

Huntington Township Budget Hearing & Regular Meeting July 11, 2023

President Gary Hopkins called the July 11, 2023, meeting to order at 6:02 P.M. at the Fire House.

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

*** 2024 Budget Hearing***

FO Robin Snyder presented the 2024 Budget to the Board, reviewing both revenues and appropriations.

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

- a. Recommending a 5% increase for all employees
- b. Recommending an increase for the Chief from \$600/month to \$800/month. This figure was based upon the results of 3 public records requests made to other townships with 24/7 coverage, and we pay considerably less to our chief than the other townships. We do not have an assistant at this time, but recommending an increase from \$300 to \$400.
- c. Noted that the last payment on the loan for the 2021 dump truck is March 15, 2024.
- d. Incorporated the additional taxes from the 2Mill that passed as a replacement, and continuous - \$31,360.12 more.
- e. The expected year end 2023 balance in the ARPA fund is \$54,872.55. As of April 9, 2023, premium pay is no longer effective for hours worked after that date. We still have about \$52,214 appropriated in 2023 that needs moved from salary and retirement to Operating Supplies.
 - i. The money must be obligated by 12.31.2024, but we have until 12.31.2026 to spend and then return unspent funds.
- f. We are financially stable in all of our funds except perhaps the cemetery fund. Most of our money earned goes to mow them.
- g. The original 1 mill levy expires in 2024. The Board will need to be put it back on the ballot either during the primary in 2024 or the general election in 2024.
- h. Floral Hills is not included in this budget. Nor is anything regarding the possibility of a SAFER grant award.

General discussions regarding the budget:

- Budget reflects \$15,000 in payments for EMS transport out of Twin Township.
- EMS Billing Receipts were set at double the current collection rate, or \$216,684.
- Snyder had \$30,000 set aside for machinery and equipment, but the Board asked her to increase that to \$50,000 and take it out of operating supplies. We need to replace the tractor and need another box spreader.
- The Board discussed the proposed pay increase of 5% for all employees. It seemed a bit high, but further discussion showed it was necessary to bring us closer in line to other townships with full-time coverage. Snyder believes we can easily cover the additional expense because of the 2 mill replacement tax receipts we will begin to receive in 2024. The Board also discussed increasing the Chief's pay from \$600 to \$800, but Hopkins felt is

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should be \$1000 and spent time honoring the Chief for his hard work and “turning this place around.”

Motion by Larry Kellough, second by Gary Hopkins to approve the 2024 Budget.

Vote:	Larry Kellough	Yes
	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes

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

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by John Cottrill to approve the June 2023, meeting minutes.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

Motion by Larry Kellough, second by John Cottrill to approve payment of June 2023 bills.

Vote:	Larry Kellough	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes
	Gary Hopkins	Yes

Fire Department Business:
TJ Oyer

1) Oyer asked the Board to approve nine (9) purchase requisitions for the FD, as follows:

#1 O'Reilly Auto Parts	\$15.80	916 valve stem repair
#2 VCNB Amazon	\$408.41	Station supplies
#3 VCNB Amazon	\$196	CO monitoring - Gas/Carbon Monoxide
#4 VCNB Lowes	\$147.38	Paint supplies for outside maintenance
#5 VCNB Lowes	\$105.50	Replace shop lights
#6 VCNB Lowes	\$592.56	Plumbing/ceiling repair dayroom leak
#7 Advance Auto	\$45.35	916 drug cabinet repair
#8 Mark Porter Ford	\$1760.65	916 maintenance
#9 TL Doors	\$1200	Squad bay door repair

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Motion by John Cottrill, seconded by Gary Hopkins, to approve the nine (9) purchase requisitions as requested by Chief Oyer.

Vote:	John Cottrill	Yes
	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

2) Oyer discussed a Priority One grant for training and equipment. We will use it for drug bags - \$811.20. We must match it. Korey and Eric worked on the grant.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by John Cottrill, to authorize the work on this grant, and the commitment to match funds.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

3) Oyer and Snyder discussed management of the AFG grant award. Oyer is recommending that we contract with Ohio First Responder to administer the grant at a cost of \$150/hour. If we were audited by FEMA, this group would go into and through the audit with the township. Expects that we will spend no more than \$2500 over the life of the grant. At first Snyder was opposed to the idea because she has the ability to manage the grant reporting but given that a new FO will come in the next election cycle, she agreed to this idea.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by John Cottrill to contract with Ohio First Responder to administer the AFG grant award.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

4) Oyer shared that 2023 grant cycles will open up January 2024. He would like to apply for a grant to obtain portable radios. Discussed the end of the MARCS grant from the Ohio Dept of Commerce that ended several years ago. The expectation is that the MARCS radio fees will decrease.

5) Snyder informed the Board that the agreement with Twin Twp to cover 1/3rd of their township with emergency services had been signed and returned, along with the downpayment of \$10,000. The downpayment will be deposited, but the funds are designated for a specific purpose and are not available for use outside of covering the fees for our EMS runs in Twin. Oyer shared that Scioto Twp had offered to buy Twin's squad. Twin is putting a 1.5 levy on their November ballot to pay for the EMS services provided by other townships.

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- 6) Snyder provided information from the public records request of Green and Union townships for salary and wages, benefits, retirement etc. paid to their emergency service departments.

Guest: Larry Taylor of Trebel Energy

Mr. Taylor addressed the Board regarding electrical aggregation and asked the specifically to pass a resolution to put the issue in front of the voters this November election cycle. Snyder expressed that the resolution would need to be turned in by August 9th at 4:00 to make the ballot and she didn't know if that was possible. Larry said he would handle everything with the Board of Elections.

The aggregation is only applicable to residents who have AEP as their provider; those with SCP do not get a choice. 3 or 4 Board members have SCP and feel they have the best provider. Mr. Hopkins, who has AEP, explained how much his bill has gone up recently and that he would like to see aggregation on the ballot. It was noted that the only change is who generates it and how much you pay. Trebel acts as the broker/consultant, not the generator. The question was raised if the program would be opt out or opt in; it is an opt out program. Larry mentioned that Jim Hatfield of Jefferson Twp is a proponent of Trebel and aggregation. Scioto Twp has used them for the last 7 years and most residents are in favor of it. For the most part, it benefits those customers/residents who never look at making their own selections and are uninformed.

Snyder asked if the 3 documents Taylor was asking the Board to sign had been preapproved by the Ross County Prosecutor. He did not know that answer, and understood her position that they needed to be reviewed by legal counsel.

Once reviewed, changed if necessary, the Board would hold a special meeting in order to proceed with the approvals and resolutions.

Township and Cemetery Business:

- 1) **FO Snyder informed the Board that the National COVID emergency ended April 10, 2023; therefore, employees are no longer eligible for premium pay.** She suggested that the Board should honor the Q2 premium pay regardless, because employees had been counting on it, but that after Q2, there would be no more. To make this happen, we would be \$3/hr. premium pay from April 3 – 9, then from April 10 – July 9, the \$3/hour would be paid directly out of the Fire and Road funds.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by Larry Kellough to proceed with Q2 premium/bonus pay through hours worked July 9th by paying 7 days out of the ARPA fund, and the rest out of the applicable fund. After Q2 there will be no more bonus payments of \$3/hour.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes

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- 2) **Snyder made the Board aware of the public records request from the steering committee exploring county-wide EMS.** In particular the Cambridge Consulting Group. It is a significant request and will take time for both her and Oyer to compile. She stated that she would not be able to meet the communicated time frame. Trustee Cottrill said that he spoke with Devon Shoemaker, who heads up the committee explaining that with the current budget cycle we would not meet their deadline. Larry Cuckler is on the committee, representing the role of fire chief, which he currently does not hold. The consultants are expected to tour the various stations around the county very soon. Cottrill also said that our county auditor, Jeff Lehner, said that there are a broad range of options under consideration. A fire district is one of those options. Cottrill said that at first he was opposed to a fire district, against the Twin Twp agreement, but now realizes that mutual aid and helping our fellow townships is something we must do.
- 3) **Cottrill** asked that August meeting be moved to Saturday, August 5th at 9:00 AM due to the Ross County Fair.

Motion by John Cottrill, second by Gary Hopkins to change the August meeting to Saturday, August 5th at 9:00 AM. Snyder will publicize the change in the Gazette and on the Township website.

Vote:	John Cottrill	Yes
	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes

- 4) **FO Snyder** informed the Board that the next Floral Hills hearing in Judge Ater's courtroom would be July 13 at 1:30. It is a public hearing. Cottrill shared a discussion he had with our representative, Mark Johnson, regarding Floral Hills. He feels it may be ours in the near future. The bridge is in critical condition and the RC Engineer's estimate to repair is \$100,000. Also believes the house and storage garage behind the building will need torn down and disposed. It is in terrible shape, and the group who had been taking care of it "Friends of Floral Hills" quit. There are endowment funds at Huntington Bank.
- 5) The Board discussed the tractor and mower deck that were totaled in an accident. We have the option to buy it back, or receive the salvage value. We do have a 2nd mower. Need to find out more information and decide how to proceed.
- 6) **Cottrill** provided an update on the transfer from World Fuel Services to Glockners. He said that the pumps and fuel from Glockners would be more cost efficient. We would get their new tanks, and World Fuel Services would remove the old ones.
- 7) **Cottrill** shared that we were awarded the David Meade Massie grant for curbing at the cemetery. The quote for that work is \$4,113. JB Design has 90 days to complete the work. And it must be for the specific grant awarded work, nothing else.

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- 8) The Ohio Dept of Commerce cemetery grant is now active. Cottrill would like to apply for it, and needs some information. We would use to purchase a battery powered weed eater and mini-tiller. Around \$1000 and it is a 50/50 grant.

Motion by John Cottrill, second by Larry Kellough to apply for the Ohio Dept of Commerce Cemetery grant as discussed above.

Vote:	John Cottrill	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	Gary Hopkins	Yes

- 9) Snyder provided an update on the biannual 2021-2022 audit. It is 75% complete. The audit team found one mistake regarding pay for the elected officials. One of the 1.75% increases had been missed. The result is additional pay for the elected officials as follows:

John Cottrill	\$721.74
Gary Hopkins	\$315.70
Larry Kellough	\$315.70
Robin Snyder	\$1,188.01

The additional compensation will be paid out in two installment; one is for the underpayment for the first six months of 2023, and the rest will be paid out on a second check, all in July.

Other than this one finding, the rest of the audit is clear and has passed.

- 10) **The Board** then discussed the amount owed Power Plan/Murphy's for \$2,418 dating back to 2022. Hopkins said we do owe it. Snyder will generate the check for that balance.

- 11) **FO Snyder** asked the Board to approve a \$52,214 reappropriation of Salaries and Retirement in the ARPA fund to be split between the Fire Dept and the Road Crew evenly in Repairs and Maintenance.

Motion by John Cottrill, second by Gary Hopkins to authorize Snyder to make those reappropriations.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes

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General items under discussion:

- June 2023 Run Statistics: 81 calls of which 74 were EMS and 7 were fire. We gave 4 mutual aid and received 5. We had 3 runs into Twin Twp. Refused mutual aid 5 times.
- The average EMS response time was 8 minutes 56 seconds, whereas the national average is 12 minutes. Average fire response was 9 minutes 24 seconds.
- Only one overtime mandation, 12 hours on a Saturday night.
- The fish fry went very well, the station looked good.
- Snyder reminded the trustees that there would be a special election on August 8. Chief Oyer said that they would make sure things were ready for the BOE, and would assist where needed.

Motion by Gary Hopkins, second by Larry Kellough to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 P.M.

Vote:	Gary Hopkins	Yes
	Larry Kellough	Yes
	John Cottrill	Yes

ATTESTED:

President

Vice President

Member

Fiscal Officer