

Record of proceedings Book for Champion Township Board of Trustees 2022-2025 *1:*

The Champion Township Board of Trustees met in Regular Meeting on April 4, 2022 at 6:30p.m. at the Champion High School Community room for the purpose of conducting the business of the township. The Chairman called the meeting to order with a full board present.

Incoming Rotary President, Sadie Brown, presented Champion Township with a flag of the new township logo, to be used on Township letterhead and Township web site.

Cherry Poteet was unable to come to the meeting; her presentation will be postponed to April 19.

The department heads gave their respective reports. Chief Dempsey had to leave the meeting due to staff shortage and returned to present his report once call was finished.

Nancy Shafer told the township officials that she had plenty of construction equipment that the Road department was welcome to use. Working Foreman Davis was concerned about liability and having to repair a machine he had damaged. Ms. Shafer retorted that she would fix her own machines and that in the past 30 years while using the equipment, the township had not damaged anything so she was not even concerned about it. She was more frustrated that taxpayer dollars were being spent to utilize other equipment when she was offering it for free.

The Statler Ridge HOA president was in attendance and in communication with Working Foreman Davis about the Township declaring their roads and taking over maintenance. The Township does not know what specifications the roads were put in at, but the HOA provides snow removal on their driveways also and that is not something that the township can do, so the HOA will have to look elsewhere.

Trustee Fee was appointed as Rotary Liaison for the Board in order for the township to conduct business in collaboration with the Rotary Club. **Trustee Fee will discuss with Sadie Brown whether or not she would be interested in doing the website for the township.** (Ms. Brown and the Rotary members present for the earlier presentation had already left.).

Trustees did not acknowledge the February and March 2022 Financial Statements as they had been previously handed out and could not recall having received them.

Trustee Templeton made a motion to approve as amended the November 8, 2021 and December 2021 minutes, the exception of November 30 was made by Templeton. Templeton was not present at the November 30 meeting and therefore did not feel comfortable approving those minutes. Former Trustee Bugos was no longer in office to approve them, so the auditor would be consulted on what to do. Fee was not in office at that time, so he abstained. Emerine seconded. Templeton yes, Emerine yes.

Trustee Templeton made a motion to accept a donation, in the amount of \$500, to the Champion Fire Department from David and Carol Natale for an EMS bill that was written off years ago when their daughter was transported by Champion EMS and they were unable to pay. They have been blessed with the ability to pay now and they wanted to pay their debt, with interest. Fee seconded, passed unanimously.

C2022-30 Trustee Templeton made a motion to rehire cemetery workers Earl Huff and Seth Shay at at \$15 per hour and \$11 per hour respectively. Emerine seconded. Emerine yes, **Fee no due to the large wage increase and due to the lower wages of starting part time EMS and same wage as starting part time Police.**; Emerine, yes.

Trustee Emerine made a motion to participate in the Mosquito Spray Program at the cost of \$1800 which is more than the grant amount. Fee seconded. Templeton no, Fee no, Emerine yes. **Motion failed.** Working Foreman Davis to inform the Health Department we will no longer be participating in the grant this year.

R2022-31 Trustee Templeton made a motion to purchase an additional 100 tons of salt at \$49.23 a ton for the 2021 – 2022 winter months, a county program allowing the township to purchase 10% additional before the price change occurs. Trustee Fee seconded, passed unanimously.

R2022-32 Trustee Templeton made a motion to commit to purchase up to 1100 tons of salt for the 2022-2023 season, price to be determined after the county collects total counts from the other townships. The commitment only requires a guaranteed purchase of 90% of the order. Fee seconded, passed unanimously.

Z2022-33 Trustee Templeton made a motion to raise Zoning Commission and Zoning Appeals members from \$35 to \$45 and the secretary from \$50 to \$60. Trustee Fee seconded, passed unanimously.

Announcements:

Highway Engineer's Meeting April 12, 5pm. This is a Champion only meeting. Trustees, Fiscal Officer and Working foreman Davis are invited.

Clean Up Day is April 23. In order to perform this cleanup, we kindly request that all decorations be removed from grave sites prior to April 30th. All decorations after this date may be discarded at the discretion of the cemetery staff. Owners can begin to redecorate on Saturday, May 7th. Please be reminded that landscaping stones are prohibited at grave sites; these stones present a hazard to surrounding stones, mowers, visitors and cemetery workers. Your cooperation will assist us in achieving our goal of preserving the beauty and serenity of our cemetery. Thank you, if you have questions or concerns you can call 330-847-8915. No paint will be accepted onsite during the clean up day.

Benefit renewal will be discussed at our April 19 regular meeting, in which the healthcare cost containment committee and brokers will be present to discuss options.

Old Business:

Trustee Templeton gave an update on the Gas Aggregation and recommended no change at this time as prices are going crazy.

Warren Steel Holdings, per a tribune article and confirmed by the County Auditor, will finally begin paying off its balances due to the township. A past due balance of \$52,226. The school will receive ~\$34,000 and the Township will receive about \$7,000. The balance was in county taxes.

There seems to be some concern over the Homestead Exemption, which the County commissioners have the power to eliminate. Many property owners have found it missing on their tax bills, so the Board would like you to check your tax bill and check in with the commissioners to see what is going on with it.

Public Comments:

Brianna Johnson, 4651 Verona commended the Fire Department for their response time and dedication to the residents of Champion.

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Dick Berry, 5171 Calla, commented on the need to hire replacement Firefighters for the open positions in the Fire Department. Trustee Fee agreed that this is not servicing our community.

Cal Williams, 17 Danbury Court, inquired about the progress of the Park Project and decisions of what is being put in the park. Made a request for Pickle Ball Courts. Trustees Fee and Emerine gave him some pricing.

Marcy Chismar 813 Prentice Rd, commented that there was a nicely done one on Oak Hill for under \$15,000. Fee mentioned that the Township would have to follow county specifications since it was for public use, which drives up the cost.

Breanna Johnson, 4631 Verona Drive, also requested Pickle Ball Courts for Champion residents to use and offered up some ideas about memberships to play on the courts..

Trustee Templeton interjected that since the school sucks the wind out of the room and doesn't allow the Township to have any money, the residents should go to the school and ask them to install pickleball courts and whatever other park stuff they want funded, especially now that they're finally getting their \$32k per year from Warren Steel Holdings.

Debbie Christ, 400 Lauder Ave, commented that we need better funded infrastructure for our township. Trustees need to prioritize the infrastructure over some park pipe dream and that there were probably legal issues that prevented the township from setting up memberships. Breanna Johnson commented that she was just brainstorming ways to improve the community and offering herself as a resource to the Board.

Dick Berry, 5171 Calla, proud of the police and fire but we do need to prioritize funds even if he believes in the park idea.

John Streitferdt, 5170 Calla, had questions about the township getting scammed. Ms. Christ interjected in disbelief. Fiscal Officer Hatt admitted that she broke protocol by accepting a form from an employee via email rather than on paper but that no money had been lost as the bank was investigating and had issued a provisional credit. Fiscal Officer Hatt offered to resign effective May 31, 2022 and advised Ms. Christ she could ask the trustees to apply since clearly there had been a mistake on Hatt's part. Trustee Emerine told Hatt not to resign. Trustee Fee told the public that clearly it was a difficult subject as Fiscal Officer Hatt cares about her job and that the bank was investigating and it would be rectified as soon as possible.

Debbie Christ, 400 Lauder, made comments to the Board about being ridiculously behind on approving the minutes and whose fault was it. Templeton said all of them because it used to be that the minutes were read at every meeting and now they are not. Fee again stated that it was not that difficult to read them over and make a quick call to the Fiscal Officer to make changes or to shoot a text saying they looked fine. Trustee Emerine stated that he had been ready to approve the minutes before.

Hearing no further comment, the Chairman adjourned the meeting.

Chairman

Fiscal Officer

The Champion Township Board of Trustees met in Regular Meeting on April 19, 2022 at 6:30p.m. at the Champion High School Community room for the purpose of conducting the business of the township. The Chairman called the meeting to order with a full board present.

Attorney Poteet was present and went through the personnel policies thoroughly with the trustees. A few changes were needed and she would review and send them to us.

G2022-34 Trustee Fee made a motion to update and include the Township credit card policy in the handbook, to be added by Attorney Poteet at a cost not to exceed \$250.00 Templeton seconded. Passed unanimously.

The Healthcare Cost Containment Committee was present to hear from various Health Care Brokers who are joining us with their quotes. All brokers recommended staying with Anthem as the township is unshoppable. The township has a reputation for seeking bids from multiple brokers and that has made several healthcare companies not want to do their best work when quoting. The township needs to pick a broker that they like the service from and stick with them. **Trustee Emerine says this seems counterintuitive from a normal business model.** Mr. Rob Green of Alberini Insurance once again complained that he did not get enough time with formfire and wanted to get more time with it. He also again brought the Humana dental plan. The trustees thanked the brokers for coming and left with **no decision made by the trustees.**

Trustee Emerine stated that he had signed renewal paperwork with Anthem because he had been told by Insurance Navigators that if there was no decision made by 5/1/2022, the rates were subject to change, so while the Township does not have to renew with Anthem, it will not be able to if it does not by the deadline. Since there have already been staff changes, his concerns were legitimate. Trustee Templeton was irate. Fiscal Officer Hatt explained that the Township can change brokers at any time, but Trustee Emerine was only guaranteeing the quote for the extra time needed.

G2022-35 Trustee Fee made a motion to appoint Sadie Brown as the Township Website Administrator at a cost of \$150.00 for the first two months and \$75.00 per month thereafter. Templeton seconded. Passed unanimously.

P2022-36 Trustee Fee made a motion to pursue two COPS grants. Templeton seconded. Emerine yes, Fee no, Templeton yes. Patrolman Wasko was appointed to the COPS grant writing committee. Prior to the motion, Trustee Fee stated his concerns that this is a short term solution to a long term problem. The Chief is retiring on June 30, the sergeant may be done in July or August and another officer can leave in the next two and a half years. There is definitely more need for the residents to input via levy on the ballot.

R2022-37 Trustee Fee made a motion to award the bid to Kirila Construction Inc. at 505 Bedford Road, Brookfield Ohio 44403 in the amount of \$238,357.00 which is slightly higher than the Trumbull County Engineers estimate of \$237,194.50. This project includes Alva and Sarah. Templeton seconded. Passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Soccer Field relocation will be costly for utility movement, but perhaps just moving the fields and waiting on the rest of the infrastructure is the way to go.

Due to concerns raised at the last meeting over the security of the Fiscal Office, Fiscal Officer Hatt requested Mr. John Streitferdt, who only uses his key to the Fiscal Office a few times a year and travels frequently, as well as the fact that the Zoning Inspector has a key and regularly attends the Zoning Commission meetings, returns the key she gave him permission to have. Trustee Templeton asked the Board of Trustees to decide whether or not to override Fiscal Officer Hatt's decision since Mr. Streitferdt was an honored member of the community. The Board told Mr. Streitferdt to keep his key. Fiscal Officer Hatt stated that she was going to document that the liability was no longer hers as the Board had previously given her the authority to determine who had keys to her office.

F2022-38 Trustee Fee made a motion to hire Jonathon Massett pending a drug screen, background check and pension physical. Emerine seconded. Templeton voted no because he feels that hiring a non-EMT is against the contract. Emerine yes, Fee yes.

Public Comment:

Cindee Mines, 207 Glendola, questioned the safety of the fire department with staffing issues. Trustees discussed Southington contract as well as the other issues that had been previously discussed.

Jim Latimer, 1025 Prentice road, he heard sobering statistics tonight on the state of the Fire and Police departments. He is concerned that they are in worse shape than before and expects the Board to act responsibly with the money they are entrusted with, including the ARP. Trustee Fee commented that he would like to have the board bring ideas for the money to the next meeting and take care of business.

Hearing no further comment, the Chairman adjourned the meeting.

Chairman

Fiscal Officer

The Champion Township Board of Trustees met in special session to discuss healthcare renewal options on April 28, 2022 with a full board present at the Township Administration Building.

Rob Green, Alberini Insurance Group, was present to discuss his late healthcare proposal.

Benefits Administrator Hatt had addressed with Mr. Green and the Board that the public officials could not vote in the Humana plan presented by Alberini's because it was an increase in benefits. Alberini stated that they could offer two separate plans until after the Board was reelected.

After Mr. Green's presentation, he and Mr. Templeton went outside. The Board held a lengthy discussion on the choice of the new broker. Fiscal Officer Hatt said as Benefits Administrator, she wanted someone easy to work with. Trustee Fee expressed concerns that the ethics may be violated if any of the trustees had ties to any of the brokers. Trustee Emerine stated he had none. Trustee Fee stated he had none also. Trustee Templeton was asked when he returned to the office. He stated he had none also.

Debbie Christ, 400 Lauder, told the Board it was a very serious matter if any of the Board had entanglements with the brokers and there could be severe penalties if they did. Trustee Templeton asked if he was being singled out and it was explained that the topic had been brought up while he was out of the room, so the rest of the Board was simply reiterating the conversation.

Trustee Templeton questioned where the broker Tony Palandriani had gotten the desire to offer the \$75,000 life insurance rather than the contractual \$25,000. Benefits Administrator Hatt explained that it was the company he worked with, The Standard, who included line of duty deaths at 3 times the rate as a benefit to public safety/first responders.

Trustee Templeton asked about the hiring of Jon Massett and asked if the hiring could be un-done as he was concerned about contract violations. Fiscal Officer Hatt reminded him that this was a special meeting and only employee healthcare renewal could be discussed.

Trustee Templeton brought up the advantage of having a local broker, such as Alberini, not someone out of town, like Rankin or Burnham and Flower. He also asked about which townships each brokerage handled locally or across the state.

The Board ruled out Burnham and Flower due to past issues with responsiveness to the employees. They also ruled out going with an ACA plan. They ruled out Huntington and Rankin because he had failed to attend the meeting.

G2022-39 Trustee Templeton made a motion to appoint Alberini Insurance as agent of record/broker. Emerine seconded. Passed unanimously. Trustee Fee made an additional statement reiterating that Alberini runs very deep and there should be every effort made to ensure that it is true that none of the trustees has business or personal relationships with them so no one gets in to any trouble ethically.

Fiscal Officer Hatt left at this time due to a family emergency. Vanessa Teuscher took over as Pro Tempore.

G2022-40 Trustee Templeton made a motion to enact the Anthem 5000 plan effective May 1, 2022. Emerine seconded. Passed unanimously.

G2022-41 Trustee Emerine made a motion to enact the plan changes from the current Anthem plan to the Anthem 5000 plan for the 2022-2023 HRA plan year, with the township picking up copays/coinsurances in the HRA effective May 1, 2022 as the new plan design saves the township thousands over what the old plan's renewal was. Fee seconded. Passed unanimously.

A discussion was held on enacting the Humana plan, ut it was tabled until the next meeting as no one present knew when it renewed for certain.

Debbie Christ, 400 Lauder, commented that given the financial circumstances of the township being scammed, she demands a forensic audit of all the computers, and she wants Courtney working from this building and all township equipment brought back here immediately.

Trustees commented that they have no authority to order Fiscal Officer to do anything, including to work in their building.

Trustee Fee has stated that he spoke to an attorney and plans on discussing the options for the Fiscal Officer during her current family emergency situation. First, a leave of absence. Secpnd, a citizen petition to the Auditor of State, which if validated would go to the Attorney General. Third, a petition y residents to unseat, which then must go before a judge. Fee and Emerine stated they do not believe that the Fiscal Officer intends to resign on May 31 as she mentioned at the last meeting.

Trustee Emerine stated that he spoke with Attorney Finamore and he said that until Fiscal Officer Hatt turns over all of the township equipment and notifies the Board of Elections of her resignation, she is still "in office" regardless of what she states in a meeting.

Assistant to the Fiscal Officer Teuscher asked for a meeting with Trustee Emerine and Fee, without Trustee Templeton present, in executive. The trustees believed that it was not legal to do so. AFO Teuscher stated that she believed that someone was feeding Ms. Christ personal information that was unrelated to the township business with regards to FO Hatt's family emergency and that information was being used against her when she did her work and Trustee Templeton had hundreds of unsigned documents about to go to the audit.

The trustees responded that if that was occurring it was unfortunate because elected officials should be working as a team, not out to harm each other.

Hearing no further comment, the Chairman adjourned the meeting.

Chairman

Fiscal Officer