding coverage at the Fire House.

Oyer stated that the goal of the committee is:

- 24/7 – 3 FT employees - supplemented by part-time
- Long term goal – 6 full-time employee
- A livable wage

Newland shared a suggestion of instead using six 3-person crews who work 12 hour shifts 3 days a week. Part-time employees would then cover weekends. He expressed his dislike for mandated overtime. Oyer stated that he agreed that doing away with 24-hour shifts is a good idea.

There was then discussion about the concern of putting two levys on the ballot at the same time. Oyer insists that we need the additional 1 mill levy now in order to operate effectively. Mary Cuckler stated that the school gets so much more of our taxes than the Township.

Cassie Noble: Shared that she doesn't want to talk about the situation in our Township regarding the Fire Department with people any longer. It is difficult to discuss. She stated that we "we need a department plan a goal – What do we need now?"

Oyer shared how the Pike County-wide EMS coverage failed, and as a result they had to "turn around and give the money back". He affirmed his belief that would not happen here.

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Mary Cuckler: Stated that there is “always hope” and that “events and community service are a big deal”. That the “fish fry is a big deal”.

The Board then made a motion to move into Executive session.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by John Cottrill to go into executive session at 8:06 to discuss a personnel issue.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

The meeting was called back to order by Hopkins at 8:14 and roll was taken:

Roll Call:	Gary Hopkins	Present
	Larry Kellough	Present
	John Cottrill	Present

Hopkins asked those in attendance what they are hearing from the community – what does the does the community think. Two people – Newland and Becky McWhorter – said it is not favorable.

Newland asked how does our run reports. Oyer said that he does them, and the drug license as well. Newland would like to look at them. Oyer said that he would appreciate all the help he could get, but he stated that the people writing up the reports need to do a better job both for legality and billing aspects.

Oyer said that we need a policy regarding documentation of EMS and Fire runs that lays out discipline when the record written is inaccurate. We need accuracy for both legality and billing. Need to be strict on what you write, and what you do not write.

Chris Benson: Shared that a resident just beat them down on a run they made. The person was videoing the crew that responded. Some felt like it was an intentional set up to make us look back. No one was transported.

Becky McWhorter: Would like to be more involved. “Just soak it all in”. She said that she was “willing to help with run reports, as well as collections of accounts that are unpaid”. She retired from the banking field and has skills to offer the Township.

Cottrill stated that we need “all the positive press we can get” and that “If we are all going to pull together we have to get started”. He also said that he “did not like the headline” on

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the Gazette article on the interview that he and Hopkins agreed to do with Megan, the Gazette reporter (who was in attendance at the meeting) but that the “rest was good. She has been fair. There has been a lot of misinformation.”

Mary – Referenced the article and agreed about the accident our squad was in. That resulted in a discussion about the person who caused the accident and was recently found at fault in a court case. She had appealed the decision, but lost. The Township, according to Oyer, “paid out a boat load of money”. She also reminded the Board of a time when Larry said that we needed to put a lawyer on retainer. Snyder stated that the Fire Department did not have enough money to put a lawyer on retainer, and stated that the Ross County Prosecutor is our attorney. She said that we often rely heavily on the Prosecutor.

Hopkins asked Newland if he was willing to get involved at the Fire Department. He stated that he is now 73 years old and is limited in being an emergency responder, but that pending the “outcome of this meeting” he would consider it.

Oyer summarized the plan for the 2 levys:

Existing 2 mill is replaced and changes to a continuous levy

Adding a new 1 mill as well

He strongly believes we cannot go forward without the additional 1 mill.

Snyder reminded the Board that if the levys are defeated, we do have the second ARPA payment that will arrive in September to help out the Fire Department. Mary stated to explain what ARPA stood for, because there were those in attendance who were uninformed. Snyder then shared the amount, the history, and how the money could be utilized.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by Larry Kellough, to approve a Resolution to Proceed with the 2.0 mill replacement of a continuous levy that will collect \$158,837.12. Levy will be placed on the November 2022 ballot. (Prosecutor’s office will prepare the official resolution.)

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes

Motion by John Cottrill, second by Gary Hopkins to approve a resolution requesting certification of county auditor for an additional 1 mill levy to be on the ballot this November. The purpose of the 1 mill levy would be to pay personnel to provide more coverage at the Fire Station. (Cottrill did express that he is worried about 2 levys on at the same time, but he would go with the committee’s recommendation.)

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Vote: John Cottrill Yes
 Gary Hopkins Yes
 Larry Kellough Yes

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by John Cottrill to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 P.M.

Vote: Gary Hopkins Yes
 John Cottrill Yes
 Larry Kellough Yes

ATTESTED:

President

Vice President

Member

Fiscal Officer