

# Middleton Township Trustees

Wednesday, January 21, 2026

6:00 p.m.

Mr. Moulton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was spoken. In attendance were Trustees Moulton, Petrea, and Vetter, as well as Fiscal Officer Limes, Wood County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Linda Holmes, and Peter Griggs, Esq., of Brosius, Johnson & Griggs, LLC. The sign-in sheet for employees and visitors is attached with the approved minutes.

*Noted on the sign in sheet is a statement indicating the meeting may be recorded or streamed live to the internet by a visitor - not at the authority of the township trustees.*

## **FISCAL OFFICER REPORT**

- **Mr. Vetter moved, Mr. Moulton seconded a motion to approve the January 7, 2026 meeting minutes as provided. Motion approved.**
- **Mr. Vetter moved, Mr. Moulton seconded a motion to approve Resolution 26-0121, 2026 Temporary Appropriations: Role was called: Mr. Moulton – YES; Mrs. Petrea – YES; Mr. Vetter - YES**
- **Mr. Vetter moved, Mr. Moulton seconded approval of accounts and payroll as submitted. Motion approved with Mrs. Petrea abstaining.** A payment register is attached to the approved minutes.
- **Mr. Moulton moved, Mrs. Petrea seconded a motion to approve a special meeting for the purpose of 2026 budget and appropriations review for Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. Motion approved.**
- **Mr. Vetter moved, Mr. Moulton seconded a motion to approve the annual 2026 cemetery contributions of \$6,000 to Union Hill Cemetery and New Belleville Ridge Joint Cemetery. Motion approved.**
- **Mr. Vetter moved, Mr. Moulton seconded a motion to approve a \$75,000 work agreement with the Wood County Engineer for 2026. Motion approved. The formal agreement will be finalized and submitted upon receipt from the Engineer's office.**

## **ROAD DEPARTMENT**

- Road Superintendent Chase Greulich noted his thanks for all the help during the latest snow event and noted the Saddlebrook subdivision Homeowners' Association for its communication to residents.
- The new "road closed" signage has been updated and put in use.
- New road name signs have been installed on Asmus and Pargillis Roads at the respective intersections of St. Rt. 582.
- Mr. Greulich noted that ditch repair is needed on Asmus Road near the St. Rt. 582 intersection.
- A resident contacted Mr. Greulich about a culvert at the Riverby Golf Course location along St. Rt. 65. Mr. Greulich will assess the situation.
- Mr. Moulton stated that the ODOT mileage certification stated the township oversees **57.632** miles of roadway as of January 1, 2026. The township trustees are to sign and return the certification form provided by February 13, 2026.
- Mr. Greulich indicated that the township has salt stored at the county based on its estimated tonnage reported to the county engineers' office last year. The county is in a salt shortage for the county and area townships.

## **ZONING DEPARTMENT**

- Zoning Inspector Kip McDowell provided a permit report for review.
- Mr. McDowell indicated he was in receipt of the Phase 2 site plan review from Meta. It will be placed before the zoning commission board on February 11 at its regular meeting.
- A light study was handled by TranStar which indicated no trespass of light pollution along the property lines of the electric substations. He noted that lighting has been reduced at the substation.
- The curling center is being asked to turn their lights downward.
- Timers have been installed at the data center with run times of 6:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

## **VISITOR COMMENTS**

- Victor Coleman, representative to the township board for FirstEnergy was in attendance and addressed on-going approval processes with regard to the lift stations and new Emergency Vehicle Storage Building.
- Mr. Moulton indicated that he expected civil discourse throughout visitor comments.

- John Eggerton – Haskins Village Planning Commission members addressed the Board with regard to the moratorium process and how it would apply to the village. Mrs. Holmes indicated it would not impact the Village, and it was noted that zoning resolution language could be requested from the township for village planning purposes. Mr. Eggerton noted that the village had been contacted by a company who was interested in development of a single use data center in the village limits.
- Mr. Griggs. addressed the visitors with the public hearing process which includes zoning commission review, submission and approval by the Wood County Planning Commission, review and approval by the township zoning commission and final review and approval by the township board of trustees.
- Mr. Moulton noted that Mr. Griggs now serves as the township’s primary legal counsel on matters involving Meta, in addition to continuing to provide counsel on zoning.
- Tracy Wyatt, Hull Prairie Road, addressed her concerns with regard to the township’s noise ordinance, specifically the low frequency noise concerns versus decibel issues. She noted information obtained from other states and the negative issues that have arisen from data center sites. She also stated her lack of trust in the board members regarding the decisions that were made to approve a data center in the township.
- Mrs. Petrea shared that more investigation is taking place and questions are planned to be asked of Meta with concerns being shared.
- Mr. Griggs stated that technology is ever changing and reviewed the residents’ right to a referendum, and pertinent laws which now include signatures of 35 percent of the voters in the last gubernatorial election. He also pointed out electricity and grid issues are on-going and that the data center installed its own substation to provide adequate power.
- Mr. Moulton reviewed the timeline of rezoning changes that occurred over the past 10-12 years.
- Haskins resident Julie Snyder questioned who profited from the sale of the property and did the property owners know who they sold to and for what purpose.
- Mr. Vetter shared that property owners profit from the sale of their own property.
- James Demond, Mercer Road, questioned the taxes Williams will or will not be paying as a utility.
- Mr. Griggs stated that while they are exempt from zoning, he did not expect delinquent taxes to be a township issue or concern.
- Mrs. Holmes spoke about tax proceedings that occur at the county level holding businesses accountable to maintain community support.
- Mr. Demond questioned future zoning and use of buildings if they become vacant and what can be done with the buildings.
- Mr. Andy Stocking, CEO of Principle Business addressed the Board and visitors by stating as the largest employer in Middleton Township they “love” the township and want to be a supporting partner.
- Brianne Minor questioned the creation of a zoning policy strictly for data centers.
- Mr. Griggs and Mrs. Holmes indicated that the township cannot ban specific industry and reconfirmed the township is in the process of updating its zoning resolution.
- Mary Corder, Five Point Road, received confirmation of the school districts impacted by the data center phases which include Phase 1 – Eastwood Local Schools and Phase 2 – Otsego Local Schools.
- Mrs. Holmes reviewed the valuation of the site noting it will be November 2026 before structures are built out and will be assessed by the county auditor. Mrs. Holmes also reviewed the tax abatement agreements and how review is handled. Mr. Griggs supported the conversation, indicating that there are processes in place to oversee taxes are paid. Mrs. Holmes provided financial impact details with regard to the difference between taxable value on agricultural zoning versus developed commercial property. In addition, union wages and work forces as well as local subcontracting has been taken into consideration.
- Mrs. Corder questioned the phases currently in process and it was confirmed that the next phase (Phase 2) will begin site plan review.
- Lydia Watson, Haskins Village resident, asked if any of the legal counsel or engineers would be with Mrs. Petrea on the data center tour. Mrs. Watson also noted her concern over factory farms versus traditional family farms in the county and impact on roads and environment.
- Ms. Wyatt stated additional concerns about the topography and any impact studies that were handled.
- Discussion revolved around zoning resolutions and township specific requirements that are not handled in the same manner as village or city government. Mrs. Holmes reinforced that creation of townships was developed by the general assembly, i.e. townships are governed differently and only have the power given to them by the people.
- Lydia Watson expressed appreciation regarding the reduction in lighting at the data center site.
- Roger Tyson, Forst Road, stated his concerns in general about data center development.
- Mr. Moulton stated the Meta facility being built is an AI data center, sharing that AI is increasingly used in nearly every business and industry today.
- Mr. Demond noted data centers were building their own fuel systems allowing them to avoid subcontracting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- Mrs. Petrea provided a statement to the staff and visitors with regard to her decision to not move forward with a moratorium on data centers as more information being gathered.
- The township administrative building locks and camera installation project is still ongoing.
- Mr. Vetter stated that a block wall in the Emergency Vehicle Storage Building (EVSB) was torn down and replaced due to poor initial construction of same. In addition, the concrete floor is being poured, and Mr. Coleman is working on getting power to the site.
- The grassroots initiative to abolish property taxes was reviewed with the Board stating concern over passage of same and impact on local government services and schools.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- Mr. Moulton reviewed information gathered at the Wood County Township Association meeting which included the work agreement with the county engineers’ office, scholarships available to high school seniors, and data center updates.
- Mrs. Petrea provided an update from TMACOG noting a new campaign “Lake Erie Starts Here” initiative, a student watershed district program and the 208 plan.

**Mr. Moulton moved, Mr. Vetter seconded a motion to move to executive session for the purpose of legal discussion at 8:24 p.m. Role was called: Mr. Moulton – YES; Mrs. Petrea – YES; Mr. Vetter - YES**

The Board returned to regular session at 8:30 p.m.

**Mr. Moulton moved, Mr. Vetter seconded a motion to move to executive session for the purpose of discussing a prospective employee at 8:34 p.m. Role was called: Mr. Moulton – YES; Mrs. Petrea – YES; Mr. Vetter – YES**

The Board returned to regular session at 9:15 p.m.

Mr. Vetter moved, Mr. Moulton seconded a motion to recess the meeting to reconvene on Thursday, January 22, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. Motion approved.

The Board reconvened at 9:10 a.m. on Thursday, January 22.

In attendance were Trustees Moulton, Petrea and Vetter; Fiscal Officer Limes and Andy Slife, candidate for Deputy Fire Chief.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

**Mr. Moulton moved, Mrs. Petrea seconded a motion to approve the hiring of Andy Slife as Middleton Township Deputy Fire Chief on a six-month probation pending pre-employment drug and BCI screenings at an annual salary of \$90,000 plus health and dental benefits. In addition, Mr. Slife will be granted the allowable sick leave cap and three weeks vacation. Motion approved.**

**Mr. Moulton moved, Mr. Vetter seconded adjournment of the meeting at 10:38 am. Motion approved.**

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**Michael Moulton, Chairman**

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**Melissa S. Petrea, Trustee**

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**Fred E. Vetter, Vice Chairman**

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**Laurie L. Limes, Fiscal Officer**