

Hamilton Township Trustee's Meeting
Hamilton Township Police District Trustee Meeting

July 18, 2018

Trustee Board President Rozzi called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m. Mr. Rozzi, Mr. Cordrey, and Mr. Walker were present.

The *Pledge of Allegiance* was recited by all in attendance.

The Police District Meeting took place first.

Administrator, Brent Centers requested the Board make a motion regarding Resolution # 2018-02, setting meeting dates and times.

Trustee Joe Rozzi made a motion to approve resolution # 2018-02, and seconded by Trustee Joe Walker.

Roll call as follows:	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Joe Walker	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes

Administrator, Brent Centers gave a summary of options that would produce monies for the Police Fund. The options that were brainstormed were as follows: Getting money back from the Village of Maineville and the Village of South Lebanon; putting a renewal levy only on the ballot in November 2018 and a 1mil Police Levy on the ballot in November 2020; receive mutual aid from Village of Maineville who has one officer, Village of Morrow who has one officer, Loveland and Goshen who are not in Warren County and may not hear the call; and depend on the Sherriff's Office out of the Village of South Lebanon. Another option was to do a special election in the Spring of 2019 and another in the fall of 2019, however, it is not recommended to put two levies on in one year.

Police Chief Scott Hughes gave a presentation as to why the Police Department would need the extra monies. The department is asking to take the existing renewal levy that is currently out there and make that a permanent levy as well as an additional 1mil. This would add up to 5 additional officers to staffing. Currently there are a total of 17 officers/administration employees and the township is made up of 35 square miles and approximately 30,000 residents. The extra monies would allow the department to put 4 officers on the road per shift. In 2016, the average number of police officers per 1,000 residents across the United States was 1.7. In the Midwest region, it is 1.5. The minimum staffing requirements are 2 road officers per shift. The Police Department operated at minimum staffing for 66% of 2017, which can not handle 2 calls at 1 time. Police Chief Scott Hughes compared the staffing to other departments in the area. He also presented the time that it takes to respond to a call. In 2017, the department had "stacked calls", meaning calls pending, 19.2% of the time. This number excluded any call that came directly to the office that needed to speak to an officer. These monies can only be used for law enforcement. Police Chief Scott Hughes stated he believes that the department has done everything they can thus far. The municipal fleet program reduced the cost of the fleet; the department created the Administrative Police Officer position which in turn, keeps more officers on the road; the department has saved approximately \$7,000.00 since 2016 by hosting training events at our facilities.

Trustee Cordrey asked if that factored in vacation, sick time, and training?

Chief Hughes stated yes it does.

Trustee Cordrey asked what percentage of the time are we going above and beyond to pull officers off the road for training?

Chief Hughes explained that we are obligated under state law to perform a certain amount of training. With any industry it is important that their skills are the best they can be. Are we going

to start doing more training if we pass a levy for more millage? The answer is no. Chief Hughes feels like we are doing a lot of training now.

Trustee Cordrey asked are we sacrificing doing too much training and sacrificing the number of officers we have on the street? Can we do less training and put more time on the streets?

Chief Hughes stated that is a perception issue. We are not the only ones using the shooting range when the range is closed. The other component is that a well trained police force equates a lower liability. Chief Hughes does not feel like the training is over the top, nor can you put a price tag on ensuring the officers safety.

Trustee Walker asked if officers would be dedicated to different areas of the township so that the response time would come down?

Chief Hughes stated that when we are at minimum staffing, the officers are more dedicated to the more populated areas of the township currently. The township is broken up into 4 areas and if we have 4 officers on each shift, then one officer could cover each area.

Matt Nolan, Warren County Auditor, stated it is not his job to tell a municipality to put a levy on or not. It is his job to tell them how to put a levy on. Mr. Nolan stated that it cost approximately \$26,000.00 for a special election.

Trustee Walker asked if we will lose the rollback if we make the renewal levy a permanent levy?

Mr. Nolan stated that if you change the amount of money that is being collected on a levy then you lose the rollbacks. If you keep the amount of money the same, you can change the time frame and keep the rollbacks. The new 1 mil levy, there will be no rollbacks. Mr. Nolan answered some questions from the audience.

Trustee Rozzi asked if road levies are going to start becoming common?

Mr. Nolan stated there is becoming a need for road levies.

Trustee Rozzi opened the floor to public comments.

Kenny Hickey, Public Works Director and resident, stated yes we are in need of a road levy. However, we do not have the time to get the knowledge out to the residents in time to put a levy on in November 2018. He would like to get a levy on in November 2019. Mr. Hickey stated he is in support of the Police Department and the extra millage. He stated as a resident, if he can't be there to help his wife and kids, he wants somebody there as quickly as possible.

John Daunt, employee and resident, stated he is here to show support to our Police Officers on behalf of the maintenance and the teamsters local 100. He stated our officers are second to nobody. Mr. Daunt stated he believes the way the levies are lined up is a positive step for the township.

Brian Reese, Fire Chief, stated he would just like to mirror a little bit of what Kenny said. Mr. Reese stated as a fire chief he is a jealous department head. Mr. Reese met with Mr. Nolan to educate himself on fire levies. Mr. Reese stated, as a department head, he supports moving forward with the Police levies at this time.

Tyson Farlino, Firefighter, stated he is here as the union member of the fire department. Mr. Farlino stated they holy support the police levy and the increase. The team work has made leaps and bounds over the past few years. Mr. Farlino stated the union would love to help educate the public on the road levy. Mr. Farlino stated the township is one big family and we need to come together to help the community as a whole.

Lynn Ratliff, Valley View Drive, stated to go for the training. She noticed the township has been posting more pictures showing community relations on social media. The community loves it, however, the flip side is that we have officers riding around on bikes and handing out candy. We need to make sure we balance that on social media. Ms. Ratliff stated we need to make the renewal a permanent levy. The school levy will hit the tax bills in 2019 and it will be harder to

get a road levy to pass. Ms. Ratliff said she would like to see both levies be put on this November. Ms. Ratliff stated it is easier to explain why we need Fire and Police protection versus roads. She would like to see either another full time or even part time School Resource Officer.

John Roesch, 5406 Grand Legacy Drive, thanked Chief Hughes for his presentation and would like to echo Ms. Ratliff. Two problems that residents complain about are the roads and that property taxes are too high. Mr. Roesch stated he more of a want and not a need. He supports the 1 mil permanent levy. Mr. Roesch stated he feels strongly that we need to do something with our roads. Mr. Roesch stated that roads are a need and what we are asking for the additional money for the police department is a want.

Bill Dowden, 1341 Meadow Vista Drive, stated the Trustees have to prioritize what is needed for the Fire department and police department as well as the roads. Mr. Dowden is glad that we are making an effort to make the 1 mil a permanent levy.

Greg Power, Little Miami Superintendent, stated the schools are very appreciative of the first responders. He is here to talk about the safety concern of the students in the building. About 80% of the students live in Hamilton Township. The concern of the school is the length of the response time. Mr. Power is here to encourage the Trustees to make the right decision to focus on safety and let the citizens vote.

Tina Thompson, said ditto on John Roesch's comments.

Rusty Holman, Whalen Lane, asked the Trustees to consider long range planning. Mr. Holman completely supports the Police levy, making the 1 mil permanent. Mr. Holman stated he has reservations about the second mil only because he doesn't see where it fits in the overall long range strategic plan for the township. Mr. Holman suggested slowing down and get full information from the stake holders involved. Mr. Holman stated that everybody has the needs and the Trustees have a tough job to determine what's right and what's fair and what the township can afford.

Administrator, Brent Centers stated that we have been slowing down since about 2000 and he would disagree with slowing down.

Bob Winters, Village on the Green, stated he has learned a lot tonight. Mr. Winters stated coming in, he was for making the 1Mil a permanent levy and somewhat skeptical of the need for additional funding. He stated he is slightly skeptical of a 30% increase of people on the street. What does the citizen really expect? After talking with some of his neighbors, they believe the Police department is doing a great job and the residents were not aware that there was a need to ask for more money. Mr. Winters stated he would be hesitant about reducing the amount of training. Mr. Winters stated that the roads are the biggest problem.

Lisa Wilson, 22/3, stated she would like to see 2 officers in each car. Ms. Wilson stated she wants every bit of training and every bit of back and every bit of equipment we can have. Her concern about adding the extra mil is that we will lose everything. Ms. Wilson is 100% for making the 1 mil a permanent levy and maybe going back for more if we have to. She is also concerned about voter fatigue, it could mean a cost of a prescription for somebody that is on a fixed income. We need to educate the public.

Mark Sousa, thanked the Board for the form and the amount of public comments. Mr. Sousa stated the Board is sitting in a bad spot possibly due to the previous boards. Mr. Sousa stated that he sees the need for more officers. Mr. Sousa stated that with a community our size, we should be able to take care of ourselves. Mr. Sousa stated he had somebody at the end of his driveway late one night/early morning and he called the non emergency Warren County dispatch. There was no officer that showed up for atleast 30 minutes. He supports the renewal becoming a permanent levy. Mr. Sousa stated that property taxes being too high is relative. Mr. Sousa stated that maybe being too conservative for too long has us in a rushed situation.

Neil Hutchinson, 9691 Swigert Road, asked for the speed limit on Swigert Road to be lowered from 45 MPH to 35 MPH.

Mr. Centers that we are going to put the speed sensor out to gather data. Officer Rigby pulled any traffic accidents and there has been 2 accidents in the last 2 years

Ed Smith, 756 Winding River Blvd, stated the presentation was well done but it didn't say to him here's the driving reason why we have to increase the Police force by 30%. He would like to see this levy made permanent in November and work on the extra mil in 2019.

Richard Smith, Hamilton Township Police Officer, stated he has been with Hamilton Township for 15 years. The Police department has been operating on a 1 mil levy for over a decade. Officer Smith gave an example of a time that he had to go to an active shooting by himself and back up didn't arrive for atleast 10 minutes. That is what it is like to have 2 officers, 35 square miles, and almost 30,000 residents.

James Schelldorf, Hamilton Township Police officer and resident, gave another example of a time that he also had to go to an active shooting by himself on September 11, 2016. The call came in at 2:19 pm and Officer Schelldorf arrived at 2:21pm. As he turned his siren off, he could hear the gun fire quit and he is not sure where the gunfire is coming from. As he got down the driveway, a man emerged from the woods with an AR15. Officer Schelldorf was engaged in a verbal challenge for approximately 5 minutes, no other officer had shown up yet. Officer Schelldorf stated if you ask him if there is a need for this levy or his wife, you bet!

Administrator, Brent Centers, stated he has a personal opinion even though it is not his job to give it. Mr. Centers asked the Board for permission to speak and it was approved by Trustee Joe Rozzi to allow him to give his opinion. Mr. Centers stated that Chief Hughes eats, sleeps, and breathes being a cop and if he recommends that his officers need more people, he thinks we should support that. We owe it to the citizens to have a voice.

Trustee Rozzi asked if this fails, does it have to come back on again next year?

Doug Miller, stated the current 1 mil would stay and need to be renewed in 2019.

Trustee Walker stated he has struggled with this for a couple of weeks. Mr. Walker stated he is not a Police officer or a firefighter so he relies on the chiefs to tell him what they need and he needs to be backing them up, and he feels as a Board, they need to back the chiefs also. Mr. Walker stated its not the Board that is going to raise the taxes, it going to be put out to the public to vote on it. Mr. Walker stated we have a good team and we have good people here and we need to let them do their job.

Trustee Cordrey stated he has the upmost respect for the officers and Chief Hughes. Mr. Cordrey stated that he has talked about the roads since he started running for trustee. Mr. Cordrey believes there is a need for the Police Department. If he was only focusing on Police, it would be a no brainer. Mr. Cordrey stated we have one department has bumps, bruises and scrapes and another department that is bleeding out. He will 1000% support a renewal and making it permanent. He feels that he needs to build and earn the trust of the residents and the greatest need is the roads.

Trustee Rozzi stated this has been a tough decision. Mr. Rozzi is 100% behind the renewal, however the number one priority is roads. Mr. Rozzi told Chief Hughes that he made a compelling case of how well the department runs. Mr. Rozzi stated he is not opposed to an extra mil in the future. We have to think of the big picture.

Administrator, Brent Centers stated that staff recommends approval of this legislation.

Trustee Joe Walker made a motion to approve Resolution # 2018-3, providing for the submission to the Electorate of the 2.0 mil renewal and increase property tax levy for the support and maintenance of Police Services in the Hamilton Township Police District, dispensing with the second reading and declaring an emergency, and seconded by Trustee Darryl Cordrey.

Roll call as follows:	Joe Walker	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	No
	Joe Rozzi	No

Trustee Darryl Cordrey made a motion to have a special police district meeting on July 25, 2018 at 6:30pm, and seconded by Trustee Joe Rozzi.

Roll call as follows:	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Joe Walker	Yes

With no other business at hand, Trustee Joe Rozzi made a motion and seconded by Trustee Joe Walker to adjourn at 9:28 pm.

There was a 5 minute recess.