

**LIBERTY TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES
REGULAR SESSION – FEBRUARY 11, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Ken Clark called the meeting to order.

OFFICIALS ATTENDING:

Ken Clark, Evan Stump, Gene Stump, Shawn McFarland and Gene Cole.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Evan Stump moved to accept the minutes of the January 6, 2026 Organizational Meeting. Ken Clark seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried.

Gene Stump moved to accept the minutes of the January 6, 2026 Regular Meeting. Evan Stump seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried.

Evan Stump moved to accept the minutes of the January 15, 2026 Special Meeting. Ken Clark seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – abstain. Motion carried.

GUEST ATTENDING:

Chris Keller and Matt Gilroy from Findlay-Hancock Economic Development were present with a guest wishing to enter Executive Session with the Trustees later in the meeting.

Various members of the Liberty Township Fire Department.

Daniel Burket, Congressional Candidate for Ohio District 5 introduced himself and addressed those in attendance after the Zoning Inspector's Report.

ZONING INSPECTOR'S REPORT:

Gene Cole presented the Trustees with his monthly report (see attached).

Gene Stump attended a Zoning class at the OTA Winter Conference and the speaker mentioned having a consulting firm review zoning books to make sure that everything was compliant and then have a second individual review.

Gene Cole mentioned that the Zoning Appeals Board met and officers were selected.

GUESTS ATTENDING REVISIT:

Gene Stump made a motion to enter Executive Session to consider confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, trade secrets, or personal financial statements of an applicant for economic development assistance, or to negotiations with other political subdivisions respecting requests for economic development assistance, provided that both of the following conditions apply:

The information is directly related to a request for economic development assistance that is to be provided or administered under any provision of Chapter 715., 725., 1724., or 1728. or sections as listed in Ohio Revised Code 121.22 (8) (a) and (b), or that involves public infrastructure improvements or the extension of utility services that are directly related to an economic development project.

A unanimous quorum of the public body determines, by a roll call vote, that the executive session is

necessary to protect the interests of the applicant or the possible investment or expenditure of public funds to be made in connection with the economic development project.

He requests that Zoning Inspector Gene Cole, Fiscal Officer Shawn McFarland, Trustee Ken Clark, Trustee Evan Stump, Trustee Gene Stump, Economic Development members Chris Keller and Matt Gilroy, and guest Bill Morton be in attendance in Executive Session.

Evan Stump seconded the motion. ROLL CALL VOTE: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried, and the above-mentioned individuals entered Executive Session at 6:15pm.

Evan Stump made a motion to return from Executive Session. Gene Stump seconded the motion. ROLL CALL VOTE: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried, and the above-mentioned individuals returned from Executive Session at 6:45pm.

FIRE CHIEFS REPORT:

Chief Morton emailed his report to the Trustees prior to the meeting for discussion at this meeting.

Chief Morton asked if the \$50,000 Chief's Discretionary spending amount was still in his budget. Fiscal Officer McFarland reminded Chief Morton that during the Budget Meeting expenses were given a line item and per the January Trustees Regular Meeting, a letter would be signed by Chief Morton and the Trustees tonight giving Chief Morton authorization to make purchases for the department within the pre-approved budget.

Gene Stump made a motion to send two members to the March 7 and 8 TECC class at Apollo. Evan Stump seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried

Gene Stump made a motion to reinstate Nathan Dunbar's driving privileges with the Fire Department after taking his EVOC course. Evan Stump seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried

Evan Stump made a motion to send Travis Ramsey to the 36-hour Volunteer Firefighter class at Apollo Career Center pending contract signature. Ken Clark seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – abstain. Motion carried

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

COMMUNICATIONS:

Oral Communications:

Fire Department Association President Nathan Dunbar is in attendance asking the Trustees permission to use the Fire Department buildings for their monthly meetings and various events throughout 2026. Ken Clark wanted to ensure safety and security by all who use the building. Ken Clark made a motion to allow the Liberty Township Volunteer Firefighter Association, a 501 c (3) use of the township buildings for 2026. Gene Stump seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried.

Written Communications:

A letter was received regarding the City of Findlay annexation of Kohl's Distribution Center. Interpretation of the letter by Gene Stump indicates that the County Commissioners never finalized the annexation. If this is true, the city of Findlay may have collected tax monies from Kohls and their employees that should have been sent to Liberty Township. He recommends that the township seek

outside legal counsel to investigate this matter further, as the County Prosecutor's office will be representing the City of Findlay.

Additional discussion was had regarding this specific topic and it was agreed upon that the best thing to do would be to word any motion to hire outside legal counsel as vague as possible so that counsel would include any attorney or firm to handle any legal matter.

Ken Clark made a motion to hire outside legal counsel to represent Liberty Township. Gene Stump seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried

Gene Stump made a motion to hire a consulting firm to review zoning resolution. Evan Stump seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried.

Shawn McFarland completed the Volunteer Firefighter Dependency Fund certification

Shawn McFarland received a letter from the Hancock County Recorder's Office regarding their fees for Zoning Resolutions (\$50) and Amendments (\$20).

Shawn McFarland received an email from a citizen of Ada, Ohio regarding Ada Liberty Fire Chief. It was determined that the individual mistakenly emailed the incorrect Liberty Township.

Shawn McFarland received a Records Request that has been fulfilled and documented.

Ken Clark announced at this time that the applications for officers of the Fire Department will be opened and read aloud. The applicants and positions they are applying for are as follows:

Tim Hackworth - Lieutenant
John Snare – Lieutenant
Joseph Morton – Fire Chief
Robert Starcher – Battalion Chief
Stephen Arnott – Battalion Chief, Captain, Lieutenant
Braeden Johnson – Captain, Lieutenant
Matt Bryant – Captain, Lieutenant
Mike Jett – Battalion Chief, Captain
Jeff Janes – Fire Chief, Battalion Chief, Captain
Nathan Dunbar – Captain, Lieutenant
Seth Lortz – Captain, Lieutenant
Brandon Andrews – Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, Battalion Chief, Captain, Lieutenant
Gene Stump – Deputy Chief, Battalion Chief, Captain, Lieutenant
Shawn McFarland – Deputy Chief, Battalion Chief, Captain

OLD BUSINESS:

Gene Stump was contacted by Northwest Ohio Water and Sewer District meeting. Allen Township has applied.

Gene Cole advised that construction crew will be at the AEP Laydown Yard on TR 94 on Monday.

Evan Stump contacted the Prosecutor's Office about data centers. Initial response was immediate but follow up emails have gone unanswered. Evan expressed his frustration with their response time. Apparently, Justin Kahle and Cindy Land were looking into this. They were advised that if we do not get direction soon, we would seek outside legal counsel as this is important to our residents.

NEW BUSINESS:

Evan Stump was contacted by Text My Gov (similar to Everbridge). They can send things out to those township residents who sign up for it. Monthly newsletters, texts, etc. Taxpayers can report things to us as well. Pricing is \$9,000 for the first year and then \$6,000 for each year after. They stated that in the history of the company there has never been a rate increase. Evan also said that he spoke to Shumaker Group at the Ohio Township Association Winter Conference and they do the same thing. Pricing starts at \$1,750 and the platinum package is \$3,495. Gene Stump brought up the current website the township uses, and the website is about 70% ADA compliant. Gene Cole mentioned that eh will speak to Keith Breneman about updating the website. Gene Stump also said that we may want to migrate to a .gov website.

Evan Stump brought up the Fraud Prevention Training required by the state. The determination was made to have everyone take the Fraud Training again this year.

Gene Stump made a motion to have Chairman Ken Clark be the township representative at the District Advisory Council, and if there is an increase in monies, to cast a "no" vote on the township's behalf. Evan Stump seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried.

Gene Stump provided a list of the training he attended at the OTA Winter Conference: Township Websites ADA, Trustee Oversight of Fire and EMS, Cybersecurity Training, Documenting Employee Discipline, Understanding the Implications of Eliminating Property Taxes, Legislative Updates, Managing Short-Term Rentals, Data Centers, Incorporating Aspects of the Zoning, Economic Development, Working with Utilities, Township Formation of Water and Sewer Districts, and What You Need To Know: Important Township Legal Updates Resulting from House Bill 96 and House Bill 315. Gene said that all of the classes were very informative.

Gene Stump made a motion to have Vice Chairman Evan Stump be the representative of the township on the Board for Economic Development. Ken Clark seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried.

Evan Stump spoke to an ambulance sales representative at the Ohio Township Association Winter Conference. It has been two years since talks with Hanco started and there is no resolution. We owe it to our residents to have reliable EMS services, and we would like to begin by looking at numbers for ambulances, staffing, equipment, etc. Everything is on the table at this point. A committee will be formed to begin work on gathering info. Chief Morton said that several other townships are in talks about forming a joint fire district.

Shawn McFarland said that, due to his father's passing and him finding out on his way to the OTA Winter Conference, he will reimburse the township for the \$135 conference registration fee. All three Trustees said that, in light of the circumstances, Mr. McFarland does not need to reimburse the township. Mr. McFarland expressed his gratitude.

Chief Morton thanked the Trustees for allowing both himself and Assistant Chief Andrews to attend the conference, calling it a huge benefit.

Gene Stump noted that we are running out of room for storage. Shawn McFarland said that he and Hannah Brown are going to finalize the record Retention Policy in 2026 and begin moving physical copied of documents to the historical society.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS:

Mr. McFarland passed around the financial reports to the Trustees.

Mr. McFarland also passed around the agreements for Chief Morton, Gene Cole, and Jeff Janes to sign authorizing purchases.

Mr. McFarland gave updates on STAR Ohio Account and Fifth Third account interest earned.

Ken Clark made a motion to authorize the Fiscal Officer to prepare warrants and pay bills. Evan Stump seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried.

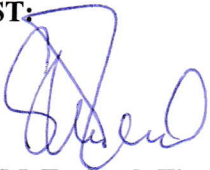
Gene Stump announced to the other Trustees and all in attendance that he will be recusing himself from Fire Department Officers interviews.

Regular Meeting start time for March has been moved up to 5pm and will be posted. Officer Interviews will be held at the tail end of the meeting, around 6pm.

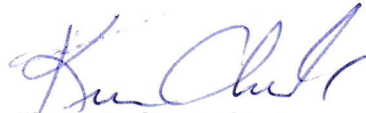
ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Trustees, Evan Stump moved to adjourn. Gene Stump seconded the motion. Vote: Ken Clark – yes, Evan Stump - yes, Gene Stump – yes. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

ATTEST:



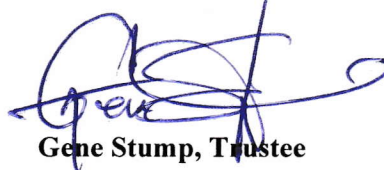
Shawn McFarland, Fiscal Officer



Kenneth Clark, Chairman



Evan Stump, Vice Chairman



Gene Stump, Trustee

Liberty Township - Gene Cole

1/1/2026

1/31/2026

DATE	PERMIT NO.	NAME - ADDRESS		VALUE	FEE	NOTES
1/12/2026	26-12-1	Matchpoint LLC 326 Pheasantrun Ln	280001018682	N/A	250.00	Zoning Amendment
1/13/2026	26-7-1	Parly Anderson 1136 twp rd 67	280001032110	\$40,000.00	200.00	accessory building
1/22/2026	26-2-1	Seeberger J. 1912 Wyoming Trl	280001013553	45,000.00	50.00	Home Addition
TOTAL				\$85,000.00	\$500.00	

Liberty Township Fire Department Report for February 2026

Fire Calls for January: 45

Total Calls to Date: 45

Medicals: 35

Fire Calls: 0

Accidents: 3

Gas Leaks/CO Calls: 1

Weather Related: 0

Other/Investigation: 6

Old Business

- The Asst. Chiefs, Fiscal Officers, Township Supervisor, and I have completed and turned in the application for National First Responder Grants. We are set to write for an Engine and a Brush truck to replace 515 and 533. Thank you for the continued support in the vision of keeping our aging trucks as priority.
- Jaxon Hill has requested to attend the EMT-B course being held at Bradner Fire and EMS. I would like to ask the board to accept my recommendation of her being allowed to enroll and complete the course with payment coming out of the training budget. Motion Passed
- I would like to request that the board grant me permission to enroll into the Tier 1 and 2 course to obtain my instructor certification. I ask that the funding come from the training budget. Motion Passed
- I emailed Jerney at Atlantic Solutions and advised him of the issues with 595. He has since contacted me and asked when I can get the truck to him. I will coordinate with Cole on how and when we can get it dropped off.
- I have advised our members that the current SOP does not have inactive status communication in them and we are working to get this added into the current SOP's within the next few months. All past members will be adopted under the new SOP policies.
- I would like to know if the previous motion from the past board is still honored of us placing a conex storage container onto the property for storage is still in effect? We are out of room and would like to purchase training props for us to use throughout the year.
- Firefighter Bryant has passed his National Registry for his EMT-B course.
- Firefighter Johnson failed his first attempt at the National Registry.
- Asst. Starcher and Hill are scheduled next week to complete their ff1 state exam.
- Firefighter A. Andrews has elected to resign. With 12 years of duty she will be added to our lifetime members board.
- Executive Session

New Business

- Firefighter Dunbar has completed an online EVOC course per his requirement from the trustees to restore his driving privileges. Motion to allow driving.
- I would like some clarification on the recommended budget for 2026? Is it active or was it removed?
- I would like to ask that we send two members through the Apollo TECC training with the cost of the course \$250. Motion
- The Sheriff Office updated a report of the county road 140. They are still working on the project and should begin hanging antennas once the weather breaks. There is still heavy discussion on the fiber lines and how they will be run.
- The County Mutual Aid Agreement has been approved, so we should be good until 2029.
- The Sheriff Office has been running a test and operating out of station 4.
- I have a quote for Marc's supply to utilize our grant funds. We are currently waiting on AXP 6000 quotes before we place an order. So far that would include 40 batteries for portables, 30 batteries for the pagers, 10 Unication pagers, and two wireless microphones.
- Probationary members are progressing very well within our training programs and maintaining great attendance.
- Jaxon Hill has completed her Firefighter one course.
- Atlantic Solution has completed our punch list on 595.
- Brush apparatus 533 was leaking diesel on the fuel rail. Atlantic Solution has since repaired 533 and is back in service.
- I am working with Apollo to host a Fire Inspector Course here at the station.
- We have been asked to cover SWHJFD on April 10, 2026.
- We have been requested to cover a 5K at LB on April 11, 2026.
- I will be starting to begin our annual turnout gear and class -b uniform sizing later this month. I feel a little leary with the unknown of being up for rehire. Is it ok to continue processing as we normally would? It is just something that is bothering me as the current chief that I could be short the next chief budget.
- Our contract and all documents with National First Responder Grants have been accepted and we are set up for the two grants.
- Asst. Chief Starcher applied for a State Farm grant for laptops for fire departments.
- 501 and 503 have applied for our training reimbursement grant through the state fire marshal's department of commerce.
- All the Chiefs worked on the state fire marshal equipment grant. The grant is \$15,000 and this year we applied for scba mask personal and 4 gas meters for all of our medical bags and 24 sections of 2.5 inch hose.

- I have provided the email trail and communications to Ohio Billing for them to aid in the assistance of the damaged turnout gear from Tawa Mulch. I spoke with them at the OTA's and they advise me they will help in recovering payment due there being a Bill in the State of Ohio that requires them to pay for damages.
- We now have an assigned rep from Bound Tree where we order our medical supplies from. I had the opportunity to meet the regional coordinator from our area at the OTA's.
- During the January truck inspection we cleaned every compartment on all apparatus.
- My laptop and Asst. Starcher laptops are out for repair currently. They are replacing the battery in my laptop and replacing the usb mother board in Starchers.
- I have sent the 02/24/2024 mutual aid run to the requesting law firm per our attorney.
- Thank you for supporting the 2026 banquet. The members enjoyed the evening of events and we all appreciate the support.

Application For New Members

- None

Upcoming Training

- Fire Business Meeting: February 5, 2026 at 7:00 pm
- Truck Checks: February 12, 2026 at 7:00 pm
- Fire Training: February 28, 2026 at 8:00 am (Search & Rescue at Strict Center)
- Officer Meeting: February 26, 2026 at 7:00 pm
- Medical Training: None

Other events

- Apollo will be hosting a Fire Level 2 transition course at Apollo starting with orientation February 23, 2026 at 6:00 pm. Classes will be Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays 6-10 pm starting 03/09/2026 and ending 04/22/2026.
- March 20, 2026 SWHJFD will be performing a large-scale active shooter drill. There will be an all call go out but it will be followed up with it being only a test. If you're interested in observing you are invited. Please note you will be in a coned off area and will not be able to participate. Starts at 9:00 am if the pre-plan and demonstration starts at 10:00 am. Lunch at 12:00 and a round table to discuss the demonstration.

Chief Month

- 01/04/26 Fire Department Chief's Phone Conference
- 01/06/26 Township Reorganization and Trustee Meeting
- 01/08/26 Fire Department Business Meeting
- 01/11/26 CPR Recertification
- 01/11/26 Fire Association Fundraising, and Scholarship Committee Meeting
- 01/11/26 Fire Department Chief's Phone Conference
- 01/13/26 County Fire Association Meeting at NWHJFD
- 01/15/26 Fire Department Truck/ Equipment inspections
- 01/18/26 2026 Annual Liberty Fire Department Banquet
- 01/21/26 County Fire Departments Association Audit with Committee
- 01/22/26 Fire Department In house training SCBA conservation and follow the hose with no visibility with tool identification.
- 01/25/26 Fire Department Chief's Phone Conference
- 01/26/26 Meeting with Asst. Chief Starcher for grant review
- 01/27/26 Fire Department Officer's Meeting
- 01/28/26 County Fire Chief's Meeting
- 01/29/26 Fire Department Medical Training Stop the Bleed and med bag review

Trustee Papers

- Trustee Agenda, Dunbar EVOC Certificate

