

SAGAMORE HILLS TOWNSHIP – REGULAR

Monday, January 12, 2009 – media notified

The regular meeting was called to order by Chair Hunt at 7:00 pm. R/C Hunt-present; Snell-present; Barrett-present; Fiscal Officer Gale-present.

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

Chair Hunt moved to approve and dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Special Records Retention and Regular meetings held on Monday, December 8, 2008; Seconded by Mr. Barrett. R/C Vote: all in favor. Chair Hunt asked to be notified if the resident names in the citizen's forum were reported incorrectly. At times, it is difficult to recognize the voices on the tape. He asked people to identify themselves before addressing the Trustees to avoid confusion in the future.

Chair Hunt moved to approve and dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Emergency Meeting held on Tuesday, December 9, 2008; Seconded by Mrs. Snell. R/C Vote: Hunt-aye; Snell-aye; Barrett-abstain.

Chair Hunt moved to recognize minutes of the Joint Work Session with the Northfield Center Fire Department held on Monday, December 15, 2008.

Chair Hunt moved to approve and dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Special Organizational Meeting and temporary appropriations held on Monday, December 29, 2008; Seconded by Mr. Barrett. R/C Vote: all in favor.

PENDING WARRANTS

Mr. Barrett moved to approve the Pending Warrant Report dated December 2008 in the amount of \$651,585.52. Seconded by Mr. Hunt. R/C Vote: Barrett-aye; Hunt-aye; Snell-abstain

WEB SITE

Chair Hunt reported the web site statistics for December 2008 were 612 visitors and 1,417 pages viewed. Yearly statistics for 2008 were 7,981 visitors and 21,624 pages viewed.

RESOLUTIONS

Mrs. Snell moved to amend **RESOLUTION 04-00** to correct the Gazebo rental agreement. Residents will pay \$25.00 and non-residents will pay \$60.00. Seconded by Mr. Barrett. R/C Vote: all in favor.

Mrs. Snell moved to amend **RESOLUTION 35-02** to delete a paragraph on page 2 of the Organizational Resolution. Seconded by Mr. Barrett. R/C Vote: all in favor.

Mr. Barrett moved to adopt **RESOLUTION 01-09** for the appropriation modification to correct an OTAS system error. Seconded by Mrs. Snell. R/C Vote: all in favor.

Mrs. Snell moved to adopt **RESOLUTION 02-09** for the correction of the Employee Handbook. Seconded by Mr. Barrett. R/C Vote: all in favor.

Mrs. Snell moved to adopt **RESOLUTION 03-09** to keep the Federal Grant application active for the Park Look Trail Project. Seconded by Mr. Barrett. R/C Vote: all in favor.

Mrs. Snell moved to adopt **RESOLUTION 04-09** to keep the Federal Grant application active for the Holzhauser Road Widening Project. Seconded by Mr. Barrett. R/C Vote: all in favor.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Police

Snell: The 2009 budget allocation was \$1,663,200.00 which was down from the 2008 budget allocation of \$1,687,000.00. Expenditures were \$1,445,514.00. In 2008 we had nine (9) full-time officers, and eight (8) part-time officers. Dispatch had 12,039 calls for service in 2008 with Sagamore Hills having 5,191 and Northfield Village at 6,848. The peak calls were between 6 pm and 8 pm. The Investigation Division investigated 158 cases in 2008. All of these cases are currently closed. The Department made 61 arrests in 2008.

Statistics for December 2008 were: Dispatch had 925 calls for service with Sagamore Hills having 458 and Northfield Village at 467. There were thirteen (13) investigations with nine (9) closed.

We had a program with the juvenile division and a national night out against crime. Our Police Explorer Program is very active. Members of the Department attended approximately 500 hours of advanced training.

Mrs. Snell made a motion to accept the resignations of Part-Time Police Officer Joe McFeeley and Part-Time Dispatcher Cheryl Hess. Seconded by Mr. Hunt. R/C Vote: all in favor.

Roads

Hunt: The Road Department completed some maintenance projects; put up shelves in the records retention room, fixed light on flag pole; and some truck maintenance. They cold patched roads on one nice day; cut down a tree on the bike connector path; cleaned out a plugged pipe on S. Gannett Road; and put up the holiday lights and decorations.

We have gone through 1,500 tons of salt. We have an allocation for 3,000 tons. We are not half way through the season. At this point we will now start doing intersections, curves and hills unless we have an icy day. We will be mixing the haydite with the salt for the cold weather coming up this week. We have access to more haydite if we need it. It is a traction material and it is also good for the lawn.

Fire/EMS

Frank Risko: Northfield Center had 445 total calls for 2008. EMS was 357 calls. Sagamore Hills had 926 total calls for 2008. Northcoast Behavioral Hospital had a mattress fire and a false alarm. Visited Elmcroft and talked to employees. This resulted in reduced calls. We have had five (5) calls to Brandywine Ski to date. They have been advised on using Advanced Life Support. Fire/EMS should be called in trauma cases and Life Care should be called for other injuries.

Ted Schoop asked about the ambulance rotation. Risko explained that they have four (4) ambulances. The policy is to use each of them. The oldest ambulances are the first ones out. The new ambulance is Medicare and it is being used 45% of the time.

Risko discussed a request from Northfield Center Fire Department for \$22,598.00 to purchase replacement equipment to revise the antenna system that we currently have. Northfield Center Fire Department and Sagamore Hills Township will then have their own channel. There could be a \$6,000.00 to \$8,000.00 differential depending on the work that is needed to complete the project.

Two thirds of that figure is \$14,655.00. The materials will need to be ordered and then a four (4) week wait time for delivery. The radio equipment is necessary and needs to be updated now whether a fire district is formed or not.

Mr. Barrett made a motion to adopt **RESOLUTION 05-09** for the purchase of the improvement of the fire department radio system. This resolution will have a not to exceed amount of \$14,655.00. Seconded by Mrs. Snell. R/C Vote: Snell-aye; Barrett-aye; Hunt-no.

Mr. Barrett commented that in 2008, we paid Northfield Center \$683,593.14 that did include the new ambulance.

Zoning

Barrett: There were no permits issued in December. There were 62 permits issued in 2008 and the total zoning fees collected were \$4,255.00.

Fiscal Officer

Mr. Gale thanked the Trustees, Police Chief, Road Department and Sagamore Hills staff for their cooperation in helping to reduce our overall expenditures for the year by \$500,000.00. The fiscal year was closed on December 30th. The quick turnaround by the administrative staff enabled the books to be ready for payroll on January 7th.

We ended up in the black for 2008 with an ending balance of \$4,482,712.12. Gale presented the December report with a Beginning balance of \$5,076,534.55; Receipts at \$60,233.92; less Expenditures - \$654,056.35; less memo Receipts \$2,470.83; which matches the Pending Warrant amount of \$651,585.52 with an ending balance of \$4,482,712.12.

Gary Smith asked for the beginning balance for 2008. Gale will look up the number and give that to Mr. Smith.

Trustees

There were two items of legislation that Mrs. Snell reported on and will be put on the web site. The 2.5% tax reduction for owner-occupied residential property and the homestead exemption that is available to homeowners who are 65 years or older.

Snell also reported on two articles that were in the newspaper. One talked about local governments sharing health plans. Municipalities are starting to join together to share employee health benefit plans in order to save on health care. Another article talked about the deer killing in Summit County. The Stanford Road conservation area in Boston Township is the only area that affects us. They are permitted to take out 5 to 10 deer in that area.

We received a request to fill out a job preservation agreement from Russell Pry, the Summit County Executive. That does not pertain to Sagamore Hills Township so it was agreed that we send a letter in response to the request.

Mrs. Snell reported that we have 27 people on Lifeline.

Mr. Barrett talked about the 2008 timeframe and thanked Scott Gale for an excellent job. With gasoline prices at an all time high in 2008 and all the expenses that went up this year, Barrett commended his

fellow Trustees for doing an excellent job deciding what to do with the money. The Trustees take the tax dollars seriously and they are already taking steps for 2009 in order to end in the black again next year. They have a very good communication line with the Fiscal Officer and he felt that it was very important for the community to be aware of that.

NEW BUSINESS

Discuss and possibly make decisions on what to charge for baseball fields and soccer fields for this year.

Mrs. Snell reported that she sent a letter to the Athletic Association that we were going to increase the charge from \$5.00 to \$15.00 per field this year and also requested an adult to supervise the restrooms. If the problems continue that we have had in the past, we will be forced to close the restrooms and bring in portable units. It is becoming very expensive for us to clean up after the facilities have been used. We have not had a response back from them.

Mr. Hunt commented that the second issue is soccer and flag football fields. They have become big events in the fall. Are we going to charge the same for the use of those fields? One of the flag football organizations that is playing out of Tallmadge is for profit. Their justification is that it is local children that they are using for their profit. We have a policy in place that the park is primarily for residents and we were not going to use it for money-making organizations. We have the field at 192 that we were using for flag football but that is a different league there and they actually make a donation to the township at the end of the season for the use of the field. Mr. Hunt and the Trustees are in agreement that we use the fields strictly for non-profit organizations.

Mrs. Snell asked a number of questions. How organized is soccer and how many fields are being used? What organization is this? Is this under Nordonia Hills that our children are playing there? Who is playing? Are they charging these children fees? We need to look into this and discuss at the next meeting.

Mr. Hunt explained that one weekend there were approximately 12 to 15 soccer fields in use. Depending on the size of the children, the size of the field changes. They were all playing at once but the fields were all different sizes.

Mr. Barrett added that they do have some Sagamore residents and children. It was the Village that started it all. I don't know who gave them permission. I think we should look into it further. Mrs. Snell thought, originally, they were going to use a couple fields and it turned out that they only have a couple fields on Houghton Road on the hill and it spilled over into Sagamore.

Mr. Hunt reminded the Trustees that he answered two letters from a family on Sandstone who complained about the noise, swearing, and rock throwing. That was flag football and soccer. When they use those fields at that end of the park, they get close to the Sandstone Development. The other problem that they had was, when they use the open field for multiple soccer games, they park all over the lawn and on the trail in the back. One of the solutions is to put up signs at each end of the trail that says "maintenance vehicles only" but that isn't going to stop these people.

Mrs. Snell also mentioned a problem with small airplanes and gliders. The planes are all over the park. She contacted the Executive Director of the Metroparks and he is going to send her the rules and regulations that they use. He explained, when the planes are flying, the small animals are afraid. They think they are hawks and they scatter. She is going to give the rules to legal to see what we can put in

place according to the ORC to get control over this. We used to have a small group of men that would fly their planes early in the morning when no one was in the park. As soon as people would come in, they would pack up and leave. It has gotten out of hand. Snell would like to get something in place by April or May so we can implement this.

Gary Smith commented that we need regulations but asked that we don't outlaw them totally. Limit their area and limit their time, but please don't shut them out completely.

Hunt talked about another conflict. We have a request to reserve ball fields on the weekends. We have a policy that we do not reserve ball fields on the weekends. They are first come first served.

Mrs. Snell explained our pavilion reservation includes the use of the baseball field. That is the only time our residents can use the fields because they are reserved for leagues during the week. Mrs. Snell said we need to check with Mayor Milani and see what the Nordonia Hills soccer group is about, and how many people are in the group, are they charging the people, what their requirements are, and have them put in a formal request for the fields. We are going to have to get some kind of an agreement and we should charge them because it costs to keep up the park.

Mr. Hunt said we also have the 192 field. The breakaway groups from the Nordonia Hills Athletic Association are using that field.

Mr. Kopas commented we can't make it exclusive to Nordonia Hills. There are other groups that may disagree with Nordonia Hills but also have the same right to use the fields. They shouldn't tie it up on the weekends. Mrs. Snell said it was fine with her if the groups can fit into the schedule during the week.

The Trustees decided to table the discussion until they get more statistics; get some information from Mayor Milani, and also set up guidelines.

Mr. Hunt opened a discussion regarding the North Eastern Ohio Sewer District. Mayor Gary Starr from Middleburg Heights is our representative on the NEO Sewer District and is up for election. NEO Sewer District will be seeking the right to tax us \$6 - \$10 a month for storm water in March 2009. Gary Starr is against this. Mr. Hunt made a motion to appoint Paul Schweikert to be our Representative at the election and give him a proxy vote. Seconded by Mrs. Snell. R/C Vote: all in favor.

CITIZENS' FORUM

Frank Kopas commented on the park and it will be a big job to maintain it and keep it in the condition that it has been. He also commented on the Trustees watching over our money. It is greatly appreciated. He asked if the standard financial agreement on Fire/EMS is 2/3 and 1/3?

Mr. Barrett explained the Fire/EMS is usually 60/40. Some months can be 70/30 based on the calls. The 2/3 and 1/3 is for the ambulance/capital improvements. He added that the Trustees watch those calls like a hawk.

Mr. Kopas added that the citizens appreciate what the Trustees are doing. Now we need to get a handle on the ski people. We seem to be working in the right direction.

Mr. Hunt added that we are going to see an increase in CO calls during the winter. The monitors go off so the fire department needs to respond.

Ted Schoop would like to see the emergency meetings on the web site sooner than they are appearing. Will the Fire District levy be put out to vote in September? Would that be a special election that we have to pay for?

Mr. Gale responded that there already is a predetermined election in September for the Clerk of Courts position in the new Stow Municipal Court District. If they put it on the ballot in September then there would be enough time to vote for the fire district in the November general election. Mrs. Snell added it will all depend on the conclusions that the committee comes to. The group will come back to the Trustees and present their recommendations.

Gary Smith asked who will be affected by the amendment to Resolution 35-02?

Mr. Hunt explained that we don't have anybody that fits into that category. We are working out all of the bugs from the handbook.

Steve Bittle asked when the last time was that we got a quote from the sheriff's department to see if we are doing everything as cost effectively as possible? How do we know that we have the appropriate size police force?

Mr. Barrett answered we have gotten a quote and the problem is that we can only get one car for Sagamore from the Sheriff versus the four cars that we have now on patrol. We can use the car from the center but that car is also used for Twinsburg Township as a backup car. We don't see where it is financially responsible to cut the services that great for that amount of money. We know we have the appropriate size from the amount of road miles that we have. We have 37 road miles, 74 lane miles, and amount of homes. The residents voted to continue with their own. The people indicate that is what they want.

Bittle said he has been in Sagamore for 13 years and has never been asked what he wanted. He was asking based on the number of residents and on the calls we have, do we have the right amount, do we have too many officers? Look at the fire department and how many calls they have to man and to figure out the size of the police station would be the same regardless of road miles. I think we had 168 arrests last year. That is one every other day.

Mr. Barrett explained it is what we offer to this community. It's about safety, especially in the environment today. We arrested one of the FBI's top ten most wanted people in Northeast Ohio. Mrs. Snell added we use the services of the sheriff for various other things that are available to the residents for county things. If we need a crime scene investigation or the bomb squad, we can call the sheriff. They still patrol Sagamore.

Mr. Hunt commented about what's going on in Lorain County and Cuyahoga County. Lorain has one sheriff's deputy for the County. They eliminated them all. All of the townships in Lorain are depending on the contract service with the sheriff's department. He has one deputy. Cuyahoga County has just downsized a bunch of deputy's. I don't know if we can depend on them if we do go that way but we are always open to that.

Mrs. Snell offered to have our Police Chief come to the next meeting. He has all of the statistics and he can make a presentation on all of the things they do. They make presentations in the schools, work with

the elderly, attend meetings, have an Explorers Program. There are a lot of things they are doing beside stopping people on the road. Mr. Hunt added we have a minimum of 2 police cars per shift, one at the south and one at the north end of town. We can always call for assistance from other communities if we need to. At peak times we have three and four cars.

Mr. Barrett mentioned Sagamore Hills was voted by Cleveland Magazine as 2nd or 3rd best communities to live in and safety was one of the major reasons. That's pretty good out of all of the communities in Northeast Ohio. It dropped down the year after to about 6th. We send in our information every year and they chart it.

There was no further business. Chair Hunt moved to adjourn at 8:25 pm. Seconded by Mrs. Snell. R/C
Vote: all in favor.