The Chester Township Board of Trustees met in **Regular** session on **Thursday, August 20, 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 #: 2026-304

Approval of Minutes

2026-304 Mr. Richter moved to approve the Board of Trustees meeting minutes for 8/6/26 and special meeting minutes for 8/17/26 as presented to the Board by the Fiscal Officer and to waive the reading of the minutes.
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

Department Business- Road

2026-305 Mr. Richter moved to approve, a Conditional Offer of Employment, as requested by the Road Superintendent to Andrew Puskar, for the position of full-time Road Worker I, at a starting rate of $27.50 with no vacation for one year.
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

2026-306 Mr. Richter moved to approve Road Department expenditures as listed below.
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

PO #	Type	Amount	Payable To	Purpose
280-2026	REG	$6,800.00	Furnace Monkey	Reznor Heater for Northern Most Bay
279-2026	REG	$4,000.00	Fisher Auto Parts Inc.	Various Parts
278-2026	REG	$2,000.00	CCM Rental-Chester	1 Week Rental Track Skid Steer
277-2026	REG	$1,400.00	Cintas Centralized A/R	Safety Equip. & Shop Supplies
276-2026	REG	$10,000.00	Arms Trucking Co.	Various Aggregate Materials

Department Business- Fire

2026-307 Mr. Richter moved to approve the creation of a purchase order from appropriation line item 2281-760-750-0303 in the amount of $283,087.00, payable to Penncare, 1317 North Road, Niles, Ohio 44446. This expense is necessary for the purchase of new 2027 Braun Chief XL III ambulance #3453.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

2026-308 Mr. Richter moved to accept PUCO 2026 Hazardous Materials Training and Planning Grant, in the amount of $5,775.00 This grant will be used to reimburse for grant approved training expenses.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

2026-309 Mr. Richter moved to approve the hiring of Travis Veleba as a Part-Time Firefighter/EMT-Basic at a rate of $21.37 per hour effective August 24, 2026, contingent upon successful completion of a drug test and background check.
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

2026-310 Mr. Richter moved to approve a leave of absence for Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic Josh Puskar for the period of September 1, 2026 to October 31, 2026.
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

2026-311 Mr. Richter moved to approve Fire Department expenditures as listed below.
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

PO #	Type	Amount	Payable To	Purpose
283-2026	REG	$283,087.00	Penn Care, Inc.	2027 Braun Chief XL III
281-2026	REG	$1,132.87	Stryker Sales Corp	EMS Cardiac Rhythm Training Simulator

Department Business- Police

2026-312 Mr. Richter moved to rescind motion 2026-293, which previously authorized the funding of the police department's reserve fund, from the Chester Township General Fund, effective immediately
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

2026-313 Mr. Richter moved to approve, after the fact, a single event hourly pay rate adjustment for Officer Ben Milroy. This adjustment shall match the current off-duty detail officer rate of $50.00 per hour, as assigned to the Chesterland Historical Society's event on Saturday / August 15th, 2026 (7 hours).
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

New Business

2026-314 Mr. Richter moved to approve and sign a cemetery deed for the transfer of cemetery plot as listed below:
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

SECTION	PLOT	SITE(S)	From	To
C	365	3	Linda Ropchock	Bruce Stefancin

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Township Park

2026-315 Mr. Richter moved to approve the use of Chester Township properties as listed below:
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

Individual/Organization	Date(s)	Location	Time(s)	Event
WG Horseshoe Club	9/2 or 9/9	West Pavilion/HS Pits	6-9PM	Picnic
Jackie Shermer	9/26/26	West Pavilion	4-8pm	Birthday Party

Financial Items

2026-316 Mr. Richter moved to approve financial transactions as listed below.
Mr. Davis seconded. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

INTRA-FUND TRANSFERS				
Fund	**Amount**	**From Account**	**To Account**	**Purpose**
RD	$10,000.00	2031-930-930-0000	2031-330-420-0000	Per J. Onyshko

PURCHASE ORDERS					
Dept	**PO#**	**Type**	**Amount**	**Payable To**	**Purpose**
GEN	275-2026	REG	$1,950.00	The Kleingers Group	Site Survey, Waterline staking for new RD Garage
ONE OHIO OPIOID SETTLEMENT	282-2026	REG	$12,000.00	Flock Safety	Flock Camera

CHECKS		
Date	**Starting No.**	**Ending No.**
8/25/26	89369	89376
8/20/26	89377	89424
Fiscal Officer's note: the last check number used on 8/6/26 was 89368		

EFT DIRECT DEPOSITS			
Date	**Starting No.**	**Ending No.**	**Description**
8/25/26	1294-2026	1372-2026	Payroll

ON-LINE PAYMENT VOUCHERS		
Date	**Starting No.**	**Ending No.**
7/30/26	1291-2026	1293-2026

VOUCHERS & WITHHOLDINGS				
Voucher	**Payee**	**Amount**	**Dated**	**Description**
1374-2026	First National Bank EFTPS	$22,162.88	8/25/26	Employee & employer withholding – Federal
1376-2026	Ohio Department of Taxation	157.84	9/14/26	Employee & employer withholding – Local School Dist.
1375-2026	Treasurer, State of Ohio	$3,546.89	8/25/26	Employee & employer withholding – State
1377-2026	Regional Income Tax Agency(RITA)	$1,988.59	9/14/26	Employee & employer withholding

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Fiscal Officer's Report

Chester Township Bank Reconciliation			
Reconciled date	**7/31/2026**		
Prior UAN Balance			7,582,966.68
Actual Receipts	+	613,303.63	
Transfers for UAN Only	+	1,400,000.00	
Total Receipts	=		2,013,303.63
Payments	-	1,108,789.03	
Transfers for UAN Only	-	1,400,000.00	
Total Payments	=		2,508,789.03
Adjustments	+		0.00
Adjustments	-		0.00
Current UAN balance as of	**7/31/2026**		**$7,087,481.28**
Other adjusting factors	+		-
Other adjusting factors	-		-
Adjusted UAN balance as of	**7/31/2026**		**$7,087,481.28**
Entered bank balances as of	**7/31/2026**		$7,259,473.39
Deposits in transit	+		0.00
Outstanding payments	-		171,992.11
Outstanding adjustments	+		0.00
Outstanding adjustments	-		0.00
Other adjusting factors	+		0.00
Other adjusting factors	-		0.00
Adjusted bank balances as of	**7/31/2026**		**7,087,481.28**
	Check		0.00

Chester Township Bank Balances			
As of	**7/31/2026**		
Business Banking			$400,000.00
FNB Sweep Account			1,112,697.28
Star Ohio			5,746,776.11
Total			**$7,259,473.39**
	Check		0.00

Budget Commission Findings & Outcome
The elected officials attended the 2027 Temporary Budget Meeting at the Geauga County Auditor's Office on August 17, 2026. It was noted that reserve funds must be funded directly from the applicable fund. If a reserve fund is later dissolved, the destination of any remaining funds must be identified.

Transfers from the General Fund to the Police, Road, or Fire Funds become funds of the receiving fund and cannot be transferred back.

Department Business - Zoning

Zoning Group Meeting Follow-Up
Mr. Richter reported on the recent HDAC meeting, where hoarding was discussed. HDAC does not intend to establish a government outreach program for individuals with hoarding issues. Mr. Richter stated that he views hoarding as a mental health issue and noted that residents, as well as the Fire and Police Departments, are diligent in reporting concerns to the Township.

Mr. Richter will provide an update if additional follow-up occurs.

Open/Ongoing Items

Capital Projects
The Township Administrator reported that HUD continues to communicate with the Township regarding the grant process. He is hopeful that, by the next Board of Trustees meeting, the Township will be assigned a point of contact and receive the grant package. Once received, the Township Administrator and Road Superintendent will begin the required site work, with the environmental survey being the first step.

The Township Administrator also reported that the current phase of the waterline rerouting has been completed. The next step will be the relocation of the fiber-optic lines. Once that work is completed, FirstEnergy will be able to begin installation of the new electrical service for the proposed Road Department Service Garage.

Road Levy
The Township Administrator reported that the proposed road levy received approval from the State Auditor and was returned to the Geauga County Board of Elections. He reviewed and signed off on the ballot language, confirming that the information was correct.

Outside Legal Counsel
This item was tabled to the next Board of Trustees meeting.

Windblown Trash at Recycle Park
The Township Administrator reported that one quote was received for approximately $10,000 for the installation of approximately 370 feet of 4-foot-high chain-link fencing to help control windblown trash from the Recycle Park.

The Board discussed whether the full 370 feet of fencing is necessary and considered reducing the overall length. The cost of the fencing is eligible for reimbursement through the Go Green Grant.

Recycle Park Exit
The Township Administrator reported that $22,500 in Go Green grant funding will be used to pave the Recycle Park exit.

Upcoming Items/Deadlines

Community Senior Clean-Up Days September 14-18
Community Clean-Up Day September 19th

Discussions

Are We Doing Enough to Protect the Resident's Money (Discussion)
In light of recent reports regarding the alleged embezzlement of approximately $1.6 million from the Hambden Fire Department, Mr. Richter initiated a discussion regarding the Township's current financial safeguards and whether additional measures could be implemented to further protect public funds.

Mr. Richter suggested that he and Fiscal Officer Patricia Jarrett meet to review the Township's existing checks and balances and discuss opportunities to strengthen current financial controls.

Mr. Radtke suggested contacting the Auditor of State to determine whether the office provides recommended best practices or additional financial safeguards specifically for smaller townships.

Fiscal Officer Patricia Jarrett left the meeting at 7:00 PM.

The Chester Township Board of Trustees met in **Regular** session on **Thursday, August 20, 2026** in the Town Hall Meeting Room at **6:30 PM** Chairman Craig S. Richter presided.

7:00 PM- Public Hearing – Zoning Amendments ZC-2026-4, ZC-2026-5 and ZC-2026-6

2026-317 Mr. Richter moved to open the public hearing for zoning amendments ZC-2026-4, ZC-2026-5 and
ZC-2026-6 at 7:00 PM.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

2026-318 Mr. Richter moved to waive the reading of the legal notice.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

ZC-2026-4 was presented as a "cleanup amendment" to the Township's Zoning Resolution. The amendment was intended to provide consistency throughout the document by standardizing the font, formatting, and overall layout of the Zoning Resolution.

No comments or input were received from the public regarding the proposed amendment.

2026-319 Mr. Richter moved to close the public hearing at 7:03 PM for zoning amendment ZC-2026-4.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

2026-320 Mr. Richter moved to adopt zoning amendment ZC-2026-4 as presented by the Chester Township Zoning Commission and recommended by the Geauga County Planning Commission.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

ZC-2026-5, commonly referred to as "blur the lines," was presented as an amendment that would allow a property owner with two abutting parcels to use the total acreage of the combined parcels when determining setback requirements. The proposed amendment could also affect the allowable size and location of accessory buildings.

Individuals in attendance who spoke in opposition to the proposed amendment included Margaret Muehling, Linda Gifford, and Pat Mula. One speaker cited two legal cases in support of denying the proposed amendment. The statement from Margaret Muehling is included in these minutes.

2026-321 Mr. Richter moved to close the public hearing at 7:20 PM for zoning amendment ZC-2026-5.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

The Board discussed concerns regarding the potential construction of an accessory building on an abutting parcel that could later be sold separately, potentially creating a zoning violation. It was suggested that alternative language be considered that would allow the combined acreage of the parcels to be used for setback and accessory building size calculations while restricting construction to the parcel containing the primary dwelling.

2026-322 Mr. Richter moved to continue zoning amendment ZC-2026-5 as presented by the Chester Township Zoning Commission and recommended by the Geauga County Planning Commission.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

Following public comments and discussion by the Board the hearing is continued until September 3, 2026 for ZC-2026-5.

ZC-2026-6 was presented as an amendment to increase the maximum allowable floor area of an accessory building from the current 2,500 square feet to a maximum of 9,600 square feet.

Margaret Muehling, Linda Gifford and Pat Mula spoke in opposition to the proposed amendment.
Resident Paul Ridley spoke in favor of the proposed amendment.
The statements provided by Margaret Muehling and Linda Gifford are included with these meeting minutes.

2026-323 Mr. Richter moved to close the public hearing at 7:55 PM for zoning amendment ZC-2026-6.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

Board discussed the proposal and expressed differing viewpoints, including concerns regarding the potential impact of larger accessory buildings on neighboring properties, as well as the rights of property owners to utilize their property.

2026-324 Mr. Richter moved to continue zoning amendment ZC-2026-6 as presented by the Chester Township Zoning Commission and recommended by the Geauga County Planning Commission.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

Following public comments and discussion by the Board the hearing is continued until September 3, 2026 for ZC-2026-6.

Pickleball Lights
After the Township Administrator consulted with the Assistant Prosecutor, the Board discussed a recognition plaque on or near the light pole would be appropriate to acknowledge the donor. The Assistant Prosecutor advised against sponsor banners on the pickleball nets due to concerns regarding recognition on taxpayer-owned property.

The Township Administrator contacted ODOT regarding lighting requirements and was advised that ODOT does not regulate, permit, or inspect the proposed lighting

Mr. Radtke stated that the West Geauga Pickleball Club received a $23,700 donation, which would then be donated to the Township. The Township would receive the funds, create the necessary purchase orders, order the equipment, and pay the contractor for the lighting project.

A list of donors will be provided to the Fiscal Officer for preparation of donation acknowledgment letters.

The Board also discussed regulation of the lights and hours of operation. Mr. Leven stated that there will be two light switches, one on the Mayfield Road side and one on the pavilion side, with the lights programmed to automatically shut off at midnight.
Mr. Davis commended Mr. Leven, noting that minimal taxpayer funds have been spent on the pickleball courts, including the proposed lighting.

Installation is anticipated to begin sometime in September.

2026-325 Mr. Richter moved to approve and agree to accept a donation of funds to the West Geauga Pickleball Club in the amount of $23,700.00, which shall cover the associated costs of adding outdoor lighting to the Chester Township Pickleball Courts. This approval shall also authorize the Township administrator to contact Jim's Electric, Inc. and initiate the scheduling of work, confirm specifications and pricing.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

Driveway Pipe and Apron Updated Policy
This item will be discussed at the next Board of Trustees meeting.

Public Comments

Patricia Mula referred back to the zoning amendment and asked the board to take considerable time to research the fiscal officer responsibility including for keeping the official zoning map in should be kept in her office. She also stated that the two zoning amendments should be denied.

Resident Joe Mazzurco asked the BOT if they were moving forward with the hiring of Andrew Puskar and recommended that the BOT do so from his experience with working with Mr. Puskar.

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Government Update- 8/20, **KR;** 9/3, **BD;** 9/17, **CR;**

Executive Session

2026-326 Mr. Richter moved to enter into executive session at 8:33 PM pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 121.22 (G) (1)) to consider compensation of a public employee and 121.22 (G) (2) to consider the purchase of property for public purpose.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

Invited into the executive session is Township Administrator, Mark Purchase.

The Board reentered public session at 8:41 PM.

2026-327 Mr. Richter moved to amend motion 2026-326 to include to Ohio Revised Code 121.22 (G) (1)) to consider appointment and employment of an outside firm.
Mr. Davis seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Radtke, yes; Mr. Davis, yes. Motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Richter adjourned the meeting at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Jarrett, Fiscal Officer

9/3/26 Motion# 2026-328
Approval Date

Craig S. Richter, Chairman

Ken Radtke Jr., Vice-Chairman

Brandon Davis, Trustee