

VERMILION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES***Record of Proceedings
Minutes to Emergency Meeting Held 3/23/20***

Meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman Charles T. Trinter.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Charles T. Trinter, Trustee; Ronald L. Dickel, Trustee; Carl E. Hill, Trustee; Brenda J. Zsebik, Fiscal Officer; Robert Kurtz, Building Official/Zoning Administrator; Frank R. Triana, Vermilion Township Fire Chief; Tina L. Karres, Township Secretary.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

No audience participation.

NEW BUSINESS:

Trustee Trinter announced the purpose of the meeting was to take action concerning Ohio Governor Mike Dewine's Stay at Home Order (Effective at 11:59 p.m. on March 23, 2020 and remain in effect until 11:59 p.m. on April 6, 2020). Trustee Trinter stated the township needed to develop some policy and decide how to respond to this particular order during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic that is taking place.

Trustee Dickel stated he had talked to the Erie County Prosecutor this morning and was advised it was up to the entities and Board to decide which jobs are essential and which jobs aren't through April 6, 2020. Trustee Dickel stated EMS/Fire Department are obviously essential and not in question. Trustee Trinter agreed.

Chief Frank Triana stated protocols are in place to get the job done. The department was mandated two days ago, all EMS calls, personnel must have face masks, gloves, and eye protection. The Chief informed the Board more eye protection should be arriving today, and all current eye protection were placed in trucks and are to be used universally. The EMS/Fire personnel have their temperature taken every morning and are logged in. If they even look like they are getting a fever, they will be sent home to be quarantined. Everything has been running smoothly through this time period, and the department remains very busy. Chief Triana advised if someone is not needed, let them stay home or come in on every other week basis. All vehicles and areas are being wiped down and scrubbed. The EMS/Fire personnel will be available if there is anything they can do to help and support the township. Trustee Trinter asked if someone stopped in, could they get the fire department's attention. The Chief stated there was a buzzer at the front door that goes off in the bay and the department would answer if need be. Through the VTFD facebook page, they also instructed emergency walk-in EMS/fire department visitors to go to the north door. They will not be accepting any regular visitors to the fire department during this time period.

Trustee Trinter stated the township is an essential business, but we don't have to be immediately available. We need to make an attempt to give residents an opportunity to be able to contact the township if they need us. The Road Crew are essential if we have a tree down etc., but wondered if they should be available full-time. Trustee Dickel stated the way he looked at it was the township is here to support the health, safety, and welfare of the public. The township is here to service the public, especially when during this pandemic, that people are becoming a little more panicked. If someone in

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the public were to call with a problem, he felt someone should be there to talk to a live person rather than a voicemail. The real question, is what the Board feels like is essential to keep the township running smoothly for our constituents. Trustee Hill stated all the city offices are closed. He recommended if the Board decided to close the township offices, they could put contact phone numbers on the door. The first responders will be available for emergencies. Mr. Kurtz stated, being available, as a first responder, he could answer the phones if they were to ring. Trustee Hill stated to let the Road Crew decide if they want to come in. Trustee Dickel stated, according to the Assistant Prosecutor, Susan R. Brown, the township does not let the employee decide, the Board needs to make the decision. Township Secretary, Mrs. Karres stated the website has been updated with the latest information on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) for those residents who use the internet. The residents who have called, have been given up-to-date information and directed to resources that have been made available. Mrs. Karres noted there has been a decrease in visitors and phone calls in general since this pandemic began. Chief Triana stated Mercy Health Center has shut down and they have one doctor and two others in the office to answer questions. They are shipping all patients to other appropriate facilities in the Mercy Health network. Trustee Trinter asked if they were keeping appointments that were already scheduled. Chief Triana said they were not keeping regular non-emergency appointments. They were rescheduling. The office staff are answering phone calls and questions on the phone and guiding patients what to do depending on the circumstance.

Trustee Trinter asked if the EMS/Fire Personnel were comfortable in what they needed to do and if they appeared scared to do their job. Chief Triana stated they were all comfortable and he has not heard any of his staff raise concerns. He stated they voiced, if they get the virus, then they get it. They knew what they signed up for. The Chief ended with a discussion on safety and protocol regarding how they are handling calls and patients during this time period.

Trustee Trinter felt guidance needed to be given to the Road Department and the office staff. Trustee Trinter felt the offices should be closed and each individual person could come in and do a job as needed. Trustee Trinter stated the order takes effect until April 6, 2020 and our next regular scheduled meeting is scheduled for April 1, 2020. He stated there were bills to pay and felt we could still have the meeting to take care of necessary business unless things proceeded to get worse. Bob would be here as a first responder and could keep an eye on the phones for emergencies. Trustee Hill stated all the Trustee's phone numbers could be placed on the front door. Trustee Trinter agreed to put phone numbers on door. The Fire Department will assist emergencies during the day. Fiscal Officer, Mrs. Zsebik informed the Board that the next regular scheduled meeting on Wednesday, April 1, 2020 could be cancelled and is not absolutely a necessity since all work pertaining to finances will be completed. She explained that she will be in and out of the office and assured the Board that all checks regarding bills that need to be paid and payroll will be processed and ready for signing as normal. There is no need to have that meeting unless there is something that comes up that needs to be voted on. Everything will be covered and can be done at the April 15, 2020 meeting. This might make it easier until after the April 6th Stay at Home order deadline when more information will be available, and things could be reevaluated at that time. Trustee Trinter restated that what they wanted was for basically everything to come to a halt for this time period. Trustee Dickel asked if they should shut down everything, the office, the road department, the staff and just have the Fire Department here, with the exception of the essential elected official Fiscal Officer who could get the mail and so on. Trustee Trinter stated local government is essential. Trustee Dickel stated to Mr. Kurtz, Building Official/Zoning Administrator that if the decision is to close the office no inspections are expected to be completed during this time period and what are his thoughts on this. Trustee Dickel stated the Board does not want to put the Building Official/Zoning Administrator in a position where he has to work and could possibly get infected with the virus. Mr. Kurtz answered saying the state did not want us to be a hindrance to contractors and there were other ways of doing it by virtual inspections. A couple of inspections cannot be virtual inspections, but he has notified them not to be there when he is

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completes them. Brenda Zsebik, Fiscal Officer inquired as to whether the contractors would be following the governor's stay at home order as well. Mr. Kurtz stated he knew they were not. Trustee Trinter stated if there was a problem such as electrical or plumbing, he could see that as essential. Fiscal Officer Zsebik agreed if there was a problem it should be considered essential. Mrs. Zsebik added, she wasn't sure, if things like putting up a pole barn would be considered essential and should be on hold as well. Mrs. Zsebik stated if the decision is to close the offices/road department, the employees will be paid their regular wages, with no sick, vacation, or personal time being used. Mrs. Zsebik wanted the Board to be aware of these considerations as well when making a decision. Trustee Trinter stated in the spirit of what is happening that would be the way he would suggest the township should handle this situation. Basically, we are protecting employees from getting sick. Trustee Dickel stated he believes the Board should protect the employees to the fullest and after this order they can reevaluate the circumstances. If any of the employees were needed during this time period, we would appreciate them helping out if necessary. Trustee Dickel stated he personally feels no inspections should be completed during this time period. Mr. Kurtz suggested he would be around the township on behalf of the fire department and has been telling people if they want a building permit it needs to be mailed or placed in the drop box. Absolutely no contact. No one will be allowed in the building and permits will be mailed. No face to face contact.

Trustee Dickel stated he felt the April 1, 2020 regular meeting should be cancelled, while trying to keep with the order of social distancing if everything has been taken care of and as long as there are no emergencies. It was agreed only 10 people would be allowed in the meeting room while this issue is going on, but other allowances for meetings could be proposed such as setting up in the bay with cameras to follow social distancing recommendations. Trustee Trinter stated that hopefully people will realize this is a serious situation and stay home and social distance like the experts are advising people to do. Fiscal Officer reminded the Board to consider the janitors as well when making a decision today. The Board agreed to have the janitors come back after April 6, 2020 unless new information is given. Trustee Trinter stated things are changing every day. Trustee Dickel stated he wanted to protect the Building Official/Zoning Administrator and stated the virus could be on objects, as well, so he would like to stop all inspections during this time period. Trustee Dickel stated people should be able to wait 2 weeks until more information is received. Mr. Kurtz stated most inspections could be done by a picture, except new homes. Trustee Dickel recommended shutting everything down and Mr. Kurtz could work on behalf of the fire department. Trustee Dickel suggested Mr. Kurtz could complete the last new home inspection on site, but then only virtual inspections unless an emergency necessity. The Board agreed and stated they do not want to put anyone in danger.

MOTION BY R. Dickel, second by C. Hill authorizing to shut everything down offices (Township Secretary, Road Crew, Janitors) effective at 11:59 p.m. on March 23, 2020 and remain in effect until 11:59 p.m. on April 6, 2020 and allowing Mr. Kurtz, Building Official/Zoning Administrator to complete the one unfinished new home inspection. No contact and no one comes inside the township building. All employees are off until April 7, 2020 with pay (unless something comes up) at which time the situation will be reevaluated. If the township needs an employee, they will contact them and will appreciate any employee coming in to help. The April 1, 2020 Regular Board Meeting will be cancelled (The township sign will be updated to include the cancelled meeting and offices closed). Contact Information will be placed on the door and website.

Roll Call – R. Dickel, yes; C. Trinter, yes; C. Hill, yes; Motion Carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 16-20

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MOTION BY C. Trinter, second by R. Dickel to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 a.m. with no further business to discuss. Roll Call – R. Dickel, yes; C. Trinter, yes; C. Hill, yes; Motion Carried.

Charles T. Trinter
Trustee

Ronald T. Dickel
Trustee

Carl Hill
Trustee

Tina J. Karres
Township Secretary