

Hamilton Township Trustee Meeting November 20, 2024

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

Roll call as follows: Darryl Cordrey
Joe Rozzi
Mark Sousa

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 November 6, 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

Swearing-In Ceremony

Full-time Police Officer Chase Hounshell

Chief Hughes introduced Chase Hounshell, a 2017 graduate of Little Miami High School, began his career as a Corrections Officer for the Clermont County Sheriff's Office before transitioning to UC Health as a Police Officer in 2019, where he completed the UC Health Police Academy in 2021. He then worked for the Village of Morrow, where he successfully organized their National Night Out event in 2021. In 2022, Chase continued his career with the City of Lebanon, making a positive impact in the community. Known for his dedication and loyalty, he resides in Lebanon with his wife Jordan and their two children, Parker and Everly. He was pinned by his father, Hamilton Township Police Officer Brian Hounshell.

Presentation- Randy Merrill, McGill Smith Punshon- New Public Works Facility

Mr. Randy Merrill, Vice President of McGill Smith Punshon, presented the concept for the new Hamilton Township Public Works Facility. In his presentation, he highlighted that the design incorporates additional parking for the Administration/Police Department, with the facility located between the existing buildings. Notably, the design avoids the need for a new curb cut. The aesthetic of the new facility will be in harmony with the current designs of Fire Station 76 and the Administration/Police Building.

The new design will feature a 19-vehicle bay, a mechanic bay, as well as office and breakroom spaces to support both personnel and fleet vehicles. The mezzanine will have high ceilings, allowing for the maintenance and storage of larger vehicles. Additional equipment and salt dome will continue to be housed at the current public works facility at Testerman Park.

Mr. Merrill explained choosing a Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) method offers key benefits for all parties involved. For owners, it ensures working with qualified firms, promotes early planning for cost control, and reduces risks like redesigns and delays. For construction managers, early involvement leads to better collaboration, smoother coordination, and more accurate bids, minimizing surprises and change orders. For architects, CMR fosters a true partnership, improves cost control, and reduces inefficiencies, while also ensuring better coordinated bids and fewer change orders during construction. He outlined the five phases of the construction process:

Step 1: CMR Selection

Develop and advertise the CMR solicitation package (RFQ/RFP). Review submissions, shortlist at least three candidates, interview them, and select the preferred CMR. Negotiate the contract with the chosen firm.

Step 2: Preconstruction Services

Review the project, establish a control estimate based on concept designs, and conduct value management to align the design with the budget.

Step 3: Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP)

Prepare and review the GMP agreement for owner approval. Finalize contracts with subcontractors, suppliers, and vendors. Develop the project schedule and hold a kickoff meeting with the owner, design team, and key subcontractors.

Step 4: Construction Phase

The CMR manages all contracts, coordinates construction activities, oversees subcontractors, and ensures compliance with project plans, schedule, and GMP. This includes constructability reviews, updating estimates at design milestones, managing bids, and ensuring timely procurement of long-lead items. Final bids are reviewed with the owner and design team.

Step 5: Project Completion & Close-Out

Upon completion, the CMR provides a punch list, coordinates with the owner and design team to address corrective measures, and ensures all contractual obligations are met. They finalize

payments, resolve outstanding issues, and provide the owner with project documents, warranties, manuals, and necessary operational training.

Mr. Cordrey shared his previous experiences with projects where he felt he lost control and emphasized the importance of having flexibility in both the building design and process while still maintaining control over the project.

Mr. Sousa highlighted his familiarity with using the Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) process, citing its successful application during the construction of the school amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite material price increases, the project remained within budget and adhered to the original timeline. He expressed satisfaction with the decision to use a CMR.

Mr. Rozzi, who is unfamiliar with the CMR process, noted that he would be relying on the advice of the other trustees for guidance.

Public Comments

Mr. Cordrey opened the floor to public comments at 6:44 PM, with nobody approaching he closed the floor to comments at 6:44 PM.

New Business

Motion to authorize an agreement with MSP for the design, assistance with the selection of a construction manager and professional services for the Public Works Facility

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to authorize the Township Administrator to enter into an agreement with McGill Smith Punshon, Inc. for the design, assistance with the selection of a construction manager and professional services for the Public Works Facility.

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

Motion to authorize the Township Administrator to accept the proposal from Gamechanger Athletics for the athletic court project at Testerman Park for an amount not to exceed \$116,160.60.

Presentation- Nicole Earley- Athletic Courts at Testerman Park

The athletic courts at Testerman Park are in need of maintenance, and funding has been secured for the project. The board allocated \$50,000 in 2023, with a split of \$31,253 from NatureWorks

funding and \$18,747 from the Township contribution. A grant was awarded, and two project options have been evaluated. However, both options exceed the original budget estimate.

Project Options:

1. Option 1: Color Coating
 - Initial Cost: \$75,000
 - Maintenance Cost every 6 years: Estimated \$20,000+ (for crack repairs and color coating)
2. Option 2: Sport Court Tile Installation
 - Initial Cost: \$103,320.60
 - Maintenance Cost every 6 years: Estimated \$5,000 (for minor repairs, if needed)

Staff recommends proceeding with Option 2 (Sport Court Tile Installation). This option involves minor repairs to cracks and low spots before installing durable Sport Court tiles. This system offers long-term durability, requires minimal maintenance, and reduces court closures. It also provides superior protection against abrasions, head injuries, and muscle and joint injuries.

Additional Necessary Upgrades:

- Tennis Net System, Portable Pickleball Nets, Basketball Hoops
 - Cost: \$12,840

Funding Breakdown:

- ODNR NatureWorks Funding: \$50,000 (split into \$31,253 reimbursement and \$18,747 Township contribution)
- Encumbered Funds (Unused Capital Grant): \$53,320.60 (from Marr Park project)
- Encumbered Funds (Contracted Services): \$12,840 (for equipment)

Total Project Cost: \$116,160.60

Mr. Cordrey inquired about the durability and replacement of the Sport Court tiles. Ms. Earley clarified that the 12”x12” tiles easily connect, and replacements can be done by the Township as needed. The courts come with a 15-year warranty, and feedback from companies and private owners indicates that replacements are rarely necessary within that period, typically only occurring if the court's usage or design is being changed.

The Trustees requested images featuring courts in different colors, along with the possibility of incorporating the Hamilton Township logo onto the courts. Ms. Earley recommended revising the motion to account for the additional cost of adding the logo. Mr. Wright suggested adjusting the requested amount to \$117,500.00.

A motion was made by Mr. Cordrey, with a second by Mr. Rozzi, to accept the proposal from Gamechanger Athletics for the athletic court project at Testerman Park for an amount not to exceed \$117,500.00.

Roll call as follows: Darryl Cordrey Yes
Mark Sousa 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 the revision of the Township Personnel Policy Manual, Section 6.02 Vacation Leave as presented, effective 11/20/2024.

Mr. Wright explains that the policy revision is cost neutral and consistent with surrounding jurisdictions. The change focuses on improving employee well-being and simplifying administrative processes. The first revision allows partial vacation accrual after completing probation, supporting mental health and aiding recruitment, especially for mid-career employees. It also provides flexibility for extending probation without accrual. The second revision standardizes vacation accruals to occur at the end of the probationary period, on the anniversary date, and annually on January 1st, making management easier. The third revision grants full vacation credit for prior service with a State of Ohio public employer, helping recruit experienced employees by recognizing their past service.

A motion was made by Mr. Cordrey, with a second by Mr. Rozzi, to approve the revision of the Township Personnel Policy Manual, Section 6.02 Vacation Leave as presented, effective 11/20/2024.

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

Resolution 24-1120A, a resolution adopting procedures regulating the payment by an insurance company for fire damage to structures located within Hamilton Township.

Mr. Wright highlighted that, several years ago, the State of Ohio passed legislation allowing municipalities and townships to adopt resolutions to streamline the reimbursement process in cases like this. He recommended that the Township adopt a similar resolution. If adopted, the Township would file the resolution with the Warren County Treasurer's Office and the State Highway Insurance Department. This would ensure that, in the event of another major incident, insurance companies would be required to check for such resolutions before distributing insurance proceeds to the property owner.

By having this resolution in place, the Township would be prioritized for compensation related to expensive property abatement and cleanup. This would prevent long delays in receiving compensation and allow the Township to recover these costs more promptly by attaching the expenses as a lien to the property.

Mr. Wright emphasized that such resolutions have become more common in Ohio and adopting this resolution would provide the Township with better protection and a more efficient process should a similar situation arise in the future.

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to approve Resolution 24-1120A, a resolution adopting procedures regulating the payment by an insurance company for fire damage to structures located within Hamilton Township.

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

Resolution 24-1120B, a resolution approving Hamilton Township’s entry into a consent decree resolving Warren County Common Pleas Court Case No. 22CV095455, and authorizing submittal of the consent decree for the Common Pleas Court’s review and approval in such case, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code 505.07

In 2005 there was a request for access to the Warren County sanitary sewer system for the development of a single-family subdivision on Mounts Road. In 2022, Warren County had denied access to the property, and since then, all parties have been negotiating to reach a fair resolution. The goal is to avoid additional expenses that would arise from continuing litigation.

The development had previously been reviewed and approved by Hamilton Township as a cluster development, complying with zoning requirements related to density and frontage. One of the key discussions during negotiations was adding additional buffering to address concerns from residents along Mounts Road. The developers have agreed to work with the Township to add this buffering to minimize any potential impact on the neighboring properties.

The Township clarified that they were not financially contributing to the settlement of this development, aside from legal expenses incurred during the process. The Township had previously moved to intervene in the case because it was not originally a party to the proceedings. It was later confirmed that the development had prior approval, dating back nearly 20 years, which helped resolve some of the issues.

The project plans are still under review, and the Township is working with the developers on potential improvements to Mounts Road. There may be changes to the neighborhood entrance and possible road modifications, but the final details are still being worked out. The Township

will share updates with interested parties once they have more information from the engineer's office.

The Trustees thanked residents for their patience and involvement in the process.

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to approve Resolution 24-1120B, a resolution approving Hamilton Township's entry into a consent decree resolving Warren County Common Pleas Court Case No. 22CV095455, and authorizing submittal of the consent decree for the Common Pleas Court's review and approval in such case, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code 505.07

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 in the Police and Fire Department

Chief Jewett stated that any equipment that is suitable for training purposes will be donated to the Great Oaks Academy.

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to approve Resolution 2024-1120C, a resolution authorizing private sale of unneeded and unfit-for-use property in the Police Department and Fire/EMS Department.

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

Resolution 24-1120D, a resolution adopting the 2025 Annual Budget.

Mr. Wright reviewed the 2025 budget, noting a decrease in capital expenses and general fund spending, as well as the need to replace the public works facility. He highlighted the benefit of paying off the administration and police building debt two years early, saving \$21,000 in interest. The budget was updated to reflect the necessary funds to pay off this debt early.

The board also discussed transferring a portion of the 2025 interest income from the general fund to the police and Fire/EMS funds. The proposed transfer is \$50,000 each to the police and fire funds, which is about 16-17% of the general fund's interest income.

Ms. Elliott inquired about the police and fire fund deficits. Mr. Wright explained that these funds often run deficits due to inflation, growth, and limitations of inside millage. The board anticipates needing to replace or increase levies in the future, with projections indicating this may be needed around 2029.

The discussion also covered the historical trend of underestimating revenues for police and fire funds. Mr. Sousa expects the actual deficits for these funds to be smaller than projected and suggested a future presentation comparing budgeted vs. actual figures for 2024.

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to approve Resolution 24-1120D, a resolution adopting the 2025 Annual Budget.

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

Resolution 24-1120E- a resolution approving an increase in appropriations in the Police District Fund to reconcile budgets for the calendar year 2024.

Mr. Wright explains the Township budgets money each year for towing companies, the revenue from the impound lot has been higher than expenses, resulting in a return on investment. The lot has been busier this year due to increased Police Department activity, but the revenue covers the costs.

The Chief provided an update, stating the impound lot is doing better than expected. This is the second year the Township raised the budget for towing expenses, as the actual costs were higher than initially anticipated. The number of vehicles in the lot varies each month, which makes it hard to predict exact numbers. However, with two years of data, the department can better plan for future budgets.

Expanding the lot is not necessary at this time, as the department is managing space by regularly selling wrecked vehicles with three companies, choosing the one that offers the most money for vehicles.

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to approve Resolution 24-1120E, a resolution approving an increase in appropriations in the Police District Fund to reconcile budgets for the calendar year 2024.

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

Resolution 24-1120F- a resolution authorizing an increase in appropriation in the General Fund, Road & Bridge Fund, Police District Fund and Fire & EMS Fund, and issue a then and Now Certificate for payment due to the increase of liability insurance.

Mr. Wright discussed the annual payment for the Township's property and casualty insurance policy, which is paid from multiple funds. This year, there was an increase in the value of the Township's assets, including buildings and larger equipment. To ensure that all assets are properly covered, it is necessary to increase the appropriation by \$12,400 across the various funds to account for the increase in asset values.

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to approve Resolution 24-1120F, a resolution authorizing an increase in appropriation in the General Fund, Road & Bridge Fund, Police District Fund and Fire & EMS Fund, and issue a then and Now Certificate for payment due to the increase of liability insurance.

Roll call as follows: Darryl Cordrey
Joe Rozzi
Mark Sousa

Public Comments

Mr. Cordrey opened the floor to public comments at 7:33 PM, with nobody approaching he closed the floor to comments at 7:34 PM.

Fiscal Officer's Report

Ms. Elliott presented the fund status report as of October, categorizing funds into General, Public Works, Fire, EMS, and Police, with subtotals and separate listings for the TIF and American Rescue Plan funds. She noted that, by the end of October, revenues were 6% higher than expected, and expenditures were at 70% of the budget.

She pointed out that the Road and Bridge fund was at 51%, but after reviewing year-to-date expenditures and remaining appropriations, it returned to a reasonable range. Similarly, the Fire Station 76 fund appeared to be at only 21%, but after considering encumbered funds, it was also within the expected range. Overall, Miss Elliott found the financials to be stable.

Ms. Elliott presented a graph comparing the cash balance and expenses over the past 10 years, highlighting a significant surplus in cash starting around 2020, largely due to the TIF and American Rescue Plan funds. As of October, the cash surplus was \$5.5 million, which decreased to \$1.9 million when excluding these funds. She recommended reviewing this metric every six months to monitor financial health.

Administrator's Report

Mr. Wright reported that the financial audit with the State of Ohio is progressing well and keeping the fiscal office busy.

In Parks and Recreation, the Little Miami Junior ROTC will be completing a community service project at Testament Park this Saturday, where they will be raking and bagging leaves along the fence lines at the ball field. He expressed appreciation for the volunteer efforts from the ROTC program, the high school, and the Little Miami School District.

Additionally, he mentioned that Mounts Park will host a Winter Wellness Walk series in partnership with the OSU Extension Office, with the first walk scheduled for Monday, December 16th, at 9:00 AM.

Mr. Wright also provided an update on staffing in the Public Works Department. Two new employees are progressing well in their training and preparation for CDL testing. Furthermore, he introduced Kris Farmer, the new Assistant Public Works Director, who started last week. Mr. Farmer is adjusting well and will be a valuable addition, helping to strengthen the department's driver capacity for winter snow routes.

Trustee Comments

Mr. Rozzi began by expressing his gratitude to all the department heads and Ellen for their exceptional work on the budget, noting their efforts in making the process go smoothly.

Mr. Cordrey shared an update regarding Hamilton Township, announcing that the township had been awarded a grant for the construction of a left-turn lane at the intersection of Stubbs Mill and State Routes 22 and 3. While no specific timeline was provided, he explained that the funds had been set aside by ODOT, and the project had been greenlit. He highlighted how this development would help with traffic flow, particularly during the morning and evening rush hours. Additionally, Mr. Cordrey reminded everyone about the upcoming Christmas tree lighting event, which would take place on December 7th from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the fire station. He also took a moment to acknowledge the Little Miami Academic Team for their outstanding performance. Mr. Cordrey praised their consistent success, noting that they were ranked second in the state and among the top 30 in the nation.

Mr. Sousa thanked Nicole for her diligent work with the presentation tonight and ensuring all materials were ready and for the adjustments made to the budget. He also commended the department heads for their increased proactivity in providing ongoing projections and the earlier completion of the budget draft, which made the process easier than in previous years. He closed by again thanking everyone for their hard work, acknowledging the collaborative effort that made the budget process more efficient this year.

Executive Session & Adjournment-

Mr. Cordrey made a motion with a second from Mr. Rozzi to adjourn the executive session at 7:46 p.m. in accordance with ORC 121.22(G)(1) to discuss the appointment, employment or compensation of public employees.

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 the Executive session and adjourn at 8:21 p.m.

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