

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HARRISON TOWNSHIP
LICKING COUNTY, OHIO
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING DECEMBER 8, 2009

The Harrison Township Trustees met in special session on December 8, 2009 at the Etna Township Hall. The meeting was a joint session with the Etna Township Trustees to meet with Licking County Sheriff Randy Thorp concerning issues of the Sheriff's Department coverage of western Licking County. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Kretzmann at 1:00 p.m. Chairman of the Etna Township Trustees, Dick Knapp called their meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. Dick Knapp led the prayer and The Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called and the following members and guests were present.

Harrison Township	
Chairman	Larry Kretzmann
Trustee	Ray Foor
Trustee	Eric Smith
Fiscal Officer	Carolyn Elder
Trustee Elect	Mark Van Buren
Etna Township	
Chairman	Dick Knapp
Trustee	John Carlisle
Trustee Elect	Randy Foor
Jersey Township	
Trustee	James Endsley
Other Officials	
Deputy Chief Pataskala PD	Bruce Brooks
Pataskala Chief of Police	Chris Forshey
Pataskala Mayor	Steve Butcher
Chief WL Fire Dept.	David Fulmer
Licking County Sheriff	Randy Thorp
Community Members	

From the Floor – There was no public comment.

Sheriff Randy Thorp discussed how the Licking County Sheriff's Department will handle coverage for the City of Pataskala and Western Licking County if the City of Pataskala Police Levy does not pass. Their office will have to provide enforcement for the City of Pataskala if they dissolve the police department. It would stress their budget but they would patrol Pataskala just like any other area in the county. Bottom line, the citizens of Pataskala need to make a decision on what kind of service they want and how to pay for it. As the County Sheriff he has the responsibility for protecting the area.

John Carlisle, Etna Township asked how they will determine reassigning. Randy Thorp stated he would review and reassign personal into new positions. He would look at the volume of calls.

Public safety is most important.

Ray Foor inquired how many sheriff deputies are currently in Harrison Township. Randy Thorp explained their peak time schedule. They have 8 hour and 12 hour shifts that overlap during the peak hours in the afternoon and evening/mid-night hours. They have 4 to 5 or 8 to 10 officers out at any given time in Western Licking County.

Dick Knapp, Etna Township asked the City of Pataskala regarding the City of Pataskala's plans. Mayor Butcher explained there would be nothing on the ballot in February but anticipates the issue being placed on the May ballot for 2010. The time frame for closing the department would be March to April 2011. If the police levy expires, the city cannot carry expenses paid from the general fund. Mayor Butcher also discussed the cost to Pataskala for prosecuting cases in Newark versus using their Mayor Court. The City of Pataskala currently has a mutual aid agreement with the Licking County Sheriff's Department.

Randy Thorp stated that the department has a good working relationship with the City of Pataskala.

Larry Kretzmann asked if townships or the city could contract with the Licking County Sheriff's Department. Randy Thorp stated that any city or township can enter into a contract with them. Currently they have no contracts. More responsibility for the department would thin services.

Jim Endsley, Jersey Township asks how many officers are on duty at one time. Randy Thorp reviewed the peak time schedule.

Eric Smith stated that the Licking County Commissioners budget will have an impact on the Sheriff's department. Randy Thorp stated that he will work within his budget and is currently making cuts for 2010.

Larry Kretzmann discussed satellite substations. Randy Thorp stated a satellite substation has to be staffed with deputies and administration staff. Jim Endsley discussed the deputies having laptops in their cruisers for paperwork. Randy Thorp explained they would operate out of the satellite station for interviews and other activities. He explained that the county is divided into districts and officers are dispersed from their district to a call.

Randy Foor, Etna Township inquired how they allocate their resources for patrol. Randy Thorp stated it is based on a number of issues, density of population and frequency of calls for service.

Larry Kretzmann questioned Chief Fulmer regarding the calls to the fire department needing police service. Chief Fulmer stated that they do require police service for domestic incidents.

Forest Yocum, Southwest Licking Schools Superintendent, wondered what will be the response time for schools with the school resource officers gone. Randy Thorp stated that it would

depend on where the officer is in the county when the call is received. He would like to have SRO's in the schools if the 2010 budget allows.

Ray Foor asked if the cruisers have GPS to monitor their locations. Randy Thorpe stated they do.

Dick Knapp, Etna Township inquired about the response times if the City of Pataskala closes the police department and whether Etna residents should be concerned. Randy Thorp stated it could delay response times and he cannot predict how many calls they will get but they will prioritize the calls. They will work together with the City of Pataskala to provide for the safety and security of the community.

Mayor Butcher has confidence in the Sheriff's Department. The city believes they should have their own police department. Not having a police department would impact response times.

Larry Kretzmann asked about the cities hiring policy. Mayor Butcher said that the third shift would be eliminated in the summer of 2010 if the levy does not pass in May.

Eric Smith stated that Harrison Township could explore contracting with the Sheriff's office. Randy Thorp stated any township or city can contract with the department and that this could be a long term solution.

John Carlisle, Etna Township discussed the block watch program in Orchard Glen and asked what we could do to help the Sheriff's office. Randy Thorp suggested keeping your eyes and ears open. The neighborhood watch program is a good way to help. Re-enforce with the County Commissioners how important public safety is to you and your entity.

Mark Van Buren discussed budget numbers and what Randy Thorp will have to cut. Randy Thorp stated they went thru the budget by line item and they will not be purchasing new cruisers for 2010. Some of the cuts are short term fixes and they will be operating more efficiently. Some of the administrative positions have been eliminated by retirement and re-assigning employees.

Mike Kerner, 8623 Watkins Road discussed auxiliary reserve units. Chief Forshey stated they bring a specialized function, the union has restrictions regarding using these units. Randy Thorp stated there are training requirements and it becomes difficult to maintain certification. They do help out at the fair and other areas but not for day to day use.

Dick Knapp, Etna Township discussed block watch programs. Randy Thorp stated these programs are a help to the department and makes people aware. The department helps to get them started and provide training but it is the responsibility of the group to keep it going. They don't have the resources to attend every meeting.

Jim Endsley, Jersey Township discussed the township block watch program in Jersey Township and the importance of providing information to the block watch captains.

Harold Rowland, 11438 Palmer Road discussed the State Highway Patrol and Fairfield County in regards to Mutual Aid Agreements. Randy Thorp stated they have Mutual Aid Agreements with both agencies. The Sheriff's Department has been going to Fairfield County more due to their budget cuts.

Dick Knapp thanked all of the entities for attending. He stated that all should contact the Licking County Commissioners and promote public safety along with encouraging the block watch program.

John Carlisle moved to adjourn at 2:07 p.m. Dick Knapp seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Larry Kretzmann adjourned Harrison Township's meeting at 2:08 p.m.

Respectively Submitted,

Carolyn I. Elder
Harrison Township Fiscal Officer