

**BERLIN TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Regular Meeting**

**February 8,**

**16**

**HELD AT:** Berlin Township House, 3271 Cheshire Rd., Delaware, OH

**CALL TO ORDER:** Adam Fleischer, Trustee Chairman

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Larry Buell

**ROLL CALL:** Adam Fleischer, Ron Bullard, Steve Flaherty and Claudia Smith, Fiscal Officer.

**ATTENDANCE:** Larry Buell, Robert Miller, Craig Hall, Norm Seese, Joe Pichert and Steve Hearst

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Fleischer asked if there were any public comments.

Norm Seese asked if you could opt out of the trash pickup and Flaherty said you could but you cannot pick another company as Republic has exclusive rights to the township. He asked if you could pair up with a neighbor and Bullard said that is not what the EPA wants people to do. He also stated that you need to sign up so you get your two cans that will be delivered the end of March. Seese said he was concerned with where we are heading with expansion in the township and wants to know what the board's philosophy is regarding expansion. He stated taxes are going up and up to fund schools and roads are going to be impacted with maintenance to the new roads. He would like to know what controls they are trying to put on in conjunction with the zoning board as they have overturned the zoning board twice now and wants to know what they are looking at in terms of adequate controls here so we don't see this township over developed, the density becoming a big problem, more traffic, more roads, etc. and higher tax rates coming. Bullard said he wants to keep the taxes down and if we can figure out a way to do a development that is neutral tax wise so it is not adding a lot to our tax burden. The density is one way of looking at it but the value of the home is going to bring in the tax money to take care of the number of kids coming into the school district. Condos and senior living brings in very low tax burden on us since the number of kids is low. Bullard said where we are getting hammered on our school taxes is not in Berlin Township, it's Liberty and Orange Townships and other areas that are coming in with lower value homes with a higher number of kids. He said Orange Township is done with its growth but Liberty still has a lot of farm land left.

Flaherty said Delaware is again the fastest growing county in the state and the top ten fastest growing in the nation. Columbus is a job hub and we are up jobs compared to the rest of the state and are growing at a 10% rate higher than Cleveland or Cincinnati so the thing people look at first is the school system. He said they know growth is coming and we have a much lower density plan than Orange Township did. He said we do have a lot of business districts and commercial businesses pay more in property taxes and there are tools out there that allow townships to benefit from the commercial businesses being in the area to help subsidize that cost that neighborhoods put on the townships. People have the right to develop their properties as they see fit within reason and code. Seese agrees but does not want us to be like Orange Township and it seems like the developers are trying to push through higher density plans. Flaherty said people can develop an R-1 neighborhood without coming to the township but most are in the business of making money so we look at what they are bringing to the township to make us change it from an R-1. Most planned residential districts have more things in them that what is required in an R-1 plan. So we look at what value they are bringing to the residents of the neighborhood and the township as a whole. We want developers to foot the bill to add pathways to benefit everyone. Flaherty said we have two massive entities being Delaware and Sunbury that are not afraid to do annexation and we have lost hundreds of acres of land from Berlin Township due to annexation that we had no control over. Fleischer said we have to decide what we want to be a martyr for. Do we want to stand up for density and then lose it to annexation and not have a seat at the table? We can't halt development but we want to make sure it's done right. Flaherty said we can do a JEDD where residents can't be involved so the businesses that want to locate here you get the income taxes from these businesses in the area. This way we can gain some of the revenue and keep it from annexing to Delaware and we get the benefit of the tax dollars to maintain the structures we do have so we don't have to ask for a levy.

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**RESOLUTION APPROVE THE 1/25/2015 ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING  
16-02-01 MINUTES AND DISPENSE WITH THE READING**

Motion: Flaherty  
Second: Bullard  
Vote: Fleischer yes, Bullard yes and Flaherty yes

**CEMETERY:**

**Benches** - Buell said we have a bench placed in the cemetery where a headstone should be and he thought that a resolution was passed 25 to 30 years ago that would not allow this. He and Smith looked and could not find it. He stated that they do allow headstone benches but feels it's a liability for regular benches as they are not sturdy and asked the trustees to pass a resolution. Flaherty said he went to a cemetery seminar at the OTA that said the wording on our right to burial document or the deed as we call it should be changed to Right to Burial or Right to Inurnment because deed implies that they own a piece of property and they only own the right of burial on that dedicated plot. Bullard suggested that we write something up changing the cemetery rules and have the prosecutor approve it and Flaherty asked if it has to be that formal as we could just do a resolution without modifying the rules. Smith said we have rule books made up so if we could add the resolution to them until they are gone and then add it to the rules for the next publication.

**RESOLUTION APPROVE CHANGE TO CEMETERY RULES THAT PROHIBITS  
16-02-02 SITTING STRUCTURES INCLUDING CHAIRS, BENCHES, ETC.  
BEING PERMANENTLY PLACED ON GRAVE SITES. MONUMENT  
STRUCTURES THAT ARE MADE OF THE SAME MATERIAL AS  
STANDARD HEADSTONES ARE SUITABLE TO BE BENCHES OR  
SITTING STRUCTURES. HOWEVER IF UTILIZED THEY MUST  
HAVE THE SAME REQUIREMENT AS STANDARD HEADSTONES  
AND THE FOUNDATION THAT THEY SIT ON AS DEFINED IN THE  
CEMETERY RULES**

Motion: Flaherty  
Second: Fleischer  
Vote: Fleischer yes, Bullard yes and Flaherty yes

Flaherty said he received a call from someone in Ravenna Ohio that the owner of Fairview Cemetery also owns one in Ravenna and a couple in Pennsylvania and apparently there is an FBI investigation going on with the owner over tax fraud and other things and the prosecutor is involved with a trust and record keeping and their might be a court order takeover of that cemetery and could happen here. Buell said they have to put so much in equity for every grave they sell in case they do go bankrupt and the trustees have to take it over and they should check to see if that has been done there and if it hasn't they should get involved in the law suit also.

**\*\*\*\*\* TIME CERTAIN 7:30 P.M. STARTED AT 7:45\*\*\*\*\*ACCENT COMPUTERS\*\*\*\*\***

Steve Hearst provided trustees with a list of the services that they offer; Phone System and Service which they are handling for us now; Data Network Support, \$500 a year for 8 hours of professional services; Google Email and Archiving, \$312; Hosting all Servers on the Cloud which is a three year commitment for \$774 with an initial fee of \$1,500. The township can pick and choose which items they want Accent to handle. They discussed the issues that we were having with the VOS email system. Smith asked if they had a smaller package for less hours a month and Hearst said no. Flaherty asked if they would be doing a rollover with the hours since he doesn't think we will use eight hours a month every month and Hearst said they can schedule events so they can use the hours together. More questions were asked and answered regarding the services and Flaherty was going to do an ROI to see if it was feasible to switch. He said we were also waiting on a quote from Involta in Westerville who does have fiber in the township. Fleischer said it seems to be a couple thousand more a year but he feels it would be worth it to make sure that everyone is using the emails.

**FISCAL OFFICE:  
January bank statement was signed.**

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**Hall Rental Refunds** – Smith said she had a request to have hall rental fees waived for the 4 H group and girl scouts that use the hall for their meetings. The 4 H group will again plant flowers around the township hall.

**RESOLUTION 16-02-03 APPROVE 4H GROUP USE THE TOWNSHIP HALL FOR MEETINGS AND WAIVE RENTAL FEE AT THE END**

Motion: Bullard  
Second: Flaherty  
Vote: Bullard yes, Flaherty yes and Fleischer yes

**RESOLUTION 16-02-04 APPROVE GIRL SCOUTS USE THE TOWNSHIP HALL FOR MEETINGS AND WAIVE RENTAL FEE AT THE END**

Motion: Fleischer  
Second: Bullard  
Vote: Flaherty yes, Fleischer yes and Bullard yes

**Safety Signage Grant-** Smith said she received info regarding a grant available for safety signs and Bullard said Irwin was getting a list together of the signs and one of them or both would attend the pre-grant meeting March 16<sup>th</sup>. Bullard said what they are talking about doing is the entire township even though it was done four years ago we will put those in storage and using them as replacements when others get damaged or are out of their reflectively standards. Flaherty said that is what Orange is doing and by taking the four year old signs down and storing them they still have ten years or more of feasibility on them it will help us get twenty five years out of our sign program instead of ten to fifteen.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Columbarium's** – Flaherty said he learned about a scattering garden at the OTA conference and can see that the columbarium be placed with a scattering garden in the landscape. Each time someone utilizes the scattering garden there would be a burial fee which would include a memorialized plaque that can be placed on the side of the columbarium. He stated that 60 to 75% of burials in the next fifteen to twenty years will be cremations. Smith reminded them that it does take approximately six months to get one so they need to be making a decision. Flaherty said we need an official quote and he will work on that. Bullard said we need to have an architect come up with a plan. Flaherty said he knows a fee landscapers that he can reach out to and get an architectural drawing that the eagle scouts can work off of.

**Newsletter** – Fleischer said to get their articles to Rippel so we can get it out in the next couple weeks.

**RESOLUTION 16-02-05 APPROVE UPTO \$2,000 FOR PRINTING, POSTAGE AND ALL EXPENSES ASSOCIATED WITH PRODUCING THE SPRING 2016 NEWSLETTER EXPECTED COST BEING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF \$1,300 TO \$1,400**

Motion: Bullard  
Second: Flaherty  
Vote: Flaherty yes, Fleischer yes and Bullard yes

**Special Events Parking** – Flaherty said Fowler was working on this and should have something in a couple weeks.

**Township Hall Alarm** – Fleischer said he still needs to meet with the fire department.

**Township Hall Lighting** – Flaherty said he has not heard back from Belcastro.

**Township Hall Siding** – Flaherty said this has developed into a more comprehensive project. He is looking at doing a more full blown architectural doing by renovating the inside and outside by having someone do a more esthetically looking plan than just replacing the siding. He is looking at doing a white wainscoting in the hall to clean up the room and give it a better presence and updating the cabinets in the kitchen whether it is just painting them or replacing. Bullard agreed that it does need a facelift instead of building a new township hall. Flaherty said in conjunction with that he would like to see instead of

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renting the hall for the whole day rent it in time slots so we can rent to two different people in the same day in four hour shifts. This all goes along with the lighting.

**Modified Ditch & RR Crossing** – Bullard said the grant application has been put together for the Glen Road railroad crossing and we could get up to \$5,000. Bullard said they have what was written up on the modified ditch they were just going to try to include it with complete streets. Flaherty said the courts ruled on storm water stuff for townships that allows townships to create a storm water district that allows for improvements of culverts and the taxes are assessed on the property taxes and is just like a sewer or water district to keep up with the EPA's regulations of the Clean Water Act. Riedell struggles with having a modified ditch with complete streets so they need to get more information of how it will work with right-of-way and everything else. Bullard said the discussion they had with the county engineer regarding the Piatt Road extension was they want to put in curb and gutter because they didn't want to have that much right-of-way that open ditches have. Fleischer asked if it was going to be two lane with a turn lane and Bullard said he did not know.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT:** Pichert said they emailed a draft resolution today to try to change the fulltime firefighters working hours from a forty hour work week to a fifty six hour work week. Bullard said Hall asked that we put the annual fire report on the website so talked to Rippel who said she could do it they just need an electronic copy.

**ROAD DEPARTMENT:** Flaherty said the international truck is down so they are running only two trucks this storm. Bullard said the new tractor is in and Smith said she was going to list the old one on Govdeals again.

**TRUSTEE ITEMS:** Flaherty said he was a little disappointed that Fleischer showed up to the OTA conference at 11:50 on Friday when we paid for him to attend the entire conference and he feels he didn't give it any effort and if that's the case he's welcome to attend but thinks he should foot his own bill instead of the township paying on his behalf. Fleischer said he had several conflicts that came into play but the previous two years he attended the sessions. Bullard said he would like to see if we can get a membership for Heid and Irwin which gets them a magazine and discount rate to the conference. Smith said she will check.

Smith said they keep adding things to the agenda as late items and she learned at the OTA that everything that is discussed should be on the agenda as residents want to know what is going to be discussed and they don't know if it's not on the agenda. So she asked the trustees to start sending her agenda items.

### **ZONING DEPARTMENT:**

**Monthly Zoning Report** – Flaherty said January was not an active month but hopefully we'll have more in the spring.

**BZC Open Position** – Smith said she spoke with John Sherman who had dropped off an application for the BZC awhile back and since they have an open position she said she would give it to the trustees. Flaherty said he would call Bardash and see if he is still interested and then we can go from there.

### **FUTURE MEETINGS:**

2/22/16	Trustee Meeting
3/14/16	Trustee Meeting
3/26/16	Spring Open House with Egg Hunt
3/28/16	Trustee Meeting
5/7/16	Township Cleanup Day

**LATE ITEMS:** None

Fleischer thanked Miller for the meeting and asked him if he had a particular reason for coming and Miller said he hasn't been for about twenty years. He said there are a lot of speeders on Africa Road and with the hill it is getting dangerous. Bullard said it is a county road but the state is who sets the speed limit and we could ask them to do that but people don't pay attention to speed limit signs. Bullard said he would bring it up to the county engineer representative at our Spring Roads Meeting and see what they can do.

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**RESOLUTION  
16-02-06**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Motion: Bullard  
Second: Fleischer  
Vote: Flaherty yes, Fleischer yes and Bullard yes

Meeting adjourned by Chairman Fleischer at 9:17 p.m.

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Adam Fleischer, Trustee

ATTEST:

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Ron Bullard, Trustee

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Claudia Smith, Fiscal Officer

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Steve Flaherty, Trustee