

ROSS TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS MEETING

June 2, 2025

The Ross Township Supervisors Meeting was called to order on June 2, 2025 at 5:59pm. The meeting was held at the Township Municipal Building.

In attendance were Chairman James Zahoroiko, Vice Chairman David Shay and Supervisor Randy Detrick. Solicitor Attorney Eric Filer was also in attendance.

OPEN TO PUBLIC:

Martha Rezeli from The Ross Township Historical Society let it be known that the Museum will be open Saturday 6/14 from 11:00am-3:00pm with an exhibit on curated and documented Indian Arrowheads from the surrounding area.

Ms. Rezeli also stated that they are set with the September 7th date for the reenactment, but are looking more into a food truck option as it was more expensive than they originally thought it would be.

Chairman James Zahoroiko stated they had done hot dogs for Community Day and Supervisor Randy Detrick stated he had commercial level rollers that could be used. Ms. Rezeli stated she would follow up.

MINUTES REVIEW:

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2025 meeting as written by Supervisor Randy Detrick and seconded by Vice Chairman David Shay. The motion carried 3-0.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Vice Chairman David Shay made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Randy Detrick and carried 3-0.

PLANS:

Catherine Andrews/Dan Saunders Land Development - Extension Expires 8/4/2025

Applicants were not in attendance and Supervisor Randy Detrick stated there was no action to be taken on the Plan that evening and that they should be back before the Board of Supervisors next month.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS:

Lease for the Haney House

Vice Chairman David Shay stated the existing lease was up and that the rent was increased due to the occupant no longer providing security services to the Township which were previously considered part of the rental agreement.

Vice Chairman David Shay made a motion to approve the new two year lease, with two year option, at \$1400 per month. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Randy Detrick and carried 3-0.

Blue Ridge Hook & Ladder

Chief Paul Warnick stated the main item he wanted to address was what could be done to expand the current budget of the Fire Department outside of only asking for donations to have enough to come in in

order to continue operations. He asked the Board of Supervisors had put any more thought into the situation. Supervisor Randy Detrick stated the Board of Supervisors had not had any further discussions as a group.

Chief Warnick stated with how their current budget is running, they have about a year and a half that they continue sustaining how they have been running and that, if things continue as they have been, Blue Ridge Hook & Ladder would not be able to continue operate after the end of 2026. He further stated he had a meeting with Hamilton Township and that they are currently giving approximately \$300,000 a year in terms of monetary donations, diesel purchases and covering of their Workman's Compensation. It was stated the usual deal they have set up with Ross Township would be Hamilton Township paying 2/3 and Ross Township paying 1/3 of the budget. Chief Warnick stated Ross Township was not at the 1/3 amount and understands that Ross Township does not have that amount available within the budget which is where the possibility of a Fire Tax had been brought forward to not take any more away from Ross Township.

Vice Chairman David Shay stated he had spoke with Hamilton Township and learned that they had committed to giving \$200,000 over the next two years which Chief Warnick confirmed along with Hamilton Township also covering all diesel fuel, Workman's Comp and other supply purchases such as road flares. It was stated that this \$200,000 amount is double what Hamilton Township had been paying previously.

Chief Warnick continued with stating that the department has been running continuous fundraisers as of late along with having about 450 calls per year. They are unable to do more, in terms of fundraising, than they already are, but still have to come up with a substantial amount as they are now also having issues with one of their tankers which is beyond repair and will need replaced as it was a truck that would go to all fire calls.

Supervisor Randy Detrick asked if Hamilton Township had a Fire Tax. Chief Warnick stated they do not and that there are only four townships within Monroe County that do not. The money received from Hamilton Township comes from a General Fund from a Township Tax. He further stated that this is why they were suggesting a Fire Tax and that even if it would only be \$100 per household annually, it would be a very good start for them. This tax would all go to Emergency Services and helping with backdating maintenance they have been unable to afford with aging trucks and equipment.

Supervisor Randy Detrick stated Vice Chairman David Shay had a spreadsheet of previous year contributions from 2018 through 2024 and Chief Warnick stated he had numbers from 2014 through year-to-date 2025 numbers. When asked what the projected total for 2025 would be, Vice Chairman David Shay stated \$49,850 plus an additional \$10,000 towards a truck. Chief Warnick stated the last quarter payment goes to Hamilton Township for Ross Township's portion of Workman's Comp coverage leaving the amount the Fire Department receives from Ross Township to not be enough to coverage insurance for the year.

Supervisor Randy Detrick stated that 13% of Ross Township budget is going to the Fire Department and asked what would happen if nothing else happened and if they would be dissolved into other departments. Chief Warnick explained they would scale back to only Hamilton Township which they may have to do by the end of next year in order to cut expenses to work within their current budget as leaving Ross Township would cut their calls down by 40%.

As no changes could be made within the set Township Budget for this year, Vice Chairman David Shay recommended that they come in November for the workshop when they begin discussing the following year's budget. Supervisor Randy Detrick stated he would like to advertise and have a public forum at the next meeting to educate and allow for public discussion on adding a Fire Tax as there are currently no taxes for the Township in Ross.

When Chief Warnick stated the average from Ross Township has been about \$50,000 per year, Vice Chairman David Shay reviewed the numbers back from 2018 through 2025 as he stated his math for the yearly average was \$118,000 in contributions. The numbers stated were as follows:

	<u>Regular Contribution</u>	<u>Additional Given</u>
2018	\$45,000	\$40,000
2019	\$48,000	
2020	\$49,000	\$50,000
2021	\$49,500	\$40,000
2022	\$49,600	\$38,000
2023	\$49,600	\$23,650
2024	\$49,600	\$75,000
2025	\$49,000	\$10,000

Supervisor Randy Detrick asked about the difference in the amounts being given to the Fire Department versus the roughly \$30,000 per year that Chief Warnick said they were receiving. Chief Warnick explained the other amounts are line-item payments for specific projects such as trucks or radios with their last year's expenses coming in around \$480,000 without additional funds towards replacing items in the future.

Supervisor Randy Detrick and Chairman James Zahoroiko were in agreement to add a public discussion about a Fire Tax to the meeting agenda for next month. This would be advertised on the website as well for awareness.

Prior to moving on, Nathan, another member of Blue Ridge Hook & Ladder, addressed the Board of Supervisors as a resident of Ross Township. He stated he had spoke with his insurance company which stated that if there isn't a fire company, insurance will drop you from the plan and hazards would go up. He further stated the insurance company would not even be willing to provide an estimate if he did not have a fire department to service the home. Vice Chairman David Shay stated that he would guarantee that one way or another Ross Township would always have fire protection coverage.

Motion to Approve New Website

Supervisor Randy Detrick stated they are unable to contact who had originally designed the Township website years ago and are looking to migrate the website to another account in order to be able to make future updates.

Supervisor Randy Detrick made a motion to spend \$400 to migrate the Township website so that it could be managed. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman David Shay and carried 3-0.

Motion for Variance Letter - 2131 James Way

Vice Chairman David Shay stated they had received a letter from the Sewage Officer that the resident at 2131 James Way is having an issue with their septic and that a new system needs to be put in which would be within 100ft of their well. This would have no effect on any neighbors to the property. The DEP allows this and the SEO has signed off on along with the homeowner accepting any responsibility for their own well if there would be any contamination. The Board of Supervisors would just need to accept the homeowner taking responsibility of liability of his own septic system.

Chairman James Zahoroiko asked how this would show in a Deed if the homeowner were to sell in the future. Attorney Eric Filer stated there would be seller disclosures and inspections so a buyer would not be blindsided.

Based on the letter received from the SEO, Supervisor Randy Detrick made a motion to approve the Variance for 2131 James Way. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman David Shay and carried 3-0.

EVENTS:

Friday, July 4th - The Office will be closed for the Holiday

Saturday July 19th from 1:00-6:30pm – Blue Ridge Fire Fundraiser at Mazeilla

This event will be in celebration of Blue Ridge Hook & Ladder's 120th Anniversary along with raising funds for the Fire Department. Barley Creek will be providing food and drink for purchase along with Blue Ridge Winery and a portion of their sales will be donated back to the fire department. There will also be commemorative items for sale, live music, and various drawings to take part in.

ROAD FOREMAN REPORT:

Mt Eaton Road Culvert Project

Vice Chairman David Shay stated for the work to be done on the Mt Eaton Road Culvert, which the Township had received a Grant for, six bids had been received ranging from \$96,200 to \$146,800.

Vice Chairman David Shay made a motion to award the bid to the low bidder which was DGR Excavating LLC at \$96,250 based on recommendation in a review letter from the Township Engineer. This would be paid from the Grant that was received for the project. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Randy Detrick and carried 3-0.

Sale of Old Mower

Road Foreman Ethan Brewer stated the old mower had been listed on Municibid for the last month with the reserve set at \$16,000 and the auction ended that morning at \$18,400.

Vice Chairman David Shay made a motion to award the bid to the high bidder. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Randy Detrick and carried 3-0.

Backhoe Repair

Road Foreman Ethan Brewer stated the backhoe still hadn't been repaired as he had not heard anything more back.

Vice Chairman David Shay made a motion to allow up to \$4,100 for repairs needed on the backhoe. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Randy Detrick and carried 3-0.

New Truck

Road Foreman Ethan Brewer stated the international side of the new truck should be done in July and shared it was asked that the corresponding portion of the payment would be made then to avoid any future tariffs.

CORRESPONDENCE:

The Board of Supervisors had reviewed the provided Correspondence items and there were no further questions.

RECEIPTS & EXPENDITURES:

After a review of the bills to be paid, a motion to approve the processing and payment of all current bills was made by Supervisor Randy Detrick and seconded by Vice Chairman David Shay. The motion carried 3-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:30pm. The motion to adjourn was made by Supervisor Randy Detrick, seconded by Vice Chairman David Shay and carried 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lizzy Stortz

Temporary Recording Secretary