

Minutes
LAFAYETTE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Special Meeting
Friday, May 4, 2018

Meeting called to order: 3:03 p.m.

Members Present: Trustee Lynda Bowers, Trustee Michael Costello, Trustee Martin Warchola, Fiscal Officer Shirley Bailey, Law Director William Thorne.

3:04 p.m. Trustee Bowers moved to recess into executive session for the purpose of discussing employee hiring and compensation pursuant to ORC 121.22G.

Roll Call: Bowers-yes, Costello-yes, Warchola-yes

3:21 p.m. Trustee Bowers moved to adjourn executive session and reconvene to the special meeting seconded by Trustee Costello

Roll Call: Bowers-yes, Costello-yes, Warchola-yes

Trustee Bowers made a motion to amend the Lafayette Township Service Department staffing resolution to include one full time service supervisor and two full time road men and authorize the service department supervisor to offer the full time position to Mr. Luke Farren. Trustee Costello seconded the motion. All voting in favor.

Discussion took place regarding terminating the Sheriff's Department contract as the Board does not feel the township is receiving the quality or even the coverage hours being paid for. Residents complain regularly about the lack of visibility and lack of coverage. Trustee Costello reported a 90 day review of the cruiser GPS records show that on average only 20 to 25 percent of the township roads are patrolled on a regular basis with 60 – 70 percent of the roads not traveled at all by a patrol car within the same time frame. The Board discussed having numerous conversations with the Sheriff and his administration wherein they express budget and manpower problems. Trustee Bowers explained her concern that issues with manpower and budget should not impact the Lafayette service when, according to the terms of the contract, Lafayette bears the cost of the Lafayette service, not the Sheriff's budget. There was discussion that the Lafayette contract was to provide a higher level and specific hours of service to Lafayette, not supplement the Sheriff's countywide patrol. However, it is evident that often a Lafayette officer in service is utilized as a zone car. Trustee Costello said there are a number of terms the Sheriff has removed from the latest proposed agreement Lafayette has given him. Most concerning, the Sheriff removed language indicating his department cannot guarantee night time and weekend coverage for the township which the Board of trustees has stressed are key times coverage is requested. Board members expressed the importance of achieving coverage when it is deemed most necessary. The consensus of the board is that if the Sheriff is only willing or able to assure the same service to Lafayette as townships without a contract, then there is no reason to have a contract with the Sheriff. Trustee Bowers noted that the board that the opportunity available to partner with Medina City Police Department which was not available when contracting police service was first explored explaining the goal is service, to ensure residents get the service they are paying for.

Reviewing, Trustee Bowers noted there are 17 townships in Medina County, four are served by their own full time police departments and four others including Lafayette Township providing varying levels of community policing by contract with the Sheriff's Department. Lafayette Township's contract is by far the most aggressive contract at \$300 to \$350,000.00 annually. Like every other township, Lafayette residents pay general real estate taxes collected by the county which are used in part to fund the cost of the Medina County Sheriff's Office. For that reason, with or without a community policing contract, Lafayette residents are entitled to the same service that every other township especially the nine that do not have enhanced safety services. Lafayette residents approved a tax levy for the purposes of contracting

for additional police services beyond the basic sheriff's office county wide patrol and Lafayette Township Trustees entered into a contract with Medina County Sheriff's Office for community policing services with Sheriff Neil Hassinger in 2006. There was a clear understanding at that time that the deputies assigned to Lafayette and paid for by the residents of Lafayette were not considered part of the sheriff's county wide patrol but were to serve Lafayette specifically, in addition to that patrol. There was also an agreement as to the number of deputies, hours and times of assignment. In recent years, while increasing in cost, including the addition of requiring the township to pay dispatch fees, the service seems to continue to morph into Lafayette taxpayers subsidizing the budget of the Sheriff's county wide patrol. Numerous meetings, over several years between the Trustees, the Sheriff and his administration have not resolved the situation. It has come to a point where the Sheriff has conceded that failure to cover specific hours requested or the Lafayette deputies leaving the township to cover other issues within the county are more of a manpower issue with the Sheriff's department. Trustee Bowers stated it is her belief that the Sheriff does not lack the desire to deliver to the Lafayette taxpayers what they are paying for he simply doesn't have the ability. Most recently, the Sheriff declining to enter into an agreement that ensures hours contracted for would include evenings and weekends seems a deal breaker. Evenings and weekends are something that is not only important to the township but especially important in our parkland and Chippewa Lake areas of the township. The City of Medina has expressed the ability to offer a much higher quality service – a service that was not available to the township when it originally entered into the agreement with the Sheriff's Office. Townships across the state that are contracting with city departments tend to agree that the city departments are much better suited to community policing than the sheriff's contracts that some have previously had. The Board of Trustees have a responsibility to ensure the tax payers are receiving what they pay for. The Board would never consider paying to have two miles of road paved and settling for 1 1/2. This is no different. The board discussed it strives to get the best possible service for the lowest taxpayer's cost and even absent the issues we have been trying to work through, it is the consensus of the board that this new opportunity with Medina City Police will be a much better service for the residents.

The Board has agreed to meet with the Sheriff again and relay their intentions in writing. Discussion over the contracts regarding community policing between the township, the Village and the Sheriff's department were had.

Trustee Bowers moved to pay the warrants of the township. Trustee Costello seconded the motion. All voting in favor.

Ms. Bailey confirmed the amendment to the original bank depository contract from Huntington Bank has been received back.

Mr. Thorne confirmed the trustees received the draft copy of the cemetery rules and requested they review and prepare to discuss at the next meeting. Trustee Bowers will incorporate the language for the cremains burial containers in the rules.

Trustee Bowers explained that a local developer has proposed seeking the detachment of 8 acres of property from Medina City to go back to Lafayette Township for the construction of cluster homes. The acreage is zoned industrial and has been vacant for nearly 50 years. Mr. Thorne explained there is no provision in township law that gives authority. There is a statute that allows the city to give up territory. The Board has agreed not to engage as residents in the immediate area are not in favor. Mr. Thorne will forward communication to the Medina City Mayor.

Ms. Bailey stated she has received recommendations from Ms. Austin regarding employee sexual harassment training. Mr. Thorne will review the sexual harassment policy prior to next month's trustee meeting.

Mr. Thorne stated a zoning seminar will be held in August and requests the trustee consider sending him. He will forward the information to the Board.

Ms. Bailey received an invoice from Borlandia for the new website. Bill Thorne will review the contract with Borlandia prior to sending in payment.

4:56 p.m. Trustee Bowers moved to recess into executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel discipline pursuant to ORC 121.22G1.

Roll Call: Costello-yes, Warchola-yes Bowers-yes

5:03 p.m. Costello moved to adjourn executive session and reconvene to the special meeting seconded by Trustee Bowers

Roll Call: Bowers-yes, Costello-yes, Warchola-yes

No decisions were made

Trustee Costello moved to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Warchola
Meeting adjourned at 5:06p.m.

Approved: _____

Lynda Bowers, Trustee

Michael Costello, Trustee

Martin Warchola, Trustee

Shirley Bailey, Fiscal Officer