

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of **Greenfield Township Trustees** *Meeting*

March 12, 2025 - Held 7:00 PM

The Greenfield Township Trustees met in regular session at the Firehouse. Trustee Cotner called the meeting to order and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Dave Cotner, Lonnie Kosch and Kent Searle were present.

Trustee Cotner presented the minutes of the February 26, 2025 Trustee Meeting for approval, and asked for any changes or discussion; or a motion if no changes were noted. Trustee Kosch made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Trustee Cotner seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL: Cotner: Yes Kosch: Yes Searle: Abstain Motion Passed 2-0

Trustee Cotner presented the minutes of the February 5, 2025 Land Use Plan Trustee Meeting for approval, and asked for any changes or discussion; or a motion if no changes were noted. Trustee Searle made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Trustee Cotner seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL: Cotner: Yes Kosch: Abstain Searle: Yes Motion Passed 2-0

SPECIAL PRESENTATION TO CITIZENS: At this time, Fire Chief Brad Smith explained the situation which occurred on January 22, 2025, and the reason for the special citizen presentation. An auto accident happened on Route 33, resulting in a car catching fire after hitting a bridge. Greenfield Township Fire Department was on another run, and the departments providing mutual aid were not able to get there before two citizens stopped to help. The driver of the car was unresponsive, and with the quick action of the two citizens who stopped, Bobby Shelton and Keely Thress, the driver was able to be pulled from the burning car. Chief Smith noted Mr. Shelton has a military background, and Ms. Thress is a nurse at Grant Hospital, so they both had training and experience in rendering aid. They both provided aid, including applying a tourniquet. Chief Smith noted that without their assistance, the driver may not have survived the accident. The following fire departments responded to provide mutual aid: Violet, Bloom and Madison Townships. Chief Little of Violet Township, Chief Williams of Bloom Township, and Lieutenant Smith of Madison Township were in attendance for the presentation. Many thanks were expressed from the Board, Fire Department Chiefs and Lieutenant, and family members of the driver. Photos were taken to commemorate the presentation.

FROM THE FISCAL OFFICER: Fiscal Officer Jessica Kull reported on the following business:

Fiscal Officer Kull asked for a motion to pay the bills for warrants 3586 through 3602, and to approve the electronic debits 48-2025 through 58-2025. Trustee Cotner moved to approve the payments; Trustee Kosch seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL: Cotner: Yes Kosch: Yes Searle: Yes Motion Passed 3-0

Fiscal Officer Kull explained there were some certificates of deposit that needed to be addressed for reinvestment. The percentage rates reported from the bank range from 3.8 to 4 percent for two year and three year options. Updated rates (which change daily) will be investigated, and she will email the Board with the current information.

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Fiscal Officer Kull explained a situation with an approved check to a vendor which did not arrive in a timely manner. The bank has confirmed the check has not been cashed. She asked for approval to pay a \$25 stop payment fee to the bank while this situation is rectified. The Board agreed the stop payment needed to be made.

Fiscal Officer Kull reported there is an issue with the leave accrual balances being computed properly in the payroll system, which affected the 2/25/2025 payroll report. She has spoken with the Department Heads about getting it corrected, and wanted the Board to be aware.

Trustee Kosch asked if the term on the CD at Premiere Bank could be for a longer period. Fiscal Officer Kull stated this could not be extended for a longer term; however, she gave the information for various other CD's with their maturity dates and what the rates are. Each CD is specific.

ZONING DEPARTMENT: Jeff Williamsen, Zoning Inspector, presented the following items:

Meeting Schedule:

- March 14 - Review Cloudpermit software - for meeting and enforcement demonstration
- March 24 - BZA Variance Hearing

Past Meetings:

- March 6 - Uplands PUD Hearing continuance
- March 11 - Zoning Commission Meeting, and meeting regarding CEDAs and NCAs (two separate meetings)

Five permits have been issued since the last Trustees meeting.

Zoning Issues:

The Zoning Commission plans to clearly define the requirement for declaring an agricultural exemption on lots over five acres. This will be addressed at the next meeting. There has been an issue with the parameters of the working in that requirement.

A BZA Hearing has been scheduled regarding a request by Jill Maiher to erect an accessory building. The buildings Ms. Maiher already exceeds the 4,000 square foot maximum restriction; however, her land is under CAUV (13-14 acres); it is used for agricultural purposes, but she is not the one farming the land. There is a gray area due to the differences in her buildings, so a hearing was scheduled. There was one building which was torn down because it was leaking and in disrepair, and she wants to put up a smaller building. Updates will be provided as this issue continues.

The Uplands Variance Hearing was held on March 6, 2025, and the results were submitted by Jeff Zech. The Trustees will need to schedule a hearing within ten days or no later than 20 days from today. Jeff also asked about the notification requirements for this hearing, and whether adjacent properties are required to be notified in this instance. The Board noted any property

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within 200 feet of the address were required to be notified, and the notice will also be posted in the local newspaper (law regarding this requirement changes effective June 30, 2025).

Jeff has been receiving monthly survey requests in the mail from the US Department of Commerce and Building - Census Bureau. He stated he had not yet logged in to the site, and didn't want to provide the information until the Board had a chance to review the information being sought. He noted the survey states the request is voluntary. Trustee Searle stated he would contact Heidi Fought of the OTA to get clarification on this issue, and report back.

Jeff reported he has received a preliminary application for a rezone of property at 497 Rainbow Drive from R1 to HP. This is to create a venue similar to Cheers, but with no kitchen. This was just received today, and Jeff will follow-up with the status of the application.

Trustee Kosch raised the issue of the business on Old Columbus Road that was recently raided. He stated there were four signs on the building for businesses in the building, and asked if they had permits. He stated he had researched past minutes and did not find anything addressing the signs. Jeff responded that he could research this and report back.

ROAD AND CEMETERY DEPARTMENT:

At this time, Trustee Cotner stated Tom Shafer, Road and Cemetery Superintendent, was going to present information about Hickory Ridge. However, Jordan Bachman was in attendance to present information, which will answer a lot of questions that may be asked, so Mr. Bachman was allowed to proceed with his presentation.

Jordan Bachman, 3508 Hatter Road, proceeded to explain the following information in relation to the property in question.

- When the farm went up for sale, he and a good friend went together to purchase the property.
- He lives on the property and farms it; the barns house their cattle.
- He and his business partner want to split the property to get half in his name and half in the partner's name.
- The five acre piece that comes off of Hickory Ridge requires going through a steep creek which is hard on equipment.
- Trustee Cotner has been out to see the property, and Mr. Bachman has had discussion with two of the neighbors about what he and his friend want to do there.
- Mr. Bachman has heard the concerns about damage to the road, and has spoken to Trustee Cotner and Tom Shafer, Road Superintendent, about this issue. If damage is done to the road, Mr. Bachman is willing to pay for the damage.
- Another concern was mud on the road. If this occurs, Mr. Bachman stated they can get it swept off the road.
- There is a concern about kids on the property. Mr. Bachman stated his family has six children under six years old on property. They are well aware of safety concerns around farm equipment.
- There are concerns about trespassing with ATVs, four-wheelers and dirt bikes, as well as people wandering around on the property. Mr. Bachman stated he has concerns with trespassing, as well. There are trail cams that have picked up a lot of activity with these

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types of vehicles, as well as people walking around. He plans to put a culvert in with double gates and locks to deter these activities.

- There were concerns about a housing development going in on the property; however, Mr. Bachman noted he and his friend wanted the property to farm which is why they purchased it; they intend to keep it as a farm. He noted if they are unable to get the property split as they are seeking, then there is a possibility that it would be sold for a development. However, he stated that is not what he and his friend want.

Mike Kramer, 1401 Hickory Ridge Drive, asked if they had another access point to the property. Mr. Bachman responded they do have another access point off of Hatter Road; however, there is a creek that runs through the 125-acre property. Mr. Kramer suggested a bridge could be built to access the property. Lengthy discussion continued concerning the same types of issues that had been raised: the condition and deterioration of the road, with a participant stating the fact that it had only been paved twice in 25 years; their concerns about the farm equipment causing damage to the road. It was stated that the neighbors don't want the farm equipment traffic, black diesel soot, mud on the roads, etc. Another participant noted a concern about farm equipment using the narrow roadways. Trustee Cotner pointed out that the Township snow plow and the trash trucks that use/service the road weigh more than the combine that Mr. Bachman would be using. Mr. Bachman reiterated that they do not intend to use the new entrance very often. He also confirmed that he would be paying for the gravel, the permits, etc. required to create the new entrance. He also confirmed any equipment that is driven through the road to the entrance will be taken on to the farm property, and not parked at the end of the cul-de-sac. The Board went on to explain that based on current zoning, Mr. Bachman has a right to use his property as he wishes. There's nothing to prohibit him from accessing the road when his property adjoins the road. Mr. Bachman noted that he was representing both himself and his partner, whose name is on the property. Trustee Searle reiterated that the property owner is the person who needs to go through the process of applying for the permit.

Tom Shafer, Road Superintendent, gave a brief history of the origin and creation of the area/subdivision, via the Fairfield County Engineer's Office.

A participant noted the road was originally a temporary road, and had only been paved twice in 25 years. She voiced her concerns about additional equipment using the road and damaging the road further.

Ford F600 Cab and Chassis Truck: The truck, which was purchased last fall, will be picked up in April, and they will have it for approximately one month to complete the build and add the emergency lighting, etc. It should be back in the Township in early summer.

Summer Paving and Microsurfacing Work: Tom reported he had reached out to several contractors to obtain quotes for summer roadwork for budgetary purposes. He called a contractor regarding work to be done in Carroll Knolls - Wendy Dr./Jeanne Dr. /Bonita Place; however, he has not received a response as yet. He will update the Board when he receives more information.

Ohio Public Works Commission: Tom reported he will attend the bid opening on March 17 at 11:45 a.m. at the County Engineer's Office for various culvert projects, i.e. the two pipes on Ginder Rd. and the one on Stringtown Rd. A Trustee is welcome to attend, but it is not required;

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however, Tom will need to sign-off on the preliminary paperwork until the final contract is ready. Then, it will be brought before the Board for approval. He noted the contract will be rebid if it exceeds ten percent of the Engineer's estimate.

Rainbow Drive Speed Study: Tom reported the speed study to be conducted on the west side of Rainbow Drive at Coonpath, per the resolution sent to the Fairfield County Engineer's Office from the Board. This was a request to get a speed reduction between Route 158 and Coopath Road. The study came back with a speed of 40 mph. Tom reinforced with Eric McCrady of the Fairfield County Engineer's Office that the speed needed to be reduced to 35 mph to match the east side of Rainbow Drive where the speed was reduced last year. Tom noted this was ultimately an ODOT recommendation for any action to be taken.

Tom also noted a resolution to be presented to the Board at the meeting for a speed study on Old Columbus Road.

Possible Paved Parking at the Administrative Office: Tom raised this issue, noting that the Road Department should not be responsible to pay for this paving; however, he noted the condition of the area in front of the Administration Door as well as the Road Entrance Door. It currently consists of 304 stone with chip seal on it. He noted the winter freezing and thawing caused more damage. He stated the area is approximately 76 feet by 16 feet to be paved. He recommended using concrete to pave the area. Tom will gather some pricing on this job and report back to the Board.

Speed Study on Old Columbus Road: Trustee Cotner introduced this subject, and stated there were attendees who wished to speak on the subject.

Karen & Tom Rooney, 4435 Old Columbus Road NW, were the first speakers. The Rooneys voiced their concerns about damage that had been done to their property, for which she had supplied pictures, as well as concerns about safety. She noted the library is across from their home, where families and children are coming and going. The high speeds on the road were noted.

Trustee Kosch made a motion to create a resolution to ask for a speed study on Old Columbus Road; Trustee Cotner seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL: Searle: Yes Kosch: Yes Cotner: Yes Motion Passed 3-0

FIRE DEPARTMENT: Chief Brad Smith reported the following business:

Full-time Firefighter Deployment: Chief Smith asked Captain Spires to present on behalf of Local 4422 regarding a memorandum of understanding - MOU - on this issue. Capt. Spires explained when the firefighter was deployed, it was discovered the information in the contract had used old figures regarding active military members, and this required an MOU to be drafted to reflect the current situation. The figures in the contract were drafted on an eight-hour work day schedule. The MOU reflects the current information in the ORC, and is drafted to reflect this in order to be compliant with the ORC. This is being presented to the Board for their review, so action can be taken at the next meeting (Executive Session). The Board asked for both the original language and the current language so the two can be compared and reviewed, and this will be provided by Chief Smith via

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email.

Hiring of Part-Time Firefighters: Chief Smith presented the following individuals for part-time hire: Owen Scott and Jayden Whaley - firefighter/EMT - Basic. They are currently more than halfway through paramedic school, and are recommended for hire upon successful completion of physical and background check. Trustee Searle made a motion to appoint Owen Scott and Jayden Thomason-Whaley as part-time firefighters-EMT basic upon completion of physical and background check; Trustee Kosch seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL: Cotner: Yes Kosch: Yes Searle: Yes Motion Passed 3-0

Part-Time Firefighter Hours: Chief Smith presented a draft policy regarding the ORC approved part-time firefighters hours to be reviewed by the Board.

State Fire Marshal Grant: Chief Smith reported the Department received a grant of \$15,000 for safety equipment. This grant will allow the Department to purchase four sets of turnout gear which averages around \$4,000 each (this does not include boots).

Recent Fire: Chief Smith reported a fatal fire which occurred on Saturday March 8, 2025. He stated he wanted to commend Greenfield Township, as well as the mutual aid that Greenfield Township Fire Department received on the scene. Individuals were rescued from the house within seven minutes of arrival, while also attacking the fire at the same time. The fire was contained within 25 minutes from the time of the call. Chief Smith reported a Columbus fireman actually arrived on the scene first and attempted a rescue; however, was unable to do so due to the heat. He stayed on scene and assisted with the rescue. He returned this week to tell Chief Smith he was highly impressed with the response and work of the Greenfield Township Fire Department, and stated it was the most efficient work he had ever seen. Bloom Township Fire Department also responded to the fire.

FLOOR:

Nick Babamov was present to address the Zoning Commission hearing on March 6, 2025 which denied the plan for the project he wants to build. He noted the plans have been amended to include a walking path, a playground and some green space. One of the four unit buildings has also been removed from the plans, so he was providing all of this information/drawing to the Board for their consideration.

Mr. Babamov also provided the lease for the business that had been in his commercial property which was recently raided due to illegal activity. It states there is to be no illegal activity at the property. Mr. Babamov went on to read a statement (submitted to the Board), as follows:

“Good Evening, everyone. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak tonight regarding my rezoning request for the Uplands multi-family development in Greenfield Township.

Before addressing the details of my proposal, I want to take a moment to respond to some personal comments made about me in the last two meetings. I have remained silent on these matters until now, but when my morals and character are being questioned, I feel it is necessary for me to speak up.

Please, for a moment, put yourself in my shoes. I have a longstanding, proven track record as a responsible

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property owner. I have successfully owned and managed a four-unit apartment complex for 25 years without incident, and I have owned commercial rental properties for the past eight years. While I cannot control every action of my tenants, I take my responsibilities seriously, thoroughly vetting all renters for both criminal history and financial responsibility.

Another concern that has been raised is the fact that I do not live in Greenfield Township full-time. While I do split my time between Ohio and North Carolina, my ties to this community are strong. I consider myself a true Ohioan. All my vehicles in North Carolina have Ohio State license plate brackets, and whenever I see someone wearing an Ohio State shirt out of town, I proudly greet them with an "O-H!"

More importantly, I own multiple properties - both residential and commercial - right here in Greenfield Township. Maintaining these properties requires my regular presence, which undeniably makes me a part of this community.

On a personal note, I have a vision for this project. I dream of one day watching the sunset from my rooftop deck, but beyond that, I see a development that will enhance this community.

Some concerns have been raised about potential road damage during construction. I want to assure everyone that this will be properly managed by the appropriate department, just as it is for other developments. Subdivisions with 50, 60 or even 70 homes - each with multiple vehicles - are regularly built throughout Greenfield Township without issue. This project will have a similar, if not lesser, impact.

As for traffic concerns, I understand that change can bring hesitation. However, studies and observations - such as those by Jeff Williamson and Tom from the road department - confirm that this road is not heavily trafficked. That said, I do support lowering the speed limit to 35 mph for safety.

Now, let's talk about the future of this land.

We want to build a development that benefits Greenfield Township and its residents - a place with green spaces, a playground for children, and a walking path for the community to enjoy.

Regarding community interest, the turnout for the first rezoning meeting was just 17 people out of approximately 5,000 Greenfield Township residents. Not a single person from across the street from the proposed development attended. At the second meeting, even fewer people showed up. This suggests that, despite a few vocal concerns, the broader community is not overwhelmingly opposed to this project.

*In fact, there is even a proposed **Cooperative economic development agreement in the Greenfield Township Land Use Plan** for this area, further supporting the case for responsible development.*

I truly believe this is the right project in the right place. Greenfield Township is growing, and this development aligns with that growth in a way that provides housing options while respecting the character of the area.

I appreciate your time and consideration, and I look forward to working together to create something beneficial for the community.

I can take your questions if there are any questions?

Thank you".

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At this time, the Board determined the hearing date for the Uplands Variance Trustee Hearing as April 10, 2025, 7 p.m. at the Greenfield Township Firehouse.

Trustee Cotner also raised the issue of holding a special meeting with Amy Brown-Thompson to discuss some issues.

Trustee Searle went on to raise the issue of the Ascend marijuana dispensary in the Township, and the situation with the host agreement. He explained HB 96 and how it will impact the Township if it passes, with the vote occurring in November 2025. It will potentially decrease the funds from the sales which Greenfield Township may receive. The Board encouraged the group to call the Governor’s Office, Rep. LaRe’s office, and Senator Tim Schaffer’s office to express their feelings on the issue.

Trustee Searle also raised the issue of the Indigent Burial Fund. The state increased the funding for this state reimbursement fund from \$104,000.00 to \$1,000,000.00. The Township has a policy requiring the funeral homes to provide all necessary documentation in order to receive the funds for indigent burials.

FROM THE TRUSTEES:

Trustee Cotner reported he had attended another meeting with the city of Lancaster, along with Fiscal Officer Kull, Road Superintendent Shafer, Zoning Inspector Williamsen and Attorney Pete Griggs. He noted Lancaster has hired Caleb Bell as their attorney for the NCA and CEDA with Greenfield Township. As a result, they have determined they want to rewrite both documents. Once the new documents are ready, the Board will be contacted for their review.

Trustee Cotner raised the issue of scheduling a meeting with Amy Brown-Thompson. He will contact her to arrange a time. Trustee Searle noted he would not be available next week; however, he encouraged the Board to meet without him, as he has been in contact with her.

Trustee Kosch raised the issue of setting up another Land Use Plan meeting in case there were issues with the map. Discussion continued regarding the discussions with Lancaster, and the NCA and CEDA revisions, as well as explaining the CEDA - Community Economic Development Agreement - and annexation concerns. The NCA - New Community Authority - was also discussed and explained. It was reiterated that Townships are not able to receive tax money, but can receive funds from an NCA agreement based on new development and building only.

With no further business to come before the Board, Trustee Searle made a motion to adjourn; Trustee Cotner seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL: Cotner: Yes Kosch: Yes Searle: Yes Motion Passed 3-0

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.