LAWRENCE PARK TOWNSHIP

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

6:00 p.m. November 13, 2024 4230 Iroquois Avenue

**In Attendance:** Commissioner B. Rodemaker, Commissioner D. Williams, Commissioner T. Benovic, Commissioner T. Buchleitner, Chief J. Morell, Secretary C. Cunningham, Absent: Commissioner J. Golden

~Commissioner Rodemaker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was performed.

**Town hall meeting regarding Charter Cable Franchise:**

~Commissioner Rodemaker opened the Town Hall meeting by asking residents if they had any comments or concerns. Rodemaker then read Ordinance 2024-02 an Ordinance authorizing Execution of a cable franchise agreement between the Township and Spectrum Northeast, LLC an indirect subsidiary of Charter Communications, Inc. There were no resident responses. ~

**REPORTS:**

**Police Report:**

* Chief Morell stated there has been 7,509 calls year to date. There has been a raise in the parking ticket fines as there has been a problem with the streets department not being able to get down streets with equipment so there will no longer be a grace period and the change over of parking times will be strictly enforced. A grant has been awarded to Lawrence Park Township for two new police cruisers. The cruisers should arrive hopefully within the next 6 months or so. Equipment will need to be installed, and the old cruisers will be taken off the road. Both cruisers and installing of equipment are no cost to the Township. Each year he police department takes part in the no shave November and will raise money for a charitable group typically geared to benefit children’s organizations.

**~**Commissioner Buchleitner motioned to approve all reports as presented. Commissioner Benovic seconded the motion; the motion carried**~**

**Visitors:** Chris Buchleitner, Paula Cassady, Charles Curtis, Joe Michalegko, Dale Durst, Jim Crisswell, Melanie Crisswell, Cheryl Smith, Kate Griffin, Dru Blunt, Al Renshaw

**Signed in to speak**: Dru Blount, Al Renshaw

~ Dru Blount asked the Board if something can be done about people speeding down alley ways. He stated that several times he has almost been hit while trying to enter or exit his garage. He asked if a stop sign can be installed there and he would supply the stop sign, he is also concerned that many children are back there. Commissioner Buchleitner said that we have been informed that we are not to be plowing and making provision for passage as they are not recognized as a road. Chief Morell said that violations cannot be upheld because it is an alley and not a street. Commissioner Buchleitner said that they would look further into the legality of the alleys and will reach out to Senator Laughlin and Representative Harkins. ~

~Al Renshaw wanted to thank the Township for the leaf collection he said that it has been great this year. He asked if something that can be done about the vacant houses in the Township due to fires and there are vacant homes that have rats running around. He would like the Code Enforcement officer to wear a uniform and also is there a possibility of the police department to take over Code Enforcement. ~

**Bills:**

Commissioner Williams made a motion to pay bills as presented, Commissioner Benovic seconded the motion; the motion carried.

**Minutes & Resolutions:**

* Commissioner Benovic made a motion to approve BOC Minutes from October 9, 2024, and Budget meetings of 10/14, 10/21, and 11/4, Commissioner Williams seconded the motion; the motion carried.
* Commissioner Rodemaker read aloud Resolution 2024-26 the Zoning Permit Fees, with the roll call VOTE taken by Secretary C. Cunningham; Commissioner Buchleitner; “aye”; Commissioner Rodemaker; “aye”; Commissioner Williams; “aye”; Commissioner Benovic; “aye”; with all in favor, Resolution 2024-26 was duly approved.
* Commissioner Rodemaker read aloud Resolution 2024-30 the EACOG 2025 Proposed Budget with the roll call VOTE taken by Secretary C. Cunningham; Commissioner Buchleitner; “aye”; Commissioner Rodemaker; “aye”; Commissioner Williams; “aye”; Commissioner Benovic; “aye”; with all in favor, Resolution 2024-30 was duly approved.
* Commissioner Rodemaker read aloud Resolution 2024-31 an LSA Grant Application for a leaf machine with the roll call VOTE taken by Secretary C. Cunningham; Commissioner Buchleitner; “aye”; Commissioner Rodemaker; “aye”; Commissioner Williams; “aye”; Commissioner Benovic; “aye”; with all in favor, Resolution 2024- 31 was duly approved.
* Commissioner Rodemaker read aloud Resolution 2024-32, PLIGIT Signers with the roll call VOTE taken by Secretary C. Cunningham; Commissioner Buchleitner; “aye”; Commissioner Rodemaker; “aye”; Commissioner Williams; “aye”; Commissioner Benovic; “aye”; with all in favor, Resolution 2024- 32 was duly approved.

**Old Business:**

* An update was given by police Chief Morell regarding the Police Cruiser Grant

**New Business:**

* Commissioner Rodemaker gave an update regarding the installation of a “Muffin Grinder” at the Cunningham lift station. The project began last week November 7th and should conclude by Friday, November 15th. This should alleviate some of the break downs the station has incurred over the years and with people using “flushable” items the break downs have become more frequent as the grinders cannot handle all the debris. Rodemaker stated that even though something may say “flushable” it is not biodegradable, and it gets jammed in the impellors and causes the station to shut down. Rodemaker would like to remind residents to not flush anything down the toilet except toilet paper.
* Commissioner Buchleitner made a motion to approve the promotion of Officer Lewis from probationary to Class “D” officer; Commissioner Williams seconded; the motion carried.
* Commissioner Williams gave an update regarding leaf pick up. The leaf machine is in rough condition and the maintenance crew has had to make several repairs to the machine due to the deterioration of the machine. This year we have been hit with over a week of heavy winds which has brought all the leaves down at the same time, normally they fall earlier in the southern part of town, and it is a slow progression toward the lake. It is a very difficult, physically exhausting and strenuous job. Williams commended those who have bagged their leaves, and the crew has been picking those up in the very early morning hours which helps cut down on the machine time. Also, a problem that is occurring is that people are still parking on both sides of the street and the trucks and machines cannot get down with them. If the truck cannot get down the street the leaves cannot get picked up. Also, the Cunningham lift station is being worked on and our guys had to be pulled to make repairs on the sewer lines. Williams stated that the workers are being verbally abused and harassed. If this behavior continues the police will be contacted and charges will be filed against them. Williams stated that he stands behind our workers and has been diligent in going around with them and observing the behavior of the residents regarding the work that is being done. Williams stated that residents should go to the “official” Lawrence Park website or Facebook page to get the correct information as there has been much misinformation being stated on various other “non-official” sites. If there are any further questions regarding leaves, please call the Township office and leave a message for Commissioner Williams and he will get back to you. Williams said the Township has had to call a contractor in to come and help the Township employees with the leaf pick up as there has been so many leaves at one time. Residents stated that they have seen the guys out working and they are hardworking guys, and they are open to speaking with and helping residents. Anyone can place leaves out in clear plastic bags any day of the week and they will be picked up. Also, what has been happening is people are blowing and raking their leaves into the street. There is an Ordinance regarding this, and you will be cited with an ordinance violation as this poses a safety hazard to people who are walking, riding bicycles, motorcycles, etc., these also fill the storm drains which causes clogs and backups, this practice will not be tolerated. He would appreciate if people would be considerate and be patient the leaf machine moves very slowly but they are working on it.
* Commissioner Buchleitner reviewed the STMP program that the Township is involved in. The program has given us recommendations and many of those have been put into practice already. In the coming year we have cut the administration staff to all part time with no benefits to pay out and we will also be closing the office on Fridays due to the lack of foot traffic on that day, this will cut electric, heating, water, etc. we are still waiting for our final report. The Township staff will still be available by phone and email. Wesleyville has also undergone the STMP program, and we have begun working together on certain things to help both Communities to stay “alive” and in so doing there was a joint Board meeting on Monday, November 11th. The state likes when communities work together and is more willing to give you grant opportunities and certain monies to help Municipalities. The footbridge, Main Street and other items were discussed and other opportunities that are taking place but without this partnership this would not be possible. Also, the Board wants to bring back the Planning Commission, but we need volunteers to make that happen. These are the big things that we are moving forward with in 2025-2026. Buchleitner gave a budget recap as the Board has met for the past 8 weeks to complete a budget for 2025. Copies of the budget can be acquired at the Township office. Many changes have been made for 2025 to lower costs. This next year the Township Secretary will work part-time until her replacement is found toward the end of the year. The tree budget has been increased due to dead/dying trees, also what may needed is the possibility of another maintenance person. The taxes went up ½ mil for 2025. If anyone has questions regarding how the budget process was done, please contact Commissioner Buchleitner during office hours and he would answer any questions. Buchleitner also gave a short synopsis regarding the footbridges and if funding can be acquired, ground would not break for 1-2 years.

~Commissioner Buchleitner motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 p.m., Commissioner Williams seconded; the motion carried. ~

Respectfully Submitted:

Cindy Jo Cunningham

Board of Commissioner’s Secretary