

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
MIAMI TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES WORK SESSION

Minutes of

Meeting

BEAR GRAPHICS 800 325 8094 FORM NO 1014B

DECEMBER 6, 2021

Held _____ 20 _____

The Miami Township Board of Trustees met in a work session on Monday, December 6, 2021, at 8:30 a.m. at the Miami Township Civic Center. Chairperson Wolff called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Ferry called the roll. Attending were Mary Makley Wolff, Karl Schultz and Ken Tracy.

Mr. Wright advised that two TIF districts were created in 2005 for some of the parcels at the Tartan Glen condominium neighborhood. He stated that one TIF was to be ten years in length and the other 30 years in length.

Mr. Wright presented a resolution prepared by the Township's bond counsel, Dinsmore & Shohl, for the Board's consideration to terminate property tax exemptions granted for certain parcels within the Tartan Glen TIF district. He stated that the termination of the district would not change the amount of property taxes paid by an owner, rather it redistributes the disbursement of those monies collected.

Mr. Tracy made a motion to adopt Resolution 2021-44 a resolution authorizing termination of a property tax exemption granted pursuant to Section 5709.73 of the Ohio Revised Code and declaring an emergency, seconded by Mr. Schultz with all voting "AYE".

Mr. Wright advised Fire Chief Kelly is requesting the Board grant a conditional offer of employment to Ronald Smith to continue in the Fire Department's hiring process as a Firefighter/Paramedic.

Mr. Schultz made a motion to grant a conditional offer of employment to Ronald Smith to continue in the hiring process as a Firefighter/Paramedic, seconded by Mr. Tracy with all voting "AYE".

Mr. Wright advised that Police Chief Mills is recommending the Board of Trustees grant employment to Melanie J. Scherer for the position of full-time Police Clerk, with a twelve-month probationary period, at a pay rate of \$22.59 per hour with a starting date of January 3, 2022.

Mr. Tracy made a motion to grant employment to Melanie J. Scherer for the position of full-time Police Clerk with a twelve-month probationary period, at a rate of \$22.59 per hour, with an effective starting date of January 3, 2022, seconded by Mr. Schultz with all voting "AYE".

2022 Budget Hearing: Ms. Wolff announced next on the agenda was the 2022 Budget Hearing.

Mr. Wright began by informing the Board that the budget is very conservative and there are not large increases projected for property tax collections although there is active construction in the Township. He stated the Township is still benefiting from the 2020 re-appraisal which resulted in an increase of \$197 million in new valuation for the Township. He referenced that significantly helped the inside millage funds and in future years helped the outside millage funds to a lesser degree.

Mr. Wright stated the budget is conservative with its interest income, although it is believed that in 2022 there is likely to be two or three interest increases next year. He shared that it would be appropriate to let the public know that the auditor of state recently completed and released the Township's biannual financial audit for the Township for the year 2019 and 2020.

Mr. Wright stated it was unique in that the Township also received a single audit because the Township received federal grant funds that exceeded \$750,000 in one year. He shared that he is proud to let the Board and the public know that the Township did not receive any negative comments and there were not any material citations or weaknesses that were highlighted. He

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stated that he is really proud of the fiscal office and all of their work throughout the two-year period. He stated the audit took place over a few months, some in-person and working remotely.

Fiscal Officer Ferry took a moment to thank Finance Director Kelly Flanigan and Finance Associate Laura Wells for their work. He shared that the auditors were grateful for their responsiveness to questions.

Mr. Ferry informed the Board that one of his goals for 2022 was to eliminate writing checks and made reference to small check amounts that do not get cashed. He enlisted the assistance of department heads to transition to an ACH payment method.

Mr. Ferry commented that he sat in on the audit and recap where the auditors expressed they were extremely grateful. He extended his appreciation to all staff involved, especially Kelly Flanigan and Laura Wells.

Mr. Wright next informed the Board that he would like to highlight on a positive note within the draft budget there is an increase of the local government funds again. He stated that Miami Township has been the leader over the past three years to have the Clermont County formula right sized to reflect population. He stated that would result in an annual increase of approximately \$93,000 in additional revenue.

Mr. Wright referred to the active residential construction in the Township and stated there was a record number of fees collected through the end of November. He stated for the first eleven months of 2021 the Township collected almost \$184,000 in zoning fees. He noted this was a good indicator that the residential housing market has not slowed down. In 2021 through November, there were 141 new single-family homes and 122 apartments. He shared that the median price of a typical single-family home in the Township exceeded \$450,000 this year. He noted that not included in any of those statistics is the fact that Fischer Homes is currently installing the infrastructure for their Parkview Condominium development located off Hilltop Way off of State Route 131. When completed, it will be a \$60 million development.

Mr. Wright reported that although the Township did not see quite as much new commercial construction this year, there were new tenants in retail. He stated that because the Township is still a bedroom community as more residents stay here all day or working from home, more of their dollars are staying local. He stated that translated to a few new restaurants and bakeries.

Mr. Wright advised that another item that a lot of thought was put into was the ability to attract and retain the best public employees that we are able to provide to the community. He stated that because we are a service industry, we always take a look what the cost is for personnel. He stated some very positive news is that our health insurance and dental premiums renewed on September 1st and there was a zero percent increase. He commented that while that is a flat expenditure for 2022, we will continue to invest in the wellness program to try to engage more of our employees.

Mr. Wright continued on the topic of employee retention and stated that they have noticed in the last year or so that not only is the Township competing with other public entities for good employees, the Township did also lose a couple of employees from a couple of departments this past summer to private industry. He stated that all four of the union's collective bargaining agreements expire on December 31, 2021. Negotiations have been completed with two of the four unions with 4% increase in 2022 for the terms, while inflation is 5-5.5% for 2022. He noted that seems to be keeping in line with private and public employers data that has been collected. He reported the same increase is being recommended for the 29 of the 135 employees at the Township that are not members of one of the unions to keep with the theme of parity for those employees.

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Mr. Wright reported that the Township did receive funds in 2020 and 2021 which were large, but one-time increases. A total of \$1 million was received back from the Bureau of Workers' Compensation which led to some very healthy carry-overs in many funds. He also mentioned the state assistance for COVID-19 that the Township is able to use for safety services expenses. He noted some improvements were made to some of the parks and buildings for cleaning to provide a healthier environment to residents. Also, funds were put back into Recreation for some of their lost revenue since we had to cease or reduce camps.

Mr. Wright next referenced the newest items that local governments will be receiving is Miami Township has received almost \$2.3 million from the American Rescue Plan Act. Additional ARPA funds are expected in the amount of \$2.3 million. He commented there are very stringent parameters from the Federal government for use of the funds and only four categories for how the funds should be spent. He stated that the only eligible expenditures (for ARPA) that are proposed are the Station 27 sanitary sewer extension project, Miami Riverview Park sewer pump replacements, and the Mill Street stormwater project in Miamiville. He also made reference to potential changes we anticipated from the federal government related to the parameters for ARPA funds and stated that once that occurs, he would return to the Board for further discussion.

Ms. Wolff held discussion regarding the Township's lack of authority over sanitary sewer and water as those are county functions. She stated that it really limits the uses for the ARPA funds. She commented that while the monies have been received by the Township, she wanted to point out the strict parameters for spending it.

Mr. Wright next reviewed the annual repaving program. He stated the Township began 2021 with a little higher carryover therefore in 2022, the program will be a little smaller than in 2021. He stated it will still be the second largest that has ever been completed and the Township will be able to repave 11-12 miles of road as well as concrete work for curb and gutter.

Mr. Wright highlighted that he is very proud that every department takes to heart challenges to work on competitive grants. He shared news was recently received that the Township will receive over \$400,000 in OPWC grants for additional phases of Redbird Lane and Sugar Camp Road. It was noted that this would be the second time working on Sugar Camp and the Township has been on Dry Run dozens of times. He next stated that Police and Fire have been very successful with BWC. He commented that he along with Ms. Thibodeau, Brad Roetelle, and John Musselman have been brainstorming ways to apply for Clermont County Park District grants. He stated the Township could ask for up to two \$20,000 grants and later in the meeting there will be discussed a few ideas for that grant.

Mr. Wright reported that the Parks and Recreation Fund is projected to end 2022 with \$141,000 of carryover. He noted that was better than a few years ago. He recalled that the Board and Mr. Ferry decided previously that a portion of the Civic Center debt service no longer comes from the Parks and Recreation Fund and 50% of it comes from the General Fund to assist with an improved carryover. He added that they have also been more purposeful in the last six to seven years about utilizing TIF and RID funds when applicable to the capital improvements in the parks. He referenced the carryover and noted that there would be a need to continue discussions about what year it would be appropriate to look at asking the voters for a renewal to capture the amount of valuation which has increased that the levy fund, by law, has available to capture. He stated that when a home increases in value, not all of the levies benefit from it.

Mr. Wright advised that more retirements are expected in January. There will be 3-4 employees from 3-4 departments, which will continue. He cited the Township is no different from any other type of organization private or public that is going through that same experience.

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Finance Director Kelly Flanigan reviewed portions of the budget document that discussed levy funds over a ten-year period with year-end balances, year-to-year comparisons and highlighted increased revenues, low debt and interest activity.

Mr. Wright re-emphasized that less than three percent of the annual budget is spent on debt. Ms. Wolff added that has been the stewardship of the Board requesting that kind of a conservative approach to taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Ferry held discussion regarding the possible future debt-related projects that may or could occur over the next ten years.

Mr. Wright next reviewed from the proposed budget some of the capital projects for 2022. He spoke about two stabilization projects that will be worked on next year. He clarified that 79% of the cost of Redbird and Sugar Camp repair projects will be paid from a grant. The 21% of the local match would be paid from two TIF funds in those vicinities.

Mr. Wright stated that because the Board has supported the theme of pedestrian connectivity, new sidewalk projects proposed for next year would be (1) on the south side of Business 28 from Cook Road going east to the current Milford Preschool site, and (2) the west side of Cook Road from Woodspoint going south to Business 28.

Next, Mr. Wright reviewed the TIF/RID portion of the proposed 2022 budget as to capital project proposed.

Mr. Wright concluded the narrative section of the budget review and moved into the operations portion. Departmental budgets were presented by each of the department heads.

Mr. Wright reviewed the administration budget. He stated the only reason the administrative staff budget increases besides inflation is that he will be working with the Board on replacing Ms. Henslee who is an HR administrative assistant retiring after 32 years and with the discussion about the Township's growth the position will be right-sized, remaining as one person, and having it as a director, a member of the leadership team and more input to the Board.

Mr. Wright reiterated that health insurance costs are flat in 2022. The new member of the Board of Trustees is reflected. He noted an increase in the section related to office costs related to replacement of HR office furniture, supplies and equipment within that office. He next reviewed the technology table where he highlighted a decrease of about one percent.

Mr. Tracy discussed funding technology security needs and Mr. Wright reviewed aspects of how the Township assesses cybersecurity threats and maintains an appropriate protection plan with a collaboration between the Township's IT and insurance companies.

Mr. Wright reviewed the public communication and outreach portion of the administration budget. It was noted the newsletter line item increased as additional addresses were identified and this was the reason for the volume increase. Mr. Wright stated a vehicle replacement is planned with anticipation of a vehicle rotation from the Police Department fleet and a graphic expense is the requested modification to the vehicle.

Mr. Wright next commented that there would be a 2% increase from the Clermont County Health District which he feels is reasonable. He stated that he would like to publicly compliment the Clermont County Health Department as they have done a wonderful task during the past 18 months with COVID.

Ms. Wolff held discussion on increasing the budget line item for making repairs to or replacing older digital signs as it relates to keeping the signs working. She added that it may be

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considered to reconfigure the strategy for maintaining the ongoing function of the signs. It was noted the Branch Hill sign was out for two months which was related to a part held up by supply chain issues.

Mr. Wright amplified the debt service for the Civic Center is budgeted to come out of the General Fund.

Mr. Wright highlighted General Fund capital improvements included a proposal for Phase II of the window seal repairs at the Civic Center. He commented on the difficulty in finding a contractor to bid the work and was happy with the performance of the first phase work. He advised it is being requested to bid another \$50,000 of window repair. He stated the reason for the Miami Township Civic Center roof repairs is related to the variety of roof materials involved with the unique roof system on the building.

Mr. Wright reviewed the proposed replacement of a smart board for the Recreation side of the Civic Center for meeting room utilization. He shared that Ms. Thibodeau has quotes for flooring replacement in the Trustee meeting room and the stair treads going down to the senior center. He noted overall the General Fund capital improvements are half of what was requested last year.

Next, Township Planning & Zoning Administrator Brian Elliff reviewed the zoning portion of the 2022 proposed budget. He discussed a proposed co-op position through one of the local universities, which he would present in detail at an upcoming work session. He summarized that otherwise there are the usual and customary costs embedded in salary and intended expenses. He noted an increase to the training line item as there has been a 66% staff turnover this year and it is anticipated training needs will increase.

Mr. Wright concluded the General Fund expenses review and commented that this total is the same as two years prior. He stated this was good considering the 5-5.5% inflation rate.

Next, Service Director John Musselman reviewed the various funds that make up operations and capital for the Service Department. He noted a significant change under purchases and supplies related to the need to replace the current 12-year-old software package utilized for sign management (no longer compatible) represented by a total budgeted cost of \$14,000 including data migration.

Mr. Musselman stated Redbird Road and Sugar Camp projects have been discussed. He highlighted the need to replace one salt truck. He stated the Vactor truck has been discussed with the Board with the plan to budget \$80,000 towards the truck for purchase in 2022. He stated there was a carryover for the retaining wall project of \$100,000. He advised of the need to replace a one-half ton pick-up truck for the mechanics. He reviewed the addition of a Vermeer skid-steer for \$27,500 to be split with the Parks budget. He discussed a double-wall calcium tank replacement for the existing single-wall tank to reduce liability related to the corrosive material.

Mr. Musselman next reviewed the \$1.9 million road improvement budget and the funds that make up this total. He discussed the carryover related to the columbarium project in the cemetery funds and in 2022 a plan will be presented to the Board for placement.

Mr. Musselman reviewed the Park Levy Fund and noted a proposed replacement for a compact excavator. Ms. Wolff held a brief discussion to utilize General Funds for the operating expenses related to the digital signs.

Mr. Musselman discussed utilizing TIF funds to begin resurfacing deteriorated portions of the parking lot at Miami Meadows. Mr. Schultz discussed cost projections related to blacktop.

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Recreation Director Krystin Thibodeau reviewed the Parks & Recreation budget proposed for 2022. She stated the recreation budget was severely impacted by the pandemic over the past 18 months. She noted the same budget was maintained for non-personnel items. She stated the year would end much lower in the way of summer concerts, special events and classes. She highlighted an increase in facility bookings over the past four months.

Ms. Thibodeau reviewed the changes related to personnel. A permanent part-time position was abolished, and the remaining part-time Reception/Reservationist position was transitioned to full-time. She noted changes reflected in the minimum wage as it relates to the part-time recreation staff. Next, she stated that the summer concert series was scaled back this year in response to gathering orders from the Governor. The other events came in under budget. She requested that in 2022 she would like to increase the quality of the bands for the concerts. She next commented on the transition to the upgraded version of the RecTrac software in 2021 which has improved the ability to process credit card payments.

Ms. Thibodeau continued with a review of changes related to class instructors and vendors for 2022. She reviewed facility costs and noted the continued increase of bookings. She stated the total budget in this area was \$28,000 and have spent \$9,000. Ms. Thibodeau noted that she is confident rental rates will return in 2022 to pre-pandemic levels.

Ms. Wolff took a moment to emphasize the cost of the ongoing extensive maintenance of the park system and the use of levy funds for this maintenance.

Next, Police Chief Mills reviewed the operating and capital improvements for the Police Department. He stated the proposed 2022 budget is very conservative. He reviewed cost changes to the uniforms and ammunition. A budget of \$7,500 has been proposed for the new school resource officer's educational supplies.

Mr. Tracy discussed the funds for the DARE/Junior Police Academy to ensure ample funding was set aside for educating children.

Chief Mills reviewed a lower cost in the facilities maintenance related to re-negotiating legacy contracts. He next reviewed technology and contracts reflecting an increase of \$2,500 due to IT costs and records management price increases. He noted an increase of \$5,000 in contracts related to an increase in lab fees and volume of drug arrests.

Chief Mills reported the training budget increased by \$10,000, however, the Department is expecting a \$22,000 grant reimbursement. He advised the state has mandated 24 hours of training. He noted utilities have gone down \$5,000. He highlighted a rebate of \$24,000 for communications services from the County.

Ms. Wolff and Mr. Tracy discussed the total costs of auditor related fees and noticeable increases of such in the proposed budget. Ms. Flanigan reviewed that the auditor fees are based on Ohio Revised Code which averages out to approximately 1.2% of the net revenue.

Chief Mills concluded the operating budget for the Police Department and reviewed the capital projects for 2022. He discussed three patrol vehicles for replacement. He stated when vehicles are taken out of service they do repurpose the vehicles for low-usage and gave the example of the school resource officer position. There are currently five school resource officers. He stated as mentioned earlier one vehicle will be re-positioned for the Multi-Media Manager. He summarized there are 32 vehicles that operate for the Police Department on a daily basis.

Chief Mills reported the Department is on its fifth year of having body cameras, reflected as \$23,000 in the budget. It is the fourth year of fleet cameras. He noted he would have to renegotiate pricing towards the end of the year to get costs for the next five years. He next reviewed wall guards as a project for 2022. He stated the costs for ballistic vests are down this

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year tremendously which relates to an off year when only a few officers need replacements. He next stated that being proposed is air duct cleaning in the station which has not been completed before. Ms. Wolff discussed reviewing the duct cleaning for all buildings as a potential eligible cost under ARPA funding as it is health related.

Chief Mills reviewed the Carr building renovations proposed to include removal of walls and the drop ceiling to improve the functional layout of the building at a cost of \$5,000. A brief discussion was held regarding usage of the building and fitness reimbursements.

Chief Mills concluded his budget with review of \$13,850 for less than lethal shotguns. He stated that the industry standard is going toward more long distance, less lethal force. He stated there are several tools to de-escalate and this will be another way that will save somebody the one time it is used.

Fire Chief Kelly began his budget report by echoing the effort to remain fiscally conservative when compiling the budget. He stated that knowing the industry is changing and there has been discussion on positions, the Fire Department has tried for 2022 to incorporate changing some of the part-time positions to full-time positions. He shared this was due to lack of a part-time pool. He stated they are trying to recruit part-time employees, but the liquidity of full-time jobs is placing people right out of the academy into full-time positions. He stated four new positions were placed for 2022 at the Firefighter/EMT level.

Chief Kelly stated the budget still has planned nine part-time employees working roughly 1,000 each. He referenced state law requires them to work no more than 1,500 hours as opposed to a full-time employee who can work almost 2,500 hours.

Chief Kelly reported the overall costs for personnel salaries is up 4.37% and up to about \$9.3 million.

Chief Kelly stated the operating costs and uniform costs were driven down this year which was helped by negotiations. He noted that in Fire Equipment Maintenance and Supplies was reduced by \$10,000. He highlighted that we are at a point where much of the equipment is so new that the department is at a maintaining level. He next shared the EMS equipment maintenance and supplies that have increased due to demand in medical supplies and supply chain issues.

Chief Kelly reviewed that the facility costs were also driven down. He stated the facility study was conducted and can be taken off the books for next year. He stated office costs went up by \$10,000 as they look into following suit with the other Township departments and implement document scanning.

Chief Kelly reported fuel costs are up and noted diesel is almost \$4.00 per gallon. He stated they are trying to anticipate the everchanging fuel market. He next stated computer costs were driven down due to some of the projects completed this year. He noted vehicle repair and maintenance was up slightly related to the aging tower ladder. He shared that last week they were notified that the new aerial is on the assembly line and delivery would be 120 days out, dependent upon supply chain issues.

Chief Kelly shared that contracts have increased some and pointed to the Medicount fees. He stated that Ms. Flanigan does a great job of monitoring this for the Fire Department. He stated it is paid directly out the account for EMS billing services and the budgeted amount reflects the increase in call volume. He highlighted this year it is anticipated to be over \$1 million in EMS revenue funds.

Chief Kelly next reviewed the increase in training and travel costs. He stated paramedic school has been added into the line item at \$20,000. This is the equivalent of two students' tuition for an 18-month program. This would be for two of the four new hires to attend medic school.

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Next, Chief Kelly noted utilities were down. He stated communication expenses were relatively flat as were the auditor/treasurer fees. He noted at the bottom the capital reserves are designed to help put funding aside when we know we need to buy things like ambulances or new engines.

Chief Kelly moved into the capital portion of the Fire Department budget. He discussed the replacement ambulance that was intended to be started in 2021, however, there were supply chain issues with vehicle chassis. That is pushed into 2022 and it is being researched as to whether the chassis can be secured early. He explained the order has to be in to secure the chassis to get the ambulance built and right now ambulances are running anywhere from 14-18 months out for delivery time.

Chief Kelly reported they are looking at water rescue equipment and suit replacements at a cost of \$14,000 in 2022. He stated this was part of what goes into the water rescue program for the boat as well as the suits for the responders.

Chief Kelly stated there is a carryover for the Wolfpen-Pleasant Hill annex which is the building they still own that we are required to maintain as it is being leased by another company.

Chief Kelly reviewed \$12,000 is budgeted for the respiratory fit-test machine. He stated this would be beneficial in-house rather than the cost-share model that has been used.

Next, Chief Kelly reviewed annual cycle replacement items. He stated that although turn-out gear went up ten percent in cost he was able to limit the number of sets needed for next year because of the aggressive replacement cycle for the past ten years to have a cycle reflective of the NFPA recommendations.

Chief Kelly explained a \$50,000 microgrant from FEMA was secured to assist in the cost of the exhaust system at Station 29. He stated when we built the facility it was thought that the entire bay exhaust capture system was going to be adequate, however, it is not. With the applicable grant and cost share this project has come down a lot in cost from the original \$350,000.

Chief Kelly reviewed that the boiler at Station 26 is month-to-month at this point and it is being budgeted for 2022 at a cost of \$30,000. He referenced two projects for Station 28 which hasn't had some of the upgrades since those are typically phased in each year. He noted window replacement and remodel of the deteriorated kitchen at a cost of \$8,000.

Chief Kelly reported that they are looking at installing security cameras at all four of the fire stations to provide security for critical infrastructure facilities. The rough estimate is \$26,000. He itemized thermal imaging cameras for their vehicles at \$12,000. Next, he discussed Station 27 projects, (1) sanitary sewer extension, and (2) Station 27 Rehab and Design. He stated they are looking at expanding the footprint of the 30-year-old building. He shared it is the second busiest district in the Township with a lot of new housing developments and continues to grow; he noted the three-story senior living facility that will go in off Todd Farm Lane, all of which contributes to the station getting busier by the month. He explained they are not proposing it be completely torn down but adding on work and living space to make it more functional for a true 24/7 career operation. He stated the budget included \$60,000 to hire an architect to perform engineering work on the project.

Chief Kelly informed the Board they are also looking at seeking a federal grant for remodeling design of Station 27 and if the grant is funded, it can be applied for which would place timing in 2023.

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Finance Director Kelly Flanigan concluded the operating budget review. She reviewed the breakout of the bond principal and interest for Township debt. She noted payments of \$723,000 in principal in 2022 and almost \$213,000 in interest. She next reviewed the lighting district fund, stating there are over 100 lighting districts throughout the township. She explained those are set up to receive bills from Duke, that staff audits them on a continual basis to constantly making improvements to ensure accuracy. The Township serves as the pass-through for the bill payment process and does not benefit from providing this service.

Mr. Wright acknowledged the directives from the Board for revisions to the budget and that he will bring it back to the December business meeting.

Ms. Wolff asked for public comment related to the budget hearing. There were none and the budget hearing was closed.

Public Comment: Larry Sherman, 353 Mill Street, shared his concerns for the deteriorating condition and width of Mill Street. He also expressed frustration with the traffic from AIM MRO by way of commercial delivery trucks. He shared instances of water main breaks on their street and the need for improved infrastructure. He also spoke in opposition to the public parking lot being considered in their area.

Executive Session: None.

Mr. Tracy took a moment to recognize outgoing Trustee Karl Schultz and thanked him for his service to the community. Incoming Trustee Mark Schulte was also acknowledged.

With no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Eric C. Ferry

Eric C. Ferry, Fiscal Officer

Mary Makley Wolff

Mary Makley Wolff, Chairperson