

Jersey Township, Licking County

Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 6, 2026 - 7:30 p.m.

Attendees:

Dan Wetzel, Chairman
Jeff Fry, Vice-Chairman
Ben Pieper, Trustee
Marko Jesenko, Fiscal Officer

Staff Present:

Bud Witney, Zoning Inspector
Laura Brown, Administrative Assistant

Visitors:

See Sign-In Sheet

Trustee Wetzel called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Brown called the roll and it was confirmed that Trustees Wetzel, Pieper, and Fry were in attendance.

Trustee Wetzel moved to approve the agenda as amended. Trustee Fry seconded the motion. Discussion: Under New Business Salt Contract and Engineering Request was added. With no further discussion, the motion was approved via unanimous roll call vote.

Trustee Wetzel introduced the minutes from the March 2, 2026, Regular Meeting and asked if there were any requested changes. With no changes being requested, Trustee Pieper moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve the minutes as presented. Trustee Fry seconded the motion and with no further discussion, the motion was approved via unanimous roll call vote.

Trustee Wetzel asked for Public Comments – No Public Comments were provided.

Fiscal Officer Jesenko provided the current fund balances. The bank statements will be added to the Finance Report. Trustee Wetzel moved to approve the Finance Report as presented. Trustee Pieper seconded the motion and with no further discussion, the motion was approved via unanimous roll call vote. There were no Cemetery Deeds.

Amend 2026 Permanent Appropriations

Resolution 26-04-06-01: Trustee Wetzel moved “Resolution to Amend the 2026 Permanent Appropriations” as presented to increase budget line 4901-760-700-0000 (Capital Outlay) to the total amount of \$652,022.35 to allow for the accurate accounting of the grant funds received and expended through the Ohio Public Works Commission. Trustee Fry seconded the motion and with no further discussion, the motion was approved via unanimous roll call vote.

Trustee Wetzel asked for department reports.

Administrator’s Report – No report at this time.

Mr. Witney provided an update on zoning permits issued in the township.

There was nothing to report from Monroe Township Fire Department or West Licking Joint Fire District this week.

Trustee Wetzel introduced Unfinished Business – No Unfinished Business was provided.

Trustee Wetzel introduced New Business.

Declare Agent of Record for Insurance Policy

Resolution 26-04-06-02: Trustee Wetzel moved “Resolution to Declare an Agent of Record for Insurance Policies” as presented declaring Acrisure/Burnham and Flowers Agency, Jim Organ (Consultant) as its Agent of Record for Medical, Dental, Vision, and Life Insurance policies effective immediately. Trustee Pieper seconded the motion and with no further discussion, the motion was approved via unanimous roll call vote.

Ohio Deferred Compensation ROTH 457 Plan

Fiscal Officer Jesenko explained Ohio Deferred Compensation Roth 457 Option. This is a post-tax deduction offer to the employees processed through payroll.

Resolution 26-04-06-03: Trustee Wetzel moved “Resolution to Participate in the Ohio Deferred Compensation Program Roth 457 Plan” as presented. Trustee Fry seconded the motion and with no further discussion, the motion was approved via unanimous roll call vote.

ODOT Rock Salt Contract for 2026-2027 Season

Resolution 26-04-06-04: Trustee Wetzel moved “Resolution Authorizing Participation in the ODOT Road Salt Contracts Awarded in 2026” as presented. Trustee Pieper seconded the motion. Discussion: Trustee Fry will determine the tonnage with the Road Department and submit the resolution to ODOT. With no further discussion, the motion was approved via unanimous roll call vote.

Licking County Township Engineer Assistance Request

The township received a request for a three-way stop at Caswell and Miller Roads. The Licking County Engineer will need to determine if a three-way stop is warranted. It was previously discussed to possibly close Caswell off at one end, either Mink Street or S.R. 310. Due to safety concerns with the Fire Department this was not feasible.

Trustee Wetzel moved to submit the “Township Request for Engineering Assistance” application to the Licking County Engineer’s Office for an Intersection Improvement Study at Caswell and Miller Roads. Trustee Fry seconded the motion and with no further discussion, the motion was approved via unanimous roll call vote.

Trustee Wetzel asked for any Public Comments.

Gus Smithhisler discussed a drainage issue at 11107 and 11089 Miller Road and the nuisance property at the end of Beaver Road on Burnside Road. Trustee Wetzel will follow up on these issues.

Gus Smithhisler discussed the +/- five hundred (500) acres recently purchased by Meta. Trustee Wetzel provided information regarding these properties. Township Administrator Rob Platte has met with the developer regarding economic development on these properties. There has been gas line installation in this area to support development.

Gus Smithhisler inquired about properties in St. Albans Township that are being tested for water well fields by the Licking Regional Water District. Trustee Wetzel explained that while water well exploration and increased capacities by the water district does in some ways benefit Jersey Township, the township is not involved in those transactions. Danny Howser discussed Trustee Jim Ensley previously working with Johnstown on a large aquifer. Trustee Wetzel explained this is not the same property. Neal Wengatz explained the creation and purpose of the Gateway CIC.

Trustee Wetzel explained the benefits of data center projects and the tax dollars that are generated for Jersey Township. Those tax dollars can be used to offset some tax burdens on the residents. The Gateway CIC was able to provide some tax relief for the residents that qualified for the Homestead Exemption through the Licking County Auditor's Office. Trustee Pieper discussed keeping up with everything and feels farming is dying. The residents are not saying they do not support data centers but wanted more information on development in this area. John Jones discussed the technology being used in the data centers compared to ten (10) years ago. Fiscal Officer Jesenko explained the funding of the Gateway CIC. Mr. Jesenko also stated that most Data Centers do not abandon the buildings and move after abatements expire. Neal Wengatz explained in 2025 the Gateway CIC provided \$500 dollars per resident that qualifies for the Homestead Exemption to the Auditor's office to help with property tax burdens. The Gateway CIC helps the community in Western Licking County.

Trustee Wetzel asked for Trustee Comments.

Trustee Wetzel reported on the trash along SR161. Jersey Township, the City of New Albany, and O.D.O.T. worked together to remove trash today. Approximately thirty (30) individuals worked four (4) hours picking up trash along SR161 from Beech Road to Mink Street. Several residents offered to volunteer in the future and discussed the Adopt-A-Highway program that O.D.O.T. sponsors. Trustee Wetzel discussed the requirement to provide Workers Compensation to board members and possible volunteers. Trustee Wetzel stated Rob Platte is still looking into this issue along with the Road Right-of-Way fee.

Trustee Wetzel moved to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Fry seconded the motion and the voice vote on the motion was 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:
Marko F. Jesenko, Fiscal Officer

Marko F. Jesenko

Attest:

Dan Wetzel, Chairperson

Jeff Fry, Vice-Chairperson

Ben Pieper, Trustee

Dan Wetzel
Jeff Fry
Ben Pieper