

The Chester Township Board of Trustees met in **REGULAR** session on **Thursday, January 8, 2026** in the Town Hall Meeting Room at **6:30 PM** Chairman Craig S. Richter presided.

**Roll Call:** All Trustees and the Fiscal Officer were present.

**Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

The Board led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**Leading Motion #: 2026-01**

**6:30 PM Service Department Garage Project with Roger Riachi and App Architecture**

Maria Schertler and Todd Gindelberger of App Architecture joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams. The Owner's Representative, Roger Riachi, joined in person with the Elected Officials in the Town Hall meeting room.

The Board reviewed the preliminary schematic drawings and site utility improvements for the proposed Department Service Garage. Discussion focused on potential cost-saving measures, including evaluating the feasibility of reducing the number of service bays from seven (7) to six (6) and decreasing the overall size of the connector section. These modifications were discussed as possible options to help manage project costs while maintaining operational efficiency.

It was noted that upon approval and finalization of the preliminary schematic drawings by the Elected Officials, the bid process for the project may proceed.

**Road Salt Shortage**

Chester Township is currently experiencing a shortage of road salt. The Morton Salt Company and associated trucking companies have reduced the number of deliveries to the Township. In response, the Road Department Superintendent has begun supplementing sand, cinders and ice grits to conserve salt and will begin limiting salting on secondary roads with salting focused on hills, sharp curves and intersections. A notification will be issued through the Chester Township Connect app to inform residents of the salt shortage and the reduced treatment of secondary roads. An additional concern discussed was maintaining accessibility for emergency vehicles, including fire and EMS, during winter weather events.

Resident, Joe Mazzurco stated there is a salt shortage throughout the area and a rebound will be unlikely.

Mr. Onyshko and Mr. Davis will contact ODOT regarding receiving an emergency salt reserve if available.

**Executive Session**

**2026-01** Mr. Richter moved to approve to enter into executive session at 7:34 PM pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 121.22 (G) (1) to consider compensation and the appointment for public employee(s).

Mr. Radtke seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

Invited into the executive session is Fire Chief Andy Nagy, Township Administrator Mark Purchase and Fiscal Officer Patricia Jarrett

Chief Nagy left at 7:48 PM.

The Board reentered public session at 8:01 PM.

**Approval of Minutes**

**2026-02** Mr. Richter moved to approve the Board of Trustees Regular and Special meeting minutes for 12/24/25 as presented to the Board by the Fiscal Officer and to waive the reading of the minutes. Mr. Davis seconded. Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, abstain. Motion passed.

### **Public Comments/ Questions**

#### **West Geauga Pickleball**

Barry Leven, representing West Geauga Pickleball, addressed the Board regarding fundraising efforts for Dark Sky-compliant lighting for the pickleball courts. Mr. Leven reported that West Geauga Pickleball currently has approximately \$4,000.00 in its GoFundMe account and anticipates the need to raise an additional \$20,000.00 to meet the total project cost.

Mr. Leven discussed a potential partnership with an indoor pickleball club, which is a for-profit corporation. The proposed partnership would include displaying the company's banners during tournaments, allowing the company to sell pickleball paddles under its canopy during events with 10% of the company's sales being donated directly to the lighting fundraiser and permitting West Geauga Pickleball to sell food at tournaments. The partnership would be structured as a five-year sponsorship and would include benefits such as discounts for indoor play and free pickleball lessons for children.

Trustee Radtke stated he will reach out to the Ohio Township Association (OTA) for guidance regarding the handling of funds and any legal or financial considerations related to the proposed fundraising activities. Further discussion and decisions will be addressed at a future meeting.

### **Department Business- Road**

#### **Changing Job Title of Cemetery Sexton**

The Board acknowledged that Lisa Luoma is extremely knowledgeable in cemetery operations and provides valuable experience and continuity in managing day-to-day cemetery activities. Based on this discussion, the Board agreed to proceed with changing the job title to more accurately align with her current duties. Further details regarding the updated title will be addressed at a future meeting.

#### **Cemetery Fees**

The Board discussed the current cemetery fee structure, noting that the non-resident fees are not significantly different from the resident fees. It was acknowledged that this minimal difference may not adequately reflect residency status or associated costs. As a result, the Board will review the existing fee schedule and consider potential adjustments to better differentiate between resident and non-resident fees. This matter will be evaluated further, and any recommended changes will be presented for future discussion and possible action.

#### **Flower Baskets**

The Board discussed whether to continue the use of hanging flower baskets in the center of town on the telephone poles or to transition to flower boxes placed along the fence surrounding the park. Concerns were raised regarding the upkeep of the hanging flower baskets, including the need for a bucket truck for installation and ongoing watering, as well as regular fertilizing and maintenance.

The Board noted that flower boxes may present a more manageable and cost-effective alternative, as they would reduce equipment needs and simplify routine maintenance. The matter will be evaluated further, with consideration given to aesthetics, cost, and staff time, before a final decision is made at a future meeting.

### **Road Department Equipment Fund**

Mr. Richter explained there is not a specific Road Department equipment reserve fund. The general fund historically has supported the road department for a portion of their expenses.

Reserve Funds have been established for buildings but not yet for equipment. It continues to be a topic of discussion.

Resident Joe Mazzurco inquired whether, with twelve Road Department employees, the Board would consider implementing shift work to reduce overtime costs. Mr. Radtke suggested that Mr. Mazzurco, Mr. Davis, and Mr. Onyshko discuss the matter further.

**2026-03** Mr. Richter moved to approve the use of the FNB credit card to purchase a 5000 gallon stainless steel tank and pump to use as the new cistern at an amount of \$5825.00  
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

**2026-04** Mr. Richter moved to approve and amend motion 2025-258 to modify the effective date for wages and benefits, within the collective bargaining agreement, between Chester Township & the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local Union No. 436 / Chester Township Road Department personnel to the first full pay period of 2026 and 2027.  
Mr. Davis seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

**2026-05** Mr. Richter moved to approve Road Department expenditures as listed below.  
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

PO #	Type	Amount	Payable To	Purpose
115-2026	REG	\$1,625.00	Granite Telecomm. LLC	Telephone
114-2026	REG	\$740.00	Spectrum	Bandwidth/internet
112-2026	REG	\$1,000.00	GPD Gr./Geotechnical Serv. Inc.	Sieve Test on Salt Delivered
110-2026	REG	\$1,200.00	Vancuren Services	Removal of Tree near 12585 Chesterfield

### **Department Business- Fire**

**2026-06** Mr. Richter moved to accept the Scholarship Award for the 22nd Annual Fire Protection and Life Safety Forum, valued at approximately \$200. This award shall be applied toward the conference registration and meals for Fire Chief Andrew Nagy to attend.  
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

### **Department Business- Police**

**2026-07** Mr. Richter moved to amend motion 2025-492 to clarify and affirm that the approved hourly rate of pay for Police Chief Craig Young in calendar year 2026, has been established to be \$56.65 hourly.  
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

### **Department Business- Zoning**

#### **Zoning Commission – Initial 2026 Meeting Discussion**

Mr. Davis attended the Zoning Commission meeting on January 7, 2026. During the meeting, the Zoning Commission requested a suggested expectation list of items that the Board of Trustees would like the Commission to address in 2026.

**2026-08** Mr. Richter moved to approve up to \$100 per meeting through 2026 for light refreshments for Land Use Plan Committee meetings with the Township Administrator to review/approve monthly expenses.

Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

**2026-09** Mr. Richter moved to approve after the fact resignation of George Minello from the Zoning Commission effective 12/31/25.

Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

**2026-10** Mr. Richter moved to appoint Tim Rosenbaum as a regular member to the Chester Township Zoning Commission Board effective 1/8/26 and to expire on 12/31/28.

Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

**2026-11** Mr. Richter moved to appoint Jeff Sherwood as an alternate member to the Chester Township Zoning Commission effective 1/8/26 and to expire on 12/31/26.

Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

**New Business**

**Fire Station 2 – Resident Request to Rent**

Mr. Radtke reported that he received a phone call from a resident requesting to rent space at Fire Station 2 for the purpose of parking an RV. After discussion, the Board determined that it was not in favor of approving this request. The resident will be notified of the Board’s decision.

**Second Township Water Well Consideration**

Resident David Sloan proposed drilling a second water well on Township property. Mr. Radtke stated that the proposal would be cost-prohibitive and would not be an economically efficient course of action for the Township.

**Outside Legal Counsel**

The Board discussed the possibility of engaging new outside legal counsel and noted that several recommendations have been received. It was agreed that Mr. Davis will oversee the interview process, evaluate qualifications and costs, and report his findings to the Board to assist in selecting the legal counsel that best meets the Township’s needs.

**2026-12** Mr. Richter moved to authorize reimbursement for expenses and payment for mileage at a rate of 72.5 cents per mile for Township Officials and employees traveling on Township business for the calendar year 2026 which is pursuant to IRS code.

Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

**2026-13** Mr. Richter moved to approve and waive the burial fees of \$575.00 to the Antipov Estate, at the Chester Township Cemetery

Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

**2026-14** Mr. Richter moved to approve and re-assign cemetery deeds for the following plot(s) as listed below and issue a refund of \$950.00 to Mr. Boris Shpak

Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

	DEED #	SECTION	LOT	PLOT SITE(S)
<b>FROM:</b>	2021-003	3	044	4 & 5
<b>TO:</b>	2026-001	3	044	6
	2026-001	3	045	1

**Township Park  
Park Board Joint Meeting**

The Park Board provided a copy of their proposed budget for review by the Elected Officials. They also suggested that the joint meeting could be held at the Geauga West Library. Mr. Richter will contact the Park Board to coordinate and establish a date for the meeting at the library. Further details will be confirmed once the date is finalized.

**Perennial Gardeners**

The Board of Trustees received a letter from the Perennial Gardeners outlining their plans for 2026. The letter detailed their continued commitment to plant care, including weeding, general cleanup of garden areas, and the replacement of plants that are struggling. The Perennial Gardeners also requested the continued allocation of a portion of the NOPEC grant, consistent with the funding that has been shared with other civic groups in prior years.

Additionally, a second letter was addressed to the Chester Township Park Board requesting funding assistance for the purchase of annual plants, fertilizers, weed and animal control products, soil, and other related supplies.

It was noted that in prior years, the Perennial Gardeners have undertaken significant projects, particularly in the front areas and Gazebo, for which Chester Township paid certain expenses directly in addition to allocating a portion of the NOPEC grant.

**2026-15** Mr. Richter moved to advertise in the Chesterland News, Maple Leaf and Chester Township website for landscape, grounds and field maintenance proposals for Chester Parkside Park, Town Hall and Fire Department with sealed bids due at Chester Town Hall by 4:00 PM Thursday, February 19, 2026. Bids will be open on Thursday, February 19, 2026, 6:30 PM at the Board of Trustees meeting. Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

**Financial Items**

**2026-16** Mr. Richter moved to approve financial transactions as listed below. Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

PURCHASE ORDERS					
Dept	PO#	Type	Amount	Payable To	Purpose
GEN	116-2026	REG	\$300.00	Toshiba Business Solutions	Copy Costs
GEN	113-2026	REG	\$7,953.00	Signal Service Company	Traffic Signal Caves & Lindsey Elem.
GEN	111-2026	REG	\$1,000.00	Iron Mountain	Doc. Shredding Service
Res Fund	395-2025	REG	\$30,542.22	APP Architecture	Designs SVCS/Site Dev Phase RD Garage & new bld PD

CHECKS		
Date	Starting No.	Ending No.
1/13/26	88481	88489
1/8/26	88480	
1/8/26	88490	88546
Fiscal Officer's note: the last check number used on 12/24/25 was 88479		

EFT DIRECT DEPOSITS			
Date	Starting No.	Ending No.	Description
1/13/25	01-2026	65-2026	Payroll

VOUCHERS & WITHHOLDINGS				
Voucher	Payee	Amount	Dated	Description
68-2026	First National Bank EFTPS	\$30,754.87	1/13/26	Employee & employer withholding – Federal
67-2026	Treasurer, State of Ohio	\$4,718.57	1/13/26	Employee & employer withholding – State

**2026-17** Mr. Richter moved to approve the payouts of unused holiday hours, as indicated in the chart below and hereby eliminate any past and previously established practice of receiving compensation for unused hours that conflicts with Township policy.

Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

<b>Employee</b>	<b>Unused Holiday Hours</b>
Kimberly Bican	4
John Onyshko	42
Martin Neary	12

**2026-18** Mr. Richter moved to approve and adopt the proposed language addition to Chester Township Policy: Holidays / Section 7.03 / Article 3: "All Other Employees", Subsection b to now include a requirement for the prior pre-approval of the Board of Trustees, in considering the facts surrounding any request to receive cash payment, in lieu of holiday hours being used.

Mr. Davis seconded. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

### **Fiscal Officer's Report**

The Fiscal Officer reported that a bond representative will attend the next Board of Trustees meeting to discuss the bond process. The Township is awaiting responses from First National Bank regarding the current interest rates and the Assistant Prosecutor regarding the possibility of obtaining a construction loan.

The Fiscal Officer will attend the quarterly fiscal officer meeting at Geauga County offices next week.

W-2's and bank reconciliation are in progress.

### **Open/Ongoing Items**

#### **Limited Home Rule, Capital Projects, Health Insurance, Draft: Advertising Policy**

These items have been tabled and will be discussed at a future Board of Trustees meeting.

### **Upcoming Items/Deadlines**

**GCTA Dinner Meeting January 14<sup>th</sup> -Newbury Township**

**OTA Winter Conference February 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>**

### **Discussions**

#### **America 250 / Fireworks or Community Celebration**

Mr. Davis reported that he attended an additional meeting with representatives of the local schools, during which they expressed openness to the possibility of hosting fireworks as part of an America 250 community celebration. The school representatives indicated that the proposal would be reviewed with the Board of Education, who will consult with their insurance provider regarding coverage and related considerations. Mr. Davis stated that he expects to receive a response by January 12, 2026.

The Board of Trustees discussed potential dates for the celebration as well as the possible location on school grounds, contingent upon approval from the Board of Education and confirmation of insurance requirements.

Mr. Davis will contact America's 250-Ohio Program liaison and resident, George Zehnder to coordinate and develop the commemoration of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States.

### **Land Use Plan**

The next Land Use Plan Committee meeting is scheduled for January 22, and Mr. Davis will attend on behalf of the Board.

### **Brandon's "Open for Business" Concept**

Mr. Davis shared a proposed "Open for Business" concept aimed at promoting the Township's commercial district. The initiative would focus on identifying and publicizing known commercial vacancies, expanding

advertising efforts, and collaborating with the West Geauga Chamber of Commerce to promote available commercial space and encourage business development within the district.

Mr. Radtke suggested reaching out to commercial real estate broker Andy Chess as well as Anthony Nastasi as potential resources to support and further develop the initiative.

**Shout Out Program - Core Values**

Mr. Davis discussed the desire to establish a set of core values applicable to all Township departments. He further proposed the implementation of a "Shout Out" recognition program to acknowledge and support employees who exemplify and demonstrate these core values in their work.

**2026 Permanent Appropriations**

It was noted that a meeting with the elected officials to review and discuss the 2026 Permanent Appropriations will be scheduled at a later date.

**2026 Trustee Goals / Projects**


The elected officials will submit their proposed 2026 goals and projects via email to the Administrative Assistant, who will compile the information for review and discussion at the next Board of Trustees meeting.

**Government Update-** 1/8, CR; 1/22, KR; 2/5, BD

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Richter adjourned the meeting at 9:32 PM.

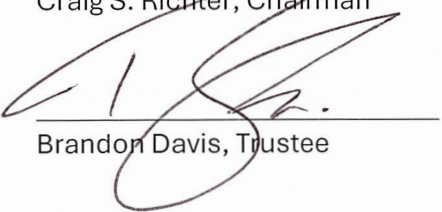
Respectfully submitted,

  
Patricia Jarrett, Fiscal Officer

1/22/26 Motion # 2026-20  
Approval Date

  
Craig S. Richter, Chairman

  
Ken Radtke Jr., Vice-Chairman

  
Brandon Davis, Trustee