

**COVENTRY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**Regular Meeting of January 13, 2011**

The Coventry Township Board of Trustees met in regular session on Thursday, January 13, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. at the Coventry Township Town Hall.

Fiscal Officer Joni Murgatroyd called the meeting to order, and recorded the following Trustees present: Dave Bulgrin, yes; Brenda Patterson, yes; and Tom Seese, yes. All Trustees were recorded present.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited by those present.

Fiscal Officer Joni Murgatroyd asked the Board for a nomination for Chairperson for the Board of Trustees for 2011:

Brenda Patterson nominated Tom Seese. Dave Bulgrin seconded the nomination.

Fiscal Officer Joni Murgatroyd asked the Board for a nomination for Vice Chairperson for the Board of Trustees for 2011:

Tom Seese nominated Dave Bulgrin. Brenda Patterson seconded the nomination.

110113-01 Brenda Patterson made a motion that Tom Seese be appointed to Chairperson of the Board of Trustees for 2011. Dave Bulgrin seconded the motion. Roll call: Dave Bulgrin, yes; Brenda Patterson, yes; and Tom Seese, yes. Motion carried 3-0.

110113-02 Tom Seese made a motion that Dave Bulgrin be appointed to Vice Chairperson of the Board of Trustees for 2011. Brenda Patterson seconded the motion. Roll call: Dave Bulgrin, yes; Brenda Patterson, yes; and Tom Seese, yes. Motion carried 3-0.

Joni Murgatroyd turned the meeting over to Tom Seese.

Approval of Minutes

110113-03 Dave Bulgrin made a motion to approve and dispense with the reading of the minutes of the regular meeting of December 9, 2010, and the special meeting of January 6, 2011. Brenda Patterson seconded the motion. Roll call: Dave Bulgrin, yes; Brenda Patterson, yes; and Tom Seese, yes. Motion carried 3-0.

Old Business:

Tom Seese asked if there was any old business. There was none.

New Business:

Tom Seese asked if there was any new business. There was none.

Report by the Fiscal Officer:

Joni Murgatroyd, Fiscal Officer, asked the Board to approve the following motions:

110113-04 Brenda Patterson made a motion to pay all bills and salaries, warrant numbers 59309 to 59491, as certified by Fiscal Officer Joni Murgatroyd, and subject to audit. Dave Bulgrin seconded the motion. Roll call: Dave Bulgrin, yes; Brenda Patterson, yes; and Tom Seese, yes. Motion carried 3-0. A listing of the warrants will be made a part of these minutes.

Joni Murgatroyd advised the Board that their period to date financial reports are in

their meeting packet. She reported that she completed a Department of Taxation Survey Request to determine the impact on Townships regarding the loss of the Tangible Personal Property Tax that ended at the end of 2010. Currently local governments are being reimbursed by the State for these revenues that we have received in the past but they are going to be reimbursed on a graduated scale and will be phased out in 2018. She also reported that she completed a Local Government Fund Survey last month regarding the financial impact on the Township if the LGF funds are reduced further or eliminated. We've already received about a twenty percent reduction over the past couple of years. Because of the State's \$8 billion dollar short-fall, they are going to be looking at every revenue source within the State as to how they are going to plug that hole. The Local Government Fund is a very significant funding source for us. In the past we've received approximately \$500,000.00, and last year we only received \$420-some thousand dollars. To even lose another \$100,000.00 or \$200,000.00 can significantly impact us. That's how we've been able to offset some of the things that you see. We've done renewals. We've been very wise in how we've managed the money. We scrutinize every expenditure no matter what size it is. To have anything like this occur, if we would even lose half of that it, would greatly impact what we do in the future. She stated that she did let them know about what the impact would be for our Township. Everyone else is responding accordingly from other Townships and governmental entities. She went on to report that she also attended a records retention round table with the Summit County Executive's Office in November and most government entities were represented throughout Summit County, which is a very good forum to have. Records retention is a monumental task. There are a lot of requirements that we have to meet, and it is something that with emails and such, that's a new thing we are addressing, because it's now the new medium. People used to send letters and now they are sending emails in place of correspondence or letters. Those are things we are working on. It's going to be nice working with the county, cities and townships as we all look at and help each other out to develop these policies as we move forward. She reported that she just closed the year 2010 very smoothly and got the new year up and running. We are preparing for our State Audit for 2009 and 2010. She stated that she asked them to come in March, so they'll be in and out by the end of March. Also, the Annual Financial Report was filed with the State Auditor's Office this week. The legal ad will be published in the paper next week and if anyone would like to meet with her to discuss the Annual Financial Report, she advised that she can be contacted by appointment at the Township Administration Office.

#### Reports by Department Heads

Sheriff's Office representative, Deputy Linda Urycki introduced herself and stated that she's been with the Sheriff's Office for 11 years and has worked in Coventry for about the last four to five years. She stated that she will be the one coming to the meetings now every month. She stated that she told them that she probably knows a little bit more of what is going on in Coventry than the supervisors do. So, it will be her from now on, and she welcomes any questions or any problems or anything that anyone has, and if she doesn't have an answer, she stated that she can try to find out. She explained that what she would like to do is tell everyone a little bit about what happened in the month of December and then has a few other things to talk about. The December totals for calls for service were 742, that was for all shifts, all deputies for the month of December, which brings our total for the year to date in Coventry Township to 9,473 calls for service. The traffic cite total for the month of December was 75, however, that does not include the warning cites that are issued as a courtesy. The year to date total for cites, that again does not include the warning cites, is 875 for the entire year for Coventry Township. Our arrest total in December was 18, bringing a total of 201 arrests in Coventry Township. The only other odd thing was that we did have the Santa escorts on Christmas Eve and we had twenty deputies working that. It was strictly volunteer for people who wanted to follow the santa sleighs around to all of the different places that we go. There were no problems with that, everything went well. The only other thing she wanted to let the Township know about was that yesterday, just as a note, we had a call for suspicious activity over on Minor Avenue and we had a deputy respond. He made a traffic stop on a vehicle that was coming out of the area and it was found that they had copper. It was a bunch of cut up copper in their truck. They did make two arrests on the gentlemen that they found coming out of there and they found out that what they do is drive around the area and look for vacant homes. The way that they find if the house is vacant is they look for the sticker that says the

home has been winterized. They pretty much know then that it's a house that is probably a home foreclosure at that point and they know it's empty. One guy gets out and he starts to shovel the driveway so that if anybody asks, he can just say that the bank told him to come out and make sure the house looks lived in. He shovels and is the lookout for the guy inside cutting up the copper. They did make those two arrests and that is of note because they've been looking to catch these guys for a long time. She stated that she's sure that there are more than just these two out there but it was a start. She stated that she does encourage everybody that no matter what kind of suspicious activity they see to report it because it's better to have the Sheriff check it out. If it's nothing, then it's nothing, no big deal, have a nice day. Other than that it could always be something like this which is what we like, to catch guys like this doing this. She stated that was all she had to report.

Tom Seese asked if there were any questions for the Sheriff's Department. There were none. He thanked her for her report and asked to move on to David Calderone's report.

David Calderone, Fire Chief/Township Service Director, reported that in 2010 they ran 1,585 calls which is an eight percent increase, averaging 4.3 emergencies a day. He stated that was all he had to report, everyone has been working hard.

Lael Stouffer, Road/Maintenance Superintendent complimented the Summit County Engineer's Office and thanked them for their excellent service to the roads here in Coventry this winter. He feels that they have really been on top of it and has noticed that and wanted to acknowledge that they've been doing a good job. Also directed at the Engineer's Department, he wanted to let Geordie know that they would like to take advantage of the offer that Alan Brubaker mentioned when he first came into office about integrating our resurfacing program into the County's when they go out to bid. He asked if he could get any information from the County that he might need as far as what our responsibilities will be and the time frame on that.

Geordie Kissos from the Summit County Engineer's Office stated that he would email all of that to Lael regarding that.

Lael Stouffer stated that he thinks it was a stand-up offer that the Engineer made. It offers us an opportunity to save on some costs that we have every year as far as advertising and other things. He stated he likes the idea and if it's still available he would definitely like to look into it. Over the course of the next few weeks we will be determining what roads will receive resurfacing treatment this year and also looking into a possible truck replacement. When Unit 25 was retired a little over a year ago we had planned to replace it and shift the duties of some of the vehicles around. We scrutinized the duties of the vehicles and decided not to replace the vehicle right away to see if we could carry the load with the remaining fleet. That was acceptable and we've been fine so far. It does emphasize keeping our current trucks in good operational readiness but we really don't have the back-up that we did before. We may look at replacing our oldest unit, the 1998 Ford dump truck and he explained that he will at a later date, have more detailed information and viable options for the Board to review.

Tom Seese asked if there were any questions for the Road Superintendent. There were none. He asked for the report from George Beckham, Zoning Inspector.

George Beckham, Zoning Inspector, reported that last week the Summit County Common Pleas Judge ruled in favor of Summit County on the skilled game regulations that were passed last fall. There may be an appeal by the operators of these businesses. At the minimum there is a window for them to appeal, and during that window Summit County is going to stand pat on any enforcement. They're not going to start it and then have an appeal so they're just kind of seeing what is happening. One of the interesting things about these regulations is that they came about after complaints by Springfield and Coventry through Paula Prentice and the County instituted these regulations. Now, what's happened is that these regulations have gained a greater importance with the northern tier of Summit County, which had never been plagued by these kinds of businesses. They were always a problem for the southern communities and the City of Akron and now they are starting to move up into

the northern, higher income neighborhoods. The folks in the northern areas are really concerned. He explained that there were times over the last few years that he would mention 'skilled games' and 'internet cafes' to zoning inspectors in northern townships and they would have no idea what he was even talking about. Now they are finding out that these skilled gamers, they just all of a sudden are there. They don't ask permission, they just open up. It's kind of interesting how the whole thing has migrated north now. He reported that 2010 was again a record for the least number of permits he has written, back in the '90's he used to write 200-250 permits a year, and last year only issued 77 zoning permits. Everyone is setting record lows for permits, it's not just in Coventry. The focus the last several years, at least here, has been on property maintenance issues. Last year we spent \$5,000 cleaning lawns at vacant houses and trash problems. People are always concerned about what their neighborhoods look like, especially now that the real estate market is completely flat and you throw in a couple of vacant houses next door and you've got absolutely no chance at all of selling a house. So, right now he is working on numerous trash issues and junk car complaints. In addition to that we have some big ticket demolitions that are going to have to go on this spring, a couple of vacant houses and they are taking some time to put together. One situation there are four different attorneys involved, so it's taking some time to get all of the agreements worked out, but those are going to be fairly expensive costs for the Township. On the subject of junk vehicles, if someone has just one vehicle they can get a little bit of leeway on time. There are a lot of reasons, people may not be able to afford a license plate, the title might be in some type of murky divorce situation or they just can't afford it. As long as you keep the tires pumped up and the weeds around it cut so it doesn't look like a junk vehicle, we can live with that a little bit longer than the three or four weeks he typically gives someone. If you've got multiple junk cars, there is really no extenuating circumstance, you have to get rid of them. Junk cars are not a one-size-fits-all. Everyone has different reasons for why they have them and most of the time they go away, but never fast enough for the neighbors. There have been a significant number of trash issues the last few weeks. Trash is one of those things that there are no extenuating circumstances. Even in caveman days, people had to get rid of their trash, so you have to get rid of your trash on time. Switching gears, he stated that last month we had a meeting with Summit County Metro Parks on a long range plan to connect the Firestone Metro Park with the new Confluence Metro Park and the Towpath Trail. That connection would be somewhere near Logan Field and Vaughn Road. Various routes are being considered so that is something we will be talking about down the road. Lastly he's had some inquiries over the the last month from about four different local businesses who are planning on doing some type of expansion next year so it's possible that the economy is looking a little bit better. People are actually at least thinking of expansion now, where they haven't been for the past few years.

Tom Seese asked if there were any questions for the Zoning Inspector. There were none.

#### Reports by Trustees:

Dave Bulgrin stated that he is glad to see everybody here. It's another new year but a lot of the same problems, and he'd like to mention just a couple of them to the Summit County Sheriff. He stated that he knows that the weather, when it's slippery and even just tonight, he was going over to Lakeview to watch the small kids play basketball, which is a riot if you ever get a chance to go over there, but on State Mill people follow you right on your tail all the way across there. He stated he doesn't know what is wrong with them and he purposely slows down, which probably ticks them off, but they just will not slow down. He stated that is a dangerous area and it's marked 25 mph.

Deputy Urycki stated 25, or 35 mph?

Joni Murgatroyd stated 35 mph.

Dave Bulgrin stated yes, but not on the bends, where it bends.

Deputy Urycki stated up towards S. Main Street?

Tom Seese stated you mean Portage Lakes Drive.

Deputy Urycki stated you're right, that's what I meant to say.

Dave Bulgrin stated he's talking about State Mill between Manchester and Portage Lakes Drive.

Joni Murgatroyd stated oh, State Mill, the curves.

Dave Bulgrin stated tonight it happened and it happens a lot and not only to him, he hears it from other people. He stated that the Road Department has done an excellent job of keeping up the roads because he knows this morning there was probably two or three inches of snow on the streets. They came down the road with the salt trucks and later on they came through again and it was clear as can be. He stated that he thinks they've done a great job and hopes that the snow slows down because we don't want to run out of salt or anything but everything else seems fine. He stated he's glad to see everyone back and wished all a happy new year.

Brenda Patterson wished everyone a happy new year. She reported that she's been working on the recycling, and getting another bin. It probably won't be at Coventry High School but they are looking at other places. She also stated that Lael has done a good job with the roads. She stated she, Lael, Tom and George were in a meeting with the Metro Parks and that was last week.

Tom Seese thanked the Board for selecting him to serve as the Chair for 2011. He explained that he believes that it's part of the duties of a Township Trustee and one that you can never prepare yourself for. It doesn't involve a lot more work with the exception of a lot more signatures, because you are the Chairperson. He stated that he looks forward to serving and it's been one year since he came back to this Board and he's tried his best to work with all of the department heads and try to learn what is going on. Obviously, over the period of the last 26 years there's been a lot of changes, most of them good, most of them for the betterment of the community, and he just looks forward to continuing to serve. He thanked George Beckham, and explained that if anyone ever drives down Canova, they noticed that there was a terrible looking shack filled with junk and with George's effort, that is gone. The neighbors are just tickled to death that that has been done. Also, he thinks tentatively on February 9<sup>th</sup> there will be a meeting here at the Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. Councilwoman Paula Prentice has reserved it to discuss how close we are to whether or not we provide sewer to the residents of Whitefriars. It's for the residents of Whitefriars to see if they have enough residents committed to do that. He advised the Board to mark their calendars if they would like to attend, 7:00 on February 9<sup>th</sup>. Tom Seese stated that concludes his report and it's been a fun year and he looks forward to working in 2011.

Comments from the Public:

Tom Seese asked for any comments from the public.

Bill Breitenbach congratulated Tom Seese on his Chairmanship. He stated that the School Board will look forward to working with the Board again this year. He wished everyone a happy new year and stated that he is looking forward to a good year in Coventry.

John Rogers thanked the Board for his appointment to the Zoning Commission and stated he will work to do his best under the leadership of George Beckham.

Dave Bulgrin stated glad to have you.

Tom Seese stated he was glad John volunteered.

Ed Diebold asked what anyone was hearing on the sewer. He stated he's hearing that prices are going to double or even triple.

Joni Murgatroyd stated that we haven't gotten any notification.

Tom Seese stated, you mean our sewer rates? He stated that he knows there is a lot of discussion going on reference a question of flat rate versus number of people in the homes. Everyone is struggling financially and who knows what is going to happen because the County and the City have some mutual agreements that they work together. The City is getting blasted pretty good for having antique, antiquated, old sewer lines that the feds are maybe going to force some renovations and upgrades. Unfortunately somebody is going to pay for that. If you don't get it from the taxpayers where do you get it, especially with federal funds, everybody is running out of funds.

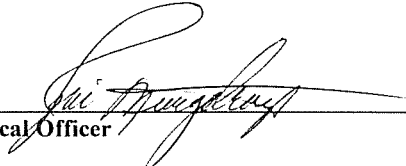
Tom Seese stated if there is nothing else, he'd like a motion to adjourn.

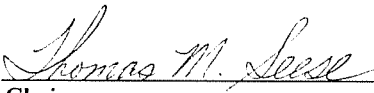
Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Dave Bulgrin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Brenda Patterson seconded the motion. Roll call: Dave Bulgrin, yes; Brenda Patterson, yes; and Tom Seese, yes. Motion carried 3-0.

Tom Seese announced that the next meeting will be February 10, 2011 at 7:30 in the Town Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

  
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Fiscal Officer

  
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Chairperson