

Hamilton Township Trustee Meeting November 6, 2024

Trustee Board Chairman, Darryl Cordrey, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Mr. Cordrey, Mr. Rozzi and Mr. Sousa were present.

Roll call as follows:	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Mark Sousa	Yes

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

A motion was made by Mr. Cordrey, with a second by Mr. Rozzi, to approve the clerk's journal as the Official Meeting Minutes of October 16, 2024, Trustee Meeting.

Roll call as follows:	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Mark Sousa	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes

A motion was made by Mr. Cordrey, with a second by Mr. Rozzi, to approve the bills as presented before the Board.

Roll call as follows:	Mark Sousa	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes

Public Comments

Mr. Cordrey opened the floor to public comments at 6:01 PM.

Brad Turner addressed two concerns during the public comment portion of the meeting. First, he mentioned a pothole on the shoulder of the road near the post. Although the hole is not in the main roadway, it is located on the shoulder, and Mr. Turner suggested that it may require attention. He believed the issue might fall under state jurisdiction, given that it's on a state road. Mr. Turner inquired about the appropriate contact for this matter.

His second concern involved performance bonds for new development projects in the Providence subdivision, particularly regarding sidewalk, street, and curb deficiencies, such as cracks. He asked who at the county level he should contact regarding these issues.

Don Pelfrey offered to contact the state the next day and follow up with Mr. Turner on the pothole issue.

The Law Director, Ben Yoder, clarified that performance bonds are part of the county's subdivision regulation process and recommended Mr. Turner reach out to the Warren County Public Works Department, the County Administrator, or the County Prosecutor's representative for assistance.

No further public comments were made, and the floor was closed to public comments at 6:03 PM.

New Business

Resolution No. 2024-1106A – Amending the Hamilton Pointe TIF Agreement

Mr. Wright explained that Hamilton Township adopted a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district a few years ago, but it has not yet become active. Initially, the plan involved issuing debt through Hamilton Township and the County Port Authority, repaid over 10 years through Payments in Lieu of Taxes. However, a revised funding model has been developed, eliminating the need for debt issuance. Under the new model, the developers will be reimbursed for public infrastructure improvements, with caps set at \$600,000 for Phase 1 (Chase Bank) and \$1.9 million for Phase 2 (Hills Communities' apartment project).

Phase 1, including Chase Bank and Take 5 Oil Change, is nearing completion, and Phase 2 will involve an apartment community with at least \$2.6 million in infrastructure improvements benefiting both the private development and the public. The TIF funds will be used in four stages: reimbursing Hamilton Township for legal and advisory costs, reimbursing the Phase 1 developer, reimbursing the Phase 2 developer, and retaining any surplus funds for future infrastructure and public services.

The revised model ensures no borrowing by the township, with private developers making substantial investments in public infrastructure. The TIF will last for 10 years, with 75% of new tax revenue generated by the developments going into the TIF fund and 25% going to local entities like schools and the county. The "spring" TIF structure resets the 10-year term with each new building completed. This approach is more fiscally responsible and ensures excess funds will be available for future needs.

Mr. Wright confirmed that surplus funds from the TIF could start appearing around years five or six, once both developers have been fully reimbursed for their public infrastructure costs. At that point, the Board would have the option to terminate the TIF early. If the TIF is terminated, any excess tax revenue would be distributed to the levying entities as usual, and Hamilton Township would no longer receive a portion of the taxes through the TIF.

Mr. Sousa is highlighting the importance of the construction timeline for the apartment project in relation to the financing structure of the TIF. The value generated by the improved property will

contribute to funding the bond issuance through the alliance's share. In the revised TIF model, the developers are directly responsible for payments, meaning there is no risk for Hamilton Township in terms of failing to generate enough revenue to cover the bond. The direct responsibility of the developers ensures that the necessary funding will be available to meet the obligations, offering a more secure and predictable financial outcome for the township.

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to approve Resolution 2024-1106A, a resolution amending Resolution 2023-0906D to remove the requirement that owners make any minimum service payments in connection with the authorized tax increment financing program therein; authorizing the execution and delivery of a tax increment financing reimbursement agreement between Hamilton Township, Hamilton Pointe Investment LLC., and Hamilton Township Apartments, LLC., dispensing with a second reading and declaring an emergency.

Roll call as follows:	Mark Sousa	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes

Resolution No. 2024-1106B – Appropriation Increase in the ARPA Fund for the 2024 Calander Year

Mr. Wright explained that the Assistant Fiscal Officer has reminded us that ARPA funds must be obligated by the end of 2024 for expenses related to the planning and design of the remediation project at Mounts Park. We currently have expenses with the consultant Goodhue Engineering and the environmental and engineering firm Stantec for the design work. The remaining funds will need to be allocated toward the construction phase of the project.

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to approve Resolution 24-1106B- a resolution approving an increase in appropriations in the American Rescue Plan Act Fund to reconcile budgets for the calendar year 2024.

Roll call as follows:	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Mark Sousa	Yes

Resolution No. 2024-1106C – Authorizing Private Sale of Unneeded and Unfit-For-Use Property

Mr. Rozzi pointed out that a vehicle was listed two times on the resolution, striking out the duplicate Buick Encore.

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to approve Resolution 2024-1106C, a resolution authorizing private sale of unneeded and unfit-for-use property in the Police Department with the correction of the duplicate vehicle.

Roll call as follows: Joe Rozzi Yes
 Mark Sousa Yes
 Darryl Cordrey Yes

Resolution No. 2024-1106D – Approving take 5 oil Site Plan with Conditions

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to approve Resolution 2024-0918C, a resolution approving a site plan with conditions for approximately .787 acres of real property located at 71 W. Towne Center Boulevard.

Roll call as follows: Darryl Cordrey Yes
 Mark Sousa Yes
 Joe Rozzi Yes

Motion to Approve McDonald’s Sidewalk Agreement with Ohio Department of Transportation

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to approve an agreement between the State of Ohio Department of Transportation and Hamilton Township to maintain the sidewalk section along State Route 48 located within Warren County.

Roll call as follows: Joe Rozzi Yes
 Mark Sousa Yes
 Darryl Cordrey Yes

Motion to Approve Purchase of Cemetery Deeds

A motion was made by Mr. Cordrey, with a second by Mr. Rozzi, to approve the purchase of cemetery deeds.

Roll call as follows: Darryl Cordrey Yes
 Mark Sousa Yes
 Joe Rozzi Yes

Motion to Approve Transfer of Cemetery Deeds

A motion was made by Mr. Cordrey, with a second by Mr. Rozzi, to approve the transfer of cemetery deeds.

Roll call as follows: Mark Sousa Yes
Darryl Cordrey Yes
Joe Rozzi Yes

Motion to Approve Hamilton Township Roster as presented

A motion was made by Mr. Cordrey, with a second by Mr. Rozzi, to approve the Hamilton Township Roster as presented before the Board.

Roll call as follows: Darryl Cordrey Yes
Joe Rozzi Yes
Mark Sousa Yes

Motion to Approve Rescheduling of the January 1, 2025 Trustee Meeting to January 2, 2025.

A motion was made by Mr. Cordrey, with a second by Mr. Rozzi, to reschedule the Board of Trustee Meeting originally planned for January 1, 2025, to January 2, 2025, at 6:00 p.m., in observance of New Year's Day.

Roll call as follows: Joe Rozzi Yes
Mark Sousa Yes
Darryl Cordrey Yes

Work Session- 2025 Budget

Mr. Wright presented the proposed 2025 Budget to the Board, highlighting the dedicated efforts of Assistant Fiscal Officer Ellen Horman, the leadership team, and staff members across departments. The budget process began in earnest with the preparation of the 2025 Tax Budget in July and continued with detailed analysis and planning.

The attached documents provide a detailed overview of the budget, including:

- **Fund Reserves:** This includes anticipated revenues, expenditures, capital expenses, unencumbered balances, and encumbrance details for each fund.
- **Debt Service Schedule:** A breakdown of principal and interest for the three outstanding debt projects, with payments remaining through 2027 for the Administration/Police building.
- **Capital Expenses:** A spreadsheet listing proposed capital expenditures by department, fund, and estimated costs.

The **Warren County Auditor's** recent property revaluation increased property values by 26%, but the Township expects a 13% increase in taxes due to the application of reduction factors.

While most of the Township's tax revenue comes from outside millage, which does not see an increase with revaluations, inside millage funds (General Fund and older Road and Bridge Fund) are projected to see a 32-33% revenue increase.

Key budget highlights include:

- **General Fund Spending:** Proposed reductions in spending due to fewer capital improvements in 2025 and efforts to manage costs.
- **EMS Billing Fund:** Revenues forecasted to increase from \$628,000 in 2024 to \$750,000 in 2025, helping to ease pressure on the Police District Fund.
- **Parks Funding:** The General Fund continues to fund the operation and maintenance of parks, as there is no dedicated parks levy.
- **Road Levy:** The 2018 Road Levy will allow continued progress on street repaving, with the goal of maintaining a 15-year repaving cycle.
- **Public Works Facility:** Preliminary funds were budgeted in 2024 for design work on the replacement facility. A presentation by architect Randy Merrill will be made at the November 20th meeting, detailing the project timeline and financing options.

There is no action requested at the November 6th meeting. Should the Board request any revisions or additional information, staff will make the necessary adjustments and present a resolution to adopt the budget at the November 20th meeting.

Mr. Cordrey thanked the staff for their work on the budget, noting the township's conservative budgeting approach and the projected reduction in expenditures for 2025.

Mr. Sousa raised several questions: He asked about the purchase of Lifepacks for the Fire Department, inquired if asphalt costs were responsible for the Public Works Department not completing the full 7 miles of paving, and whether additional paving could be done when prices decrease. He also questioned if the Police Department would continue to receive funding from the OneOhio fund and whether those funds are received regularly.

Fire Chief Jewett explained that the department's current Lifepacks are over 10 years old and need replacement. Mr. Pelfrey clarified that the increase in asphalt prices in 2024 was due to higher binder costs, and once prices stabilize, he will make up the unfinished paving. Police Chief Hughes confirmed that OneOhio funds are received sporadically and in varying amounts throughout the year.

Public Comments

Mr. Cordrey opened the floor to public comments at 6:41 pm.

Mr. Turner inquired about the steps the board has taken to reduce the debt associated with the administration building.

In response, Mr. Sousa proposed that the Board consider using unencumbered funds from the conservative budget to pay off the building, thereby reducing interest costs. Both Mr. Cordrey and Mr. Rozzi expressed their agreement with this suggestion.

Mr. Cordrey closed the floor to public comments at 6:43 pm.

Administrator's Report

- The Fire and Rescue Department recently hosted a Fire Officer One class for professional development, which was open to participants from outside agencies. This allowed our fire department members to attend for free.
- The Police Department had a significant success last week. During a night shift, officers arrested two individuals involved in multiple car break-ins in Hampton Township and other communities around Greater Cincinnati. They have been charged with several offenses thanks to the proactive efforts of the officers and a detective.
- Nicole Earley, Parks Director, shared that the bathrooms and concession stands in parks have been winterized and closed for the season. She attended an Eagle Scout ceremony honoring Liam English who completed a community garden project at a local park. They also honored Avery West, an Eagle Scout candidate that is working on a storybook trail and little library at Mounts Park. The book, written by a local author, tells the story of species found in the Little Miami River. Most of the funding comes from an aquatic education grant and the scout's fundraising efforts. The project is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Lastly, Ms. Earley will participate in a fundraiser at the Kroger on Saturday to raise money for Wreaths Across America, an event that will take place in December.
- The Township received an unexpected payment from insurance this week for the arson-destroyed home on Sunrise Ridge. This will fully reimburse the Township for the costs of removing the structure and restoring the site. The adjacent property owner, Mr. Osterbrock, was thanked for his patience during the process.
- Planning and Zoning held a pre-application meeting with an international retailer and their civil engineer for a proposed 21,000 sq. ft. store at the corner of State Route 48 and Grandin Rd. Plans are expected to be submitted next week for review and approval.
- Ribbon Cutting: Tomorrow at 11:00 AM, the Township will celebrate the opening of the new Township Center on State Route 48, next to Shooters. The 20,500 sq. ft., \$5 million building is complete, with tenants Currito, Cincinnati School of Music, Pet Supplies Plus, and Great Clips already signed. Three spaces remain available for lease.
- Take 5 Oil Change broke ground this week, and Chase Bank is expected to open this winter. The developer has also completed repaving of the new Town Center Blvd.

Trustee Comments

Mark Sousa expressed his appreciation to the Police Department for apprehending two individuals involved in vehicle break-ins and linked to stolen firearms in the township. He also extended his condolences to the family of Brandon Roark following his passing.

Joe Rozzi shared his relief that the election season has come to a close.

Darryl Cordrey reminded residents of the upcoming Christmas Tree Lighting event at Station 76 on December 7th from 4-6 pm. He also announced that Kroger will be opening on December 12th. Additionally, he praised the Police Department for their successful efforts in catching the suspects responsible for recent car thefts and break-ins throughout the township.

Executive Session-

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to adjourn the executive session at 6:52 p.m. in accordance with ORC 121.22(G)(1) to discuss economic development.

Roll call as follows:	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Mark Sousa	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to come out of Executive session at 8:36 p.m.

Roll call as follows:	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Mark Sousa	Yes

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Cordrey made a motion, with a second from Mr. Rozzi, to adjourn at 8:37 p.m.

Roll call as follows:	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Mark Sousa	Yes