

HUNTINGTON TOWNSHIP BUDGET HEARING & REGULAR MEETING
JULY 7, 2022

President Gary Hopkins called the July 7, 2022, meeting to order at 5:36 P.M. at the Township Garage.

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

***** 2023 Budget Hearing*****

FO Robin Snyder presented the 2023 Budget to the Board, reviewing both revenues and appropriations.

Snyder began by laying out what she feels are the three most important takeaways about the current budget:

- The fire fund reflects a deficit of \$57,847.99. This deficit reflects a staffing level of 1 full time and everyone else part-time, 3 people the first 12 hours and 2 people the second 12 hours. If more full-time people are added, and/or a raise is budgeted for 2023, that deficit will grow.
- The ARPA fund after paying premium pay for hours worked in 2021 and 2022, as well as other designated expenditures will be around \$145,900. Money must be obligated by 12.31.2024, spent by 12.31.2026, then unused funds are to be returned.
- 2023 Chip and Seal budget is set at \$130,000.

She then refuted the claim/rumor that this Board gives themselves raises; that statement is untrue. Raises for township officials are set by Ohio's legislature; township elected officials do not vote on their own raises, and those currently in office do not receive the raise until/if they are re-elected.

Snyder reviewed the existing levies, the 2 levies on the ballot this fall, as well as the 3 loans the Township currently is paying on.

Fire Fund

- For the Fire Department she explained that the revenues from the additional 1 mill levy (\$79,419) cannot be included since the electors have yet to decide whether to approve it or not. It was stated that "the citizens will speak through the levy". EMS receipts have trended lower this year than the last several years, therefore she stated that she took receipts through June 30th and doubled it to use for 2023 at \$166,883. Also, there has been no notice of our status on the most recent SAFER grant application. Since Snyder was uncertain how to budget Fire Department staffing for 2023, she presented a spreadsheet that showed how much it would cost across 4 different scenarios of staffing. The budget was created using Option 1 (1 FT employee all else PT; 3 on first 12, 2 on second 12) which Trustee John Cottrill voiced support. Chief Oyer asked that the budget reflect the goal of returning to 24/7 coverage with 3 full-time people, 3 on for the first 12 and 2 on for the 2nd 12. That option results in a budget deficit of \$75,000. (Several people expressed concern over our ability to get people back to work; can we get them to work?)

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- In the 2023 budget are monthly payments to the FD leadership team as follows:
 - Chief \$600
 - Assistant Fire Chief \$300
 - Assistant EMS Chief \$300
- Snyder put in a 2% pay increase for the Road crew, but nothing for the Fire Department Crew. Chief Oyer took exception with that, arguing that since both crews receive ARPA premium pay it would not be fair to give the Road crew a raise, but not the FD. Oyer understands that the shift in coverage hours from PT to FT resulted in overtime, and OP&F contributions, which helped create the financial difficulties the Fire Fund has faced, stating “it killed us”. Snyder said that giving a 2% pay increase will increase the salary budget alone by \$6,000, not including retirement contributions.

Snyder shared that the ARPA 2nd distribution will be received 7.15.2022. It is the 2nd tranche plus the same supplemental as the first time; totaling \$327,602.21. She stated “That money could be used to support the FD operations”.

After discussion between the Board, the Chief, and the FO the following updates were requested:

1. Return to 24/7 coverage with 3 full-time people, 3 on the first 12 and 2 on the second 12.
2. 2% pay raise in 2023 for the FD employees.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by John Cottrill to approve the 2023 Budget.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

Both Trustee Cottrill and Chief Oyer stated that they will monitoring actual expenditures in 2023.

***** Regular July Meeting*****

Motion by John Cottrill, second by Larry Kellough to approve the June 2022 regular meeting minutes.

Vote:	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	Gary Hopkins	Yes

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Motion by Larry Kellough, second by Gary Hopkins to approve the June 27, 2022, special meeting minutes.

Vote:	Larry Kellough	Yes
	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes

Motion by John Cottrill, second by Gary Hopkins to approve payment of the June 2022 bills.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

The Board then addressed the status of our Fire Chief. Trustee Hopkins shared a resignation letter from Tristen Carter. Carter is reigning for “personal reasons” from administrative positions, but plans to remain as a volunteer.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by John Cottrill to accept Carter’s resignation as discussed above.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

The Board then discussed the need to appoint a new fire chief. Hopkins asked T J Oyer if he would be willing to accept the position with a 6 months probationary period at \$600 a month. Oyer answered “I am willing”.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by John Cottrill to appoint T J Oyer as the Fire Chief for Huntington Township.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

Snyder said she would get the \$600 payment to him soon for July

- **GUEST:** T J Oyer, Fire Chief, asked the Board to hire Korey Pauley to the paid part-time crew at \$11.79/hr effective 6.27.22 with no lapse in time. (Korey most recently was a full-time EMT for the Township, but resigned.)

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Motion by John Cottrill, second by Larry Kellough to hire Korey Pauley to the paid part-time crew as discussed above.

Vote:	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	Gary Hopkins	Yes

➤ Oyer asked the Board to approve the applications and hire Johnathon Fyffe and Alex Ramey to the paid part-time crew. Fyffe is a FFV/EMT-B at \$11.26/hr and Ramey is a FF1/EMT-B at \$11.79/hr.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, seconded by Larry Kellough to hire Fyfe and Ramey to the paid part-time crew as discussed above.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes

➤ Chief Oyer asked the Board to accept the resignations of Kevin Fausnaugh and Ian Hardin from the paid part-time crew. Both people are relocating to South Carolina.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by John Cottrill to accept the resignations of Fausnaugh and Hardin from the paid part-time crew.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

Resolution to Proceed on additional 1 mill levy for 5 years

FO Snyder the auditor's certification for this levy of \$79,419 of expected tax receipts per year, beginning in 2023. She stated that the Board now had to decide whether to proceed or not. During this discussion she emphasized to the Board that the 2 mill replacement, permanent levy already on the ballot this fall would not be collected upon until 2024. If it were to fail, the Township would have two more chances to get it approved in 2023.

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Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by Larry Kellough to proceed with the 1 mill levy, for 5 years, to be placed on the ballot November 2022, for collection in 2023.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes

Chief Oyer then discussed a number of different topics with the Board, as follows:

The number of employees on the roster at the fire department, is not accurate, Oyer stated that while it shows 31 part-time employees, that is not the actual number. It is less than that. He plans to institute a new process of sending inactive employees a letter asking them to pick up a shift or resign. He has identified six people who have not met the current requirement. He would like for Snyder to mail the letters, requesting a response by Saturday August 6th at 9:00 for the next board meeting.

He then stated that he would like to ask former chief Larry Cuckler to come back as a consultant. (The Board did not comment on that idea.)

Presented two purchase requisitions to the Board for approval as follows:

Combs Heating & Cooling	\$580	Air conditioning issues
O'Reilly's	\$297.06	Car wash and battery

Motion by John Cottrill, second by Larry Kellough to approve both presented purchase requisitions.

Vote:	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	Gary Hopkins	Yes

In the foreseeable future, these expenditures have been identified: Engine #902 will need brakes; 927 needs routine maintenance with Mark Porter, and 920 pending work. One of the crew mentioned popping noises coming from 919.

Oyer discussed letters that we are receiving from the VA stating that the Vendor Payer form needs to be updated in order to may EMS claims. Snyder stated that she remitted an updated form in April, called in May when she got another letter. She was told it could take 3 to 4 months for the update to go through.

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Regarding the SAFER grant that we applied for, Oyer shared that Larry Cuckler is monitoring that grant application status on FEMA.Gov

He desires a Command Staff that will include an Assistant Fire Chief, an EMS Lieutenant, a Fire Lieutenant. Everyone will be dual carded except for the Fire Lieutenant who can be single carded. Intends to present this plan at the August Board meeting.

The South Central Power Grant will provide \$7900 of new tools and equipment at a cost of \$2900 to the Township. SCP will cover the rest.

A committee will be assembled to rewrite the SOPs and SOGs for the Fire Department employees. The existing standards were created before we had a paid staff, and needs updated. Bill Malone is the last member of the old department still running for the Township. Oyer will head up the effort.

The Association is hosting a fish fry on July 9th. There will be an effort for voter education, how much the two levies will cost taxpayers, and County Auditor Robyn Brewster will be in attendance. Live music is scheduled.

Oyer reminded the Board of a grant writer named Mickey Smith whom he discussed at the last Board meeting. They plan to have Mr. Smith write an Ohio First grant. He will be at the station on July 13 at 1:30. There is a \$400 consulting fee that will be paid by the HTVFD Association.

Cassie Noble will return to scheduling shifts and compiling payroll hours for Snyder. As last time, she will be paid \$.50 more an hour for this work.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by John Cottrill to appoint Cassie Noble as the Fire Department secretary with the responsibility of scheduling shifts and submitting payroll hires to the FO for \$.50 more an hour when working in this role.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

Bob Newland, resident, asked why the Township does not take advantage of the services of a paramedic nurse that would like to run and lives in our Township. (Cindy Lundy) Oyer stated that we would like to have her run, and have offered to send a vehicle home with her as a chase vehicle. She has not responded affirmatively to that offer.

Newland than volunteered his services to assist with submitting runs to our 3rd party biller and reviewing our EMS billing. GH Lk JC

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by Larry Kellough to accept Newland's offer of assistance at no charge.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes

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GUEST: Derek Myers, who runs the Scioto Valley Guardian, addressed the Board. He stated that he met with Chief Oyer who requested his help with our levies on the ballot this fall. He is willing to do everything he can to help our levy pass. He stated that he had a very different presentation planned for the Board, but given the very positive way the meeting had proceeded, he was not going to give that presentation. Instead he offered his help via the Guardian.

He stated that he is the “Guy everyone hates”. Cottrill asked if he gets compensated for every click on his news site. Myers acknowledged that yes, he “sort of” gets paid by clicks. He says it is his job to report the news.

Cottrill expressed how upset he was with the Guardian’s coverage of the car crash on 772 at the intersection of Blain Highway and St Rt 772. He said that it was his sister’s granddaughter that was cut out of that car. And he said “We did have someone that got there. Get your facts straight”.

Myers said he had delegated coverage of Huntington Township to Trevor Bales who is here covering the meeting tonight. He said that Trevor will “be fair”. Hopkins said “Your coverage is not fair!”. Myers said “I am here to speak, not about this stuff, but to help with positive press for your levy”. Cottrill said “most of your press is negative”.

Myers stated that the Guardian “gets 3.5million views a month. We intend to be the #1 news source of the county”. Hopkins asked why he had assigned someone to Huntington Township and inquired if he had assigned people to “Twin, Paxton, and others”. Myers stated that they will be at Concord’s next meeting, and that they try to get out to other township meetings. He stated that “Robin is good to get your meetings on line”, but others do not. Cottrill stated that the Township will adopt a social media policy, and that members/employees will not be permitted to post negative things about our Township. A “Morality clause”. He said that “Our reputation was destroyed.”.

Bob Newland then said “let me say something. I am working my way back in to the fire department. Why can you not contact a trustee on a story before it is published?”. Myers stated that they have called numerous times, but the trustees do not answer their phones. He said that they will “help us whether we like it or not. We will do our best. Your new chief knows how to contact me.”.

Cottrill asked “Son, do you understand why we are upset?”.

Myers said “I understand you don’t want to be transparent. And don’t call me son. We don’t publish false information. I will go back to that speech I had prepared”. At this point, Myers held up an envelope with the last name of each trustee and stated that he had “recall petitions for each trustee and a \$15,000 PAC donation to ensure each of you are removed!”.

Alice Kellough asked “Why do you have a vendetta against our township?”. She asked if it was now about money, and who writes the biggest check rather than about the people. She said “I taught most of these people. My mind is blown.”.

Hopkins said “This is so wrong. Pathetic.”.

Cottrill stated that this action shows “your character. It is the Board’s character against yours.”.

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Phil Kellough said “He wants us to fail. What business do you run in Huntington Township?”. Myers responded that he does not live in the township or have a business here, but that he drives through our township almost every day, and if he is in an accident in Huntington Township, he wants a squad available.

Alice Kellough asked “who wrote that \$15,000 check?” Myers responded “I am not an elected official and I do not have disclose information to you.”.

Hopkins then called out Robyn Brewster, the Ross County Auditor, and asked her to stand, that he wanted to talk to her. He asked “Who asked you to go the Board of Commissioners on our behalf?”.

Brewster stated that “It was not on behalf of you. I saw the need and went to make the request. It was on behalf of all the people”.

Hopkins asked “Have you ever done this before? No previous auditor has ever done anything like that. Every township has struggled. And the Commissioner shot it down. Please do not do that again. We will do it ourselves. Appreciate if you not do that again.”.

George Daniel, resident, said that he was here “due to this reason”. He shared that his home is by water and he was flooded by his neighbor. Issues with property lines. He said to Brewster and Myers “Let us take care of ourselves. We know what will happen. I worked for Scioto Township, this trustee position is a tough job. They have to work for the people. Thank you guys. I am here to support you.”..

Brett Clark offered his help if Oyer needs it, he is willing to help. Cottrill said “good people offer to help.”.

Other Business

Snyder offered congratulations to Nate Cuckler on the birth of his son. Nate said thanks, and that he would be “Back to work in 8 minutes.”.

Cottrill discussed a quote on a new equipment trailer for the track hoe from Buckeye Trailer World of \$13,190. He would like for the Township to purchase it.

Motion by John Cottrill, second by Gary Hopkins to proceed with purchasing the trailer from Buckeye Trailer World for \$13,190.

Vote:	John Cottrill	Yes
	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

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Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by Larry Kellough to pay 3 invoices to Quick Stop Lube & Tire for tire repairs.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes

General items under discussion:

- Several people requested that the Board meetings be moved back to the Fire Station. It is more comfortable, access to the copier, etc. Snyder will put it on the agenda for the August meeting.
- Snyder provided an update on the Voyager Fleet Program Application: She answered a question about the various names used for our Township and which one is correct. Now back to waiting.
- Billed June mutual aid runs into Twin Twp - \$750
- There is a primary election on August 2nd - Senate – who will prep the station and open the doors? Trustee Cottrill.
- Snyder informed the Board that we received a public records request from Derek Myers for the past 5 years of budgets, as well as the status of our current revenue and appropriations. She sent those to him 7.2.2022 and 7.5.2022
- Snyder asked everyone to remember that the August meeting will be Saturday, August 6th at 9:00AM at the Garage.
- There was discussion of the need for a Social Media Use policy for employees and elected officials in our township. Cottrill passed out an example of one in place with the Board of Commissioners.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by Larry Kellough to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 P.M.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes

ATTESTED:

President

Vice President

Member

Fiscal Officer