

RAVENNA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 1, 2023

The Ravenna Township Board of Trustees met in Special Session at the Ravenna Township Trustee's Meeting Room, 6145 Spring Street, Ravenna, Ohio, on February 1, 2023. Trustee Hank T. Gibson called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Roll call showed the following present: Trustees Vince Coia, Jim DiPaola and Hank Gibson, Fiscal Officer Gail Pittman, Liaison Mark Kozak, and Fire Chief Dave Moore.

In the audience were several Ravenna Township firefighters: Jeff Cook, Jason Myers, Heather Sweitzer, Keith Gemberling, James Collins, James Crevar, Antonio Bennardo, and Matthew Frawley.

The purpose of the meeting is a work session for the Fire Department with a focus on staffing and budget; also to approve advertising and replacement of some computer equipment that is broken.

Mark Kozak presented a report showing statistics from 2015-2022 on the overtime hours worked and total hours worked by full-time and part-time firefighters including the total payroll costs. The township is experiencing staffing shortages just like other jurisdictions around the country. Historically the department has used a mix of full time and part time fire fighters to staff the station for the required number of hours. Since the onset of Covid, the part time hours worked have continued a significant decline which continues in to 2023. As a result, it has been necessary for the full-time firefighters to pick up more overtime hours than would be necessary under normal conditions. This trend is only getting worse and is not sustainable. It was determined that the township could hire two more full time firefighters for the same wage and pension costs that the over time of one senior full time Captain. Doing so, would allow the township to gain additional work hours and reduce the overall overtime load. The costs would increase however, with providing health insurance. Additionally, it was noted that the overall cost of labor has increased significantly over the past several years, not just the overtime. However, in reviewing wage and benefit costs compared to neighboring communities and comparative townships, we are barely keeping competitive, and in some cases, lagging. This adds to the difficulty of recruitment and retention.

A projection of the current fire department budget with forecasting forward 5-10 years shows that, at some point in the years ahead we will need to consider a replacement levy for the fire department instead of a renewal. We can, and will do whatever is possible to push that into the future as far as we can. We discussed hiring the two new fire department employees using funding from ARPA for this year. We also discussed using ARPA funds to do a remount of one of the ambulances that will need to be replaced over the next several years.

We discussed the need to approve purchase orders for ads authorized to be placed on Zip Recruiter; Vince's laptop is broken beyond repair and needs replaced; and a docking station needs to be purchased for the meeting room.

RES 23-018 A motion by Hank T. Gibson, seconded by Jim DiPaola, to approve acceptance of quote for purchase of a new laptop for Vince Coia in the amount of \$1548.00. R/C: Mr. Coia, yes; Mr. DiPaola, yes; and Mr. Gibson, yes. Motion Carried

RES 23-019 A motion by Hank T. Gibson, seconded by Vince Coia, to approve the following purchase orders:

- a. #123-2023 \$500.00 Chase – advertising on Zip Recruiter for Road dept.
- b. #124-2023 \$3,000.00 CTMS – Vince’s pc and other small equipment from General Fund
- c. #125-2023 \$500.00 Chase – advertising on Zip Recruiter for Zoning Inspector

R/C: Mr. Coia, yes; Mr. DiPaola, yes; and Mr. Gibson, yes. Motion Carried

RES 23-020 A motion by Hank T. Gibson, seconded by Jim DiPaola to approve the purchase of a docking station for the meeting room through CTMS at a cost of no more than \$275.00. R/C: Mr. Coia, yes; Mr. DiPaola, yes; and Mr. Gibson, yes. Motion Carried

RES 23-021 A motion by Hank T. Gibson, seconded by Jim DiPaola, to declare Vince Coia’s old laptop obsolete and permit safe destruction of it. It is broken beyond repair. R/C: Mr. Coia, yes; Mr. DiPaola, yes; and Mr. Gibson, yes. Motion Carried

The trustees discussed moving forward with authorization to hire two full-time firefighters and pay them with ARPA money that is designated as lost revenue.

RESOLUTION NO. 23-022

Authorizing Expenditure from American Rescue Plan Act Funds

Portage County, Ohio

Be It Resolved by the Township Trustees of Ravenna Township

WHEREAS, this date, February 01, 2023, Trustee Hank T. Gibson moved the adoption of the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, the Township has received a distribution of monies (the “ARPA Funds”) from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“ARPA” or the “Act”); and

WHEREAS, Congress passed the Act effective March 11, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Section 603 created the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund which, among other things, appropriated money to cities, nonentitlement units of local government, and counties to mitigate the fiscal effects stemming from the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19); and

WHEREAS, Section 603(c) generally provides that:

(1) **USE OF FUNDS.** Subject to paragraph (2), and except as provided in paragraphs (3) and (4), a metropolitan city, nonentitlement unit of local government, or county shall only use the funds provided under a payment made under this section to cover costs incurred by the metropolitan city, nonentitlement unit of local government, or county, by December 31, 2024 -

(A) to respond to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID–19) or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality;

(B) to respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID–19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to eligible workers of the metropolitan city, nonentitlement unit of local government, or county that are performing such essential work, or by providing grants to eligible employers that have eligible workers who perform essential work;

(C) for the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue of such metropolitan city, nonentitlement unit of local government, or county due to the COVID-19 public health emergency relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year of the metropolitan city, nonentitlement unit of local government, or county prior to the emergency; or

(D) to make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.

WHEREAS, Department of Treasury Final Rule, published on January 6, 2022, and effective April 1, 2022, provides in part that:

Treasury presumes that up to \$10 million in revenue has been lost due to the public health emergency and recipients are permitted to use that amount (not to exceed the award amount) to fund “government services.” [The “standard allowance”].

WHEREAS, the Rule further observes that:

The standard allowance provides an estimate of revenue loss that is based on an extensive analysis of average revenue loss across states and localities, and offers a simple, convenient way to determine revenue loss particularly for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund’s smallest recipients. This change is intended to promote administrative efficiency and simplify revenue loss calculation for smaller recipients.

WHEREAS, the Rule further clarifies that recipients can use:

SLFRF funds on government services up to the revenue loss amount, whether that be the standard allowance amount or the amount calculated using the [Final Rule four-step process]. Government services generally include any service traditionally provided by a government, unless treasury has stated otherwise.

WHEREAS, some common examples of “government services” expressly recognized by Treasury are as follows:

- **Road building and maintenance, and other infrastructure**
- **Health services**
- **General government administration, staff, and administrative facilities**
- **Environmental remediation**
- **Provision of police, fire, and other public safety services (including purchase of fire trucks and police vehicles)**
- **Maintenance or pay-go funded building infrastructure**
- **Modernization of cybersecurity, including hardware, software, and protection of critical infrastructure**

WHEREAS, “Government services is [deemed by Treasury] the most flexible eligible use category under the SLFRF program, and funds are subject to streamlined reporting and compliance requirements;” and

WHEREAS, funds utilized pursuant to the standard revenue loss allowance continue to have certain restrictions, including:

- **Deposit into pension funds**
- **Satisfaction of settlements or judgments**
- **Contributions to financial reserves or “rainy day” funds**

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has identified a project which, in the judgment of the Board, qualifies as a permitted use of the ARPA Funds, in direct support of governmental services, which consists of the following:

Hiring two full-time firefighters and pay their wages and benefits in 2023 with money from the ARPA fund.
(the “Project”).

NOW THEREFORE, it is hereby RESOLVED by the Board that:

1. The Township elected to use the standard allowance by way of Resolution 22-038, passed April 29, 2022 and its presumption of revenue loss due to the public health emergency and to use the amount authorized herein to fund government services.

2. The Project is hereby authorized and shall be paid for from the ARPA Funds in the amount of/an amount of approximately \$100,000.00.

3. The Project described herein serves the objectives of the Act by providing services traditionally provided by a government, namely:

- Police protection
- Fire and emergency medical services
- Road repair, maintenance and other transportation and safety services
- Public infrastructure support
- General government administration and administrative facilities
- Land use regulations and enforcement
- Parks and recreational facilities and programs
- Other

4. Accordingly, the Project is in the best interests of the Township and is deemed a priority for the community.

5. No obligations paid under the authority of this Resolution were incurred prior to March 3, 2021.

Trustee Jim DiPaola seconded the Motion, and thereupon, the roll call votes are as follows:
R/C: Mr. Coia, yes; Mr. DiPaola, yes, Mr. Gibson, yes. Motion Carried.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion by Hank T. Gibson seconded by Vince Coia, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 PM.
R/C: Mr. Coia, yes; Mr. DiPaola, yes; Mr. Gibson, yes. Motion passed.

ATTEST:

CHAIR

TRUSTEE

FISCAL OFFICER

TRUSTEE