

Monday, February 1,

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The Bainbridge Township Board of Trustees met in special session at the Bainbridge Fire Department meeting room on Monday, February 1, 2016. Those present were trustees Mrs. Lorrie Sass Benza, Mrs. Kristina O'Brien, Mr. Jeffrey S. Markley. Fiscal Officer Mrs. Janice S. Sugarman was not in attendance. Mrs. Kathleen Staudenbaur Fiscal Officer elect was in attendance. Mrs. Benza presided and called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

#### Presentation by Guest

Chief Allan Woo EFO.MS (Ret) Ohio Fire Chiefs Association.

Topic: Fire Department Strategic Analysis Study review of data.

Chief Woo gave a brief overview of his years in the Fire Department. He has 36 years of Fire Service experience, with 21 years as a Chief Officer. He retired in 2014 from the Washington Township Fire Department in Dublin, OH. Chief Woo is currently the interim Assistant Chief of the Worthington Fire Department in Worthington, OH.

Chief Woo stated that he has come to help the department by sharing his observations and information from his internal and external interviews. He will also give his recommendations on improving the department's performance in safety, staffing, communications, management effectiveness, and service delivery. Chief Woo found that the Bainbridge Fire Department staff has a great deal of passion and energy. He found high levels of pride and honesty, with a respectful and committed staff. He determined that Bainbridge Fire Department has a good reputation with other departments in our community, such as Police and Service. In addition, he learned that other Fire Departments in the area give the Bainbridge Fire Department high praises and feel that the department is on the cutting edge. He reiterated that his data will be a tool that will help the department heads and trustees to make improvements.

Chief Woo's Power Point presentation focused on three Areas:

1. Communication
2. Improved Management Performance and Process
3. Development Challenges and Staffing

Chief Woo went over recommendations #1-21 found on pages 7 - 34 in the Fire Department Strategic Analysis Study report. Chief Woo's findings suggested that the department needs to create a full time position for Fire Chief, as he believes that a part time chief can no longer address the needs of the department. Chief Woo encouraged the staff to move forward and to assist the chief, to form committees, and to share the work load for the department's needs. For example, be a mentor to a younger co-worker or lead a training session. He stated that he expects that in a 24 hour work shift some of these items can be addressed and that the work can be divided up. Chief Woo told those in attendance that he can be contacted with any questions. He left his business card for those who wish to contact him.

#### Comments by Trustees

Mr. Markley made the comment that it has taken time for this group to get to where they are today. He stated that these problems did not happen overnight. He said that they know there has been miscommunication, and that it is something that will have to be repaired. He believes that it will have to start from the top down to repair it and that the corrections and recommendations will not occur overnight. The Trustees are thoroughly committed to acting on each one of these 21 recommendations to the best of their abilities. They will make sure that they address the changes in this report to improve the services to the residents. Mr. Markley said that there is a hidden wealth of talent in this department that maybe is not being shared, and it would be great to bring that out to benefit the residents of Bainbridge Township.

Mrs. Benza and Mrs. O'Brien agreed with Mr. Markley, but added that in order to make these changes work they need the BTFD staff to do their part. Mrs. Benza praised the department for their current level of service. She feels that they are an outstanding group. The Trustees want to hear from the staff, so that they can build on their energy and strength of ideas.

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Mrs. O'Brien acknowledged that the staff in the department feels stifled. She wanted to encourage everyone. She stated that although she is new to the job of trustee, she fully intends to address all of the issues in the report. With input from the BTFD staff, and by digesting the information from the report, the trustees will be able to take action and move forward in a positive way.

Mrs. Lorrie Benza said that she and her fellow trustees will take a look at those first recommendations for full time chief and full time staff and explore what steps need to be taken. After some preliminary discussions, they will look at numbers and figures and time frames. She felt that by following the recommendations of the report and by working closely with the staff, they can provide the township residents with the best possible service from the Fire Department.

Mr. Markley, as the liaison to the fire department, encouraged the BTFD staff to communicate to him any questions or comments.

#### Question and Comments

Q. Matt Scharfenberg commented, "We obviously agree about reconnecting with the community; it sounds like the most of your report suggests that the body has to step up. Is that accurate?"

A. Chief Woo answered, "Yes".

Q. Mr. Mark Lewis commented that he feels that it is not fair to suggest that there are members in this department who haven't tried to do things over the years.

A. Chief Woo answered by stating that he understands that there is past history. What he is saying is don't waste your energy on the past. His recommendations are about moving forward. He encouraged the team to use their energy and passion to focus on the future. If things did not work in the past, modify them and tweak them. Not everything is going to work. If they don't work, get a little creative and move forward.

Q. Prudy Mackenzie, Chief's Administrative Assistant, had two questions:

1. "What is the time line to completing some of these recommendations?"
2. "Where in the plan is this going to say what has to be done and who is going to set up these committees?"

A. Chief Woo answered that there are two recommendations that are given in the report.

Q. Mr. Mark Menary wanted to have clarification and questioned if those of us who have the abilities and skills should take on the issues and run with them?

A. Chief Woo answered that for operational issues the trustees probably do not want to be bothered. Those are the things you should handle. As far as handling the finances and establishing positions, the trustees will probably want to address those.

Mrs. Benza desires to readdress this topic with the fire department at the end of February 2016.

The OFCA presentation and the list of attendees are attached to and becomes a permanent part of these minutes.

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Since there was no further business to come before this meeting of the Bainbridge Township Board of Trustees, the meeting was adjourned 7:32 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice S. Sugarman,  
Fiscal Officer, Bainbridge Township

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Minutes Read: \_\_\_\_\_

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_