

**The Board of Trustees of Sugarcreek Township, Greene County, Ohio, in Special Session on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 9:00 AM.**

- 1) **Mrs. Destefani called the session to order.**
- 2) **Mrs. Tilford called the roll with Board Members**, Mrs. Destefani, Mr. Moeller, and Mr. Cramer were in attendance. Also in attendance was Mrs. Hellman, Sergeant Deckard, Detective Mantia, and Officer Lacy.
- 3) **All in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.**
- 4) **Discussion Agenda Items**

**A. Resolution to Proceed – Police Levy 2023.01.30.01**

WHEREAS, on January 9, 2023, the Board of Trustees of Sugarcreek Township passed Resolution Number 2023.01.09.02 declaring it necessary to levy a tax outside the ten-mill limitation for the purpose of a police levy pursuant to R.C. 5705.19(J) and requesting that the Greene County Auditor certify the amounts described in R.C. 5705.03(B)(2); and

WHEREAS, the amount of taxes which may be raised within the ten-mill limitation will be insufficient to provide an adequate amount for the necessary requirements of said Sugarcreek Township; and

WHEREAS, on January 10, 2023, the Greene County Auditor completed a Certificate of Estimated Property Tax Revenue and estimates that the tax will collect \$721,000 annually, assuming the taxable value of the subdivision remains constant throughout the life of the levy, at a rate not exceeding 1.5 mills for each \$1 of taxable value, which amounts to \$53 for each \$100,000 of the county auditor's appraised value, for a continuing period of time commencing in 2023, first due in calendar year 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Sugarcreek Township, Greene County, Ohio, two-thirds of all members elected thereto concurring, that it is necessary to levy a tax in excess of the ten-mill limitation for the benefit of Sugarcreek Township, for the purpose of an additional tax to support police services pursuant to R.C. 5705.19(J), For providing and maintaining motor vehicles, communications, other equipment, buildings, and sites for such buildings used directly in the operation of a police department, for the payment of salaries of permanent or part-time police, communications, or administrative personnel to operate the same, including the payment of any employer contributions required for such personnel under section 145.48 or 742.33 of the Revised Code, for the payment of the costs incurred by townships as a result of contracts made with other political subdivisions in order to obtain police protection, for the provision of ambulance or emergency medical services operated by a police department, or for the payment of other related costs, that the County Auditor estimates will collect \$721,000 annually, assuming the taxable value of the subdivision remains constant throughout the life of the levy, at a rate not exceeding 1.5 mills for each \$1 of taxable value, which amounts to \$53 for each \$100,000 of the county auditor's appraised value, for a continuing period of time commencing in 2023, first due in calendar year 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the question of levying additional taxes be submitted to the electors of Sugarcreek Township at the Primary/Special Election to be held at the usual voting places for said Township within Greene County, Ohio on the 2nd day of May, 2023; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Fiscal Officer of the Sugarcreek Township Board of Trustees be and is hereby directed to certify a copy of this Resolution to the Board of Elections of Greene County, Ohio, and notify said Board of Elections to cause notice of election on the question of levying said tax to be given as required by law.

Mrs. Destefani made a motion to accept approve Resolution 2023.01.30.01. Mr. Cramer seconded.

Mrs. Destefani-yes  
Mr. Cramer – yes  
Mr. Moeller - yes

#### 5) **Trustee and Staff Discussion**

Mr. Tiffany explained the cost of materials and services have increased, the police department is in need of new cruisers within the next year, and as of now they do not have the funding to do this. He also stated if they were to do less than 1 mill, it would work in the short run, but doing the 1.5 mill will get them through the next 10 years. Mr. Tiffany added that Miami Township and Beavercreek are both asking for additional funding through a levy.

Mr. Moeller asked who was heading the PAC to which Mr. Tiffany stated he does not know that there is anyone as of now. Mr. Moeller also stated he does not understand why the budget issues were not presented to the trustees until a month ago. He feels they should have been told 6 months ago at least. He also added the school tax increase has just hit, and on his home alone he paid an extra \$458, and he can't imagine how much the taxes went up on other homes of higher value. He stated he went out in his neighborhood and spoke with 18 citizens and out of those 18 6 were for the levy and 12 were against it. He also added that he sent out 50 questionnaires to get input and 40% were for the levy and 60% were against it. He added some of the reasons that people were against it was due to the uncertainty of the economy and possible recession coming up. In his opinion, they should wait and look into how funds are being spent and other things before they go much farther.

Mr. Cramer stated Mr. Moeller brought up a lot of good points. The school levy was 4.9 mills while this is 1.5 mills which is significantly less. He added for this one, the cost would go up \$52.50 per \$100,000 of the appraised value of the property. Mr. Cramer stated the first thing to address is the need for the levy. He added on the Beavercreek levy the reasons the put to add the levy were increase cost and increased population. Miami Townships reason was increased cost. Mr. Cramer stated he spoke with people from Bellbrook and they also stated they are going to have to put something on the ballot. From his point of view, when he was thinking if there was a need he looked at the increase in fuel costs, salaries, etc. and Sugarcreek Township has not had an increase since 2010 and there has been a population increase from 7500 citizens to 10,000

citizens which is a 33% increase but there has been no increased financial support for 13 years. Mr. Cramer added if they do not pass the levy he does not imagine that there will be a resource officer in the schools. Mr. Cramer added he had an HOA dinner and he discussed the police levy with them, and not one person objected the levy. In his opinion this is a good long term solution and he would like to see it on the ballot in May.

Mrs. Destefani stated she spoke with those in her neighborhood, and had dialogue on why the levy is needed, they seemed to be in favor of it. She stated there needs to be strategic and consistent messaging and she agrees with Mr. Cramer that it needs to go on the May ballot so that they get a second chance in November if it does not pass. She agrees with Mr. Moeller that how the funds are being spent does need to be reviewed. Some discussion followed.

Mr. Cramer stated today they are deciding whether or not they should put this on the ballot for the citizens to decide. They are not saying whether or not they are going to increase taxes, they are going to let the people decide. Mr. Cramer stated the questions is, do they want to put in on the ballot now or wait until November. Mr. Moeller stated there is going to be a recession before the November election so if they wait until then, then people can decide whether or not they support the additional taxes. Some discussion followed about economic development within Ohio.

Mrs. Destefani opened the discussion to public comments.

6) **Public Comments** – Limited to five minutes per person. Agenda related business only. (Time cannot be yielded to another person).

Chief Brown stated if there areas in which they can save money, to please provide them with suggestions. Chief Brown stated twice they have gotten new Glocks for the entire department that cost \$500 each. Through contacts they have gotten services at the safety building for a very reasonable cost or for free. So, they do monitor their budget. Chief Brown stated he has also talked to those within the community and there is some hesitation from people to head the PAC due to the way it went with the schoolboard. He has found someone who has stepped up to finance the flyers. He attended the River Ridge II HOA meeting and their president committed their support. He advised that with the increase in funds they will be able to provide an officer at the school and to be able to hire a new officer due to their call load.

Mr. Tiffany stated this process is going require effort and education to the citizens. He adds that since Chief Brown has been here, he has been under budget. Mrs. Destefani stated she has noticed the same since she has been here as well.

Mrs. Hellman asked what the cost of the school resource officer is to the township. Mr. Tiffany stated it is 50% of the salary plus benefits and they have estimated the salary to be \$100,000. Mrs. Hellman asked if Bellbrook was paying the other half. Mrs. Tilford stated the school board is paying the other half. Some discussion followed on the locations of the school resource officers. Chief Brown clarified that they will be taking a seasoned full time officer and moving them to the school and then the will need to fill that position with another officer. Mr. Tiffany stated due to this, there is a net increase of \$75,000.

Mrs. Destefani asked Chief Brown how many house checks the police department averages. Chief Brown stated it is seasonal so they get a lot during Christmas and summer is on and off. Mrs. Tilford states from an administrative point of view, she praises the police department gets sent in from the community far outweighs the complaints which she thinks is a testament to the community support that the police department receives.

Mrs. Moeller stated she is concerned that vacation house checks don't occur like they used to anymore, that the response time is long when calling the police, she rarely sees police officers in certain parts of town, and she feels like as a citizen that her money is not being put to good use. Mr. Cramer stated he has not experienced this. He had an alarm go off and before he could even turn it off there was an officer in his driveway at 2:30 am. He adds he sees the police all the time. Some discussion followed. Chief Brown states they do house checks, and the last time the Moeller's were out of town Chief Brown checked their reports and they did stop by their house and do a house check. Regarding the response time, he states that is beyond unusual. He adds if she ever has a complaint about the police department to call him immediately and he will look into it. Some discussion followed regarding the services provided by the police department and the flyers/door hanger provided on the homes door after an officer completes a house check.

Mr. Tiffany stated that he wants to clarify that Sugarcreek Township is not raising taxes. They are asking the community to support additional taxes.

Mrs. Destefani closed the public portion of the discussion.

#### **B. Consider Speed Study – 2023.01.30.02**

WHEREAS, Township Administrator, Barry Tiffany, is requesting a speed zone study be performed on Possum Run Road from Little Sugarcreek Road to Bellbrook City line; and,

WHEREAS, Township Administrator, Barry Tiffany, is requesting a speed zone study be performed on Little Sugarcreek Road from Feedwire Road to Swigert Road; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees finds that such request is of sufficient importance to the public welfare and safety to order a speed zone study be performed on said roadway,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Sugarcreek Township, Greene County, Ohio is hereby requesting the County Engineer prepare a speed zone study on Possum Run Road and Little Sugarcreek Road.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that once complete, the speed zone study will be sent to the State of Ohio for evaluation for a change in the posted speed limit on said roads, if warranted.

Mrs. Destefani made a motion to accept Resolution 2023.01.30.02. Mr. Moeller seconded.

Mrs. Destefani-yes

Mr. Cramer – yes

Mr. Moeller - yes

## 7) **Trustee and Staff Discussion**

Mrs. Destefani stated a speed study has not been done since additional developments have been put in on Little Sugarcreek. Mr. Tiffany stated the speed limit should not be 55 mph, so they need to get this speed study requested to get the proper road sign postage for a different speed. Likewise, past Feedwire there have been two additional larger developments put in. He stated that it may still come back as 55 mph, but they need to find out. Mr. Moeller asked if this cost anything. Mr. Tiffany stated no, only the speed signs.

Mrs. Destefani opened the discussion to public comments.

8) **Public Comments** – Limited to five minutes per person. Agenda related business only. (Time cannot be yielded to another person).

Mrs. Hellman stated this is so exciting. She asked if they thought that it would come back to lower the speed to 40 mph. Mr. Tiffany stated he doubts it. Mrs. Hellman stated she would like to see some consistency on the speed on Little Sugarcreek. But she is so glad to see that this is happening.

Mrs. Destefani closed the public portion of the discussion.

## **9. Adjourn**

Mrs. Destefani made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Moeller. Upon call of the roll, the vote resulted in the following:

Mrs. Destefani-yes  
Mr. Cramer – yes  
Mr. Moeller - yes

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Richard J Demko, Fiscal Officer