

SOMERFORD TOWNSHIP
P. O. Box 861
Office Location: [91 State Route 56](#) N.W.
London, OH 43140

James Moran, Chairman
Ernest Sparks, Vice Chairman
Bill Laney, Trustee

Brian Knowles, Zoning Inspector
Amanda Knowles, Fiscal Officer

The Somerford Township Trustees met in regular session on Wednesday, January 8, 2020 at the Somerford Township Hall located at 91 St Rt 56 NW with the above members present. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. and was immediately opened to the public. One of the residents asked if Jimmie could give a timeline of the events that took place that led to the acceptance of the 3 fire levies. The increase in taxes is a major concern for many residents. Mr. Moran went on to explain that Somerford Township was always a part of MCEMD and opening the new part of this building made us a central location for the MCEMD. Somerford Township was never a part of the Fire District; it had always contracted out to the City of London for fire protection. Somerford Township was approached by both London and Central Township Fire Departments in November 2018, offering fire coverage to Somerford. After review of both contracts, the Trustees agreed that Central Fire was the best option as they would be employing full time employees as well as equipment at this location. Much discussion was brought up about the Trustees making this decision and the amount of time they decided it in. One of the residents brought in a paper that was signed by the Trustees and Mr. Laney explained that it stated, "At a regularly scheduled meeting in August 21, 2019." Mr. Laney went on to explain that Central had a meeting in August and passed a resolution that the 4.75 mil levy would be on the books. Somerford Township then tried to go through the County prosecutor to draw up a lease agreement with Central to have them pay Somerford "rent" that would cover the building costs. The contract that was drawn up was heavily favored toward Central Township and the Trustees felt that Somerford would be giving up almost all control of this building and that was not going to work. That is why all levies are being collected. One of the residents then spoke out about the lack of communication between the Trustees and the public and that it was disappointing that they felt blindsided by this increase in their taxes. Mr. Laney went back and reiterated that a special meeting was advertised and held in November 2018 discussing the merger. He also stated that the Trustees could have done things differently in letting the public know about the levies being collected. At this time, there were no further questions or comments from the audience and the regular meeting material was addressed.

Amanda Knowles, Somerford Township Fiscal Officer asked for a motion to approve the permanent appropriations for fiscal year 2020. James Moran moved that these appropriations be approved, Bill Laney seconded; role call was taken and all were in favor, motion carried. Next, Ms. Knowles told the trustees that she was accepting nominations for Chairman of the

Board. Mr. Moran nominated Ernest Sparks for that position and Bill Laney seconded. There were no objections; Mr. Sparks is the 2020 Chairman by acclamation. Mr. Sparks then nominated Bill Laney as the Vice Chairman. Mr. Moran seconded, all were in favor and the motion carried. Ms. Knowles also asked for a motion to accept Somerford Township not exceeding \$85,000 for medical insurance costs in 2020; Mr. Sparks moved that this number be approved, Mr. Moran seconded, roll call was taken and all were in favor, motion carried. Appointment to committees for 2020 will be as follows: Mr. Laney - Madison County Emergency Medical District, Mr. Moran - Sewer & Water Board, Mr. Sparks - Regional Planning Commission. The minutes from the December 2019 meeting were read and approved by the trustees. The Somerford Trustees reviewed and signed approval of the January 2020 payroll and bills.

Somerford Zoning Inspector, Brain Knowles, updates the Board on the Frank Ward property. He stated that some vehicles have been removed from the property and he will continue to follow up. He also said he was looking into a house that was condemned by Madison County Health.

Mr. Bill Laney then informs the Board that Grace Electric estimated it would cost \$768 to run electric to the Somerford Township sign out from of the building. Bill motioned to repair the sign and split the cost up between the entities in the building. Mr. Sparks seconds, all are in favor and the motion is passed.

Mr. Moran brought up the topic of the furnace needing repaired and the EMS already had work done on it. He suggests a plan be put in place to keep everyone in the loop when things need immediate attention by all entities in the building. He also suggested we go ahead and get the estimate and move on from there. He also states that he will check on the mowers in the near future.

Lastly, a Mr. Bruce Rafferty was in attendance. Mr. Moran informs him that after talking with Prosecutor Pronai, it was determined that the graves Mr. Rafferty is interested in were never surveyed and they cannot be sold without it. No one is certain how to get them surveyed. Mr. Moran is going to continue to look into this process. Mr. Rafferty explains that a family member is very sick and they would like this situation expedited. Mr. Moran agrees he will continue to work diligently on the topic.

Being no further business to be discussed at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Amanda Knowles, Somerford Township Fiscal Officer

Date: _____

Ernest Sparks, Chairman