

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS



BROWN TOWNSHIP REGULAR SESSION

Held: December 15, 2025

The Brown Township Board of Trustees convened in regular session on Monday, December 15, 2025 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:35 p.m. in the second-floor meeting room at 2491 Walker Rd Hilliard, Ohio 43026. Trustee Chair Martin called the meeting to order with the following members present:

Pete Marsh, Present
Joe Martin, Present
Pam Sayre, Present
Becky Kent, Present

Approval of Minutes

Trustee Marsh made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2025 Regular Session and December 3, 2025 Planning Meeting. Trustee Sayre seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried.

Fiscal Actions

Bills were presented for payment. Trustee Sayre made a motion to approve the payment of bills. Trustee Marsh seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried.

The Trustees previously reviewed the December 2025 payroll report. Trustee Marsh made a motion to approve the payroll report. Trustee Sayre seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried.

The Trustees previously reviewed the bank reconciliation and the supporting financial reports for the month of November 2025. Trustee Sayre made a motion to approve the bank reconciliation. Trustee Marsh seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried.

Sheriff's Report

Brown Township's Community Liaison, Deputy Haren, was present for the meeting. For 11/17/2025-12/15/2025 there were 93 calls for service, 12 reports taken, and 11 arrests/citations in Brown Township. There were 10 vehicle crashes, mostly on Interstate 70.

Zero thefts were recorded for two consecutive months, possibly attributed to the Fight Organized Retail Crime and Empower Law Enforcement Act, which elevated package and mail thefts to felony charges, discouraging such crimes.

The sheriff's communication center relocated from 410 S. High St. to 900 N. Hague Ave.

Norwich Fire Department Report

Norwich Fire Chief David Baird was present for the meeting. During November 2025, Norwich Township answered 632 calls for service with 194 Fire runs and 438 EMS runs.

Of those 632 calls, there were (17) EMS runs and (10) Fire runs in the unincorporated areas of Brown Township. There were also (6) EMS run and (5) Fire runs in the incorporated area of the Township.

The community's overwhelming support during the Station 83 sewage leak that destroyed toys stored for holiday donations resulted in additional donations exceeding 50 bicycles and a check for \$1,500 from Canal Winchester. Any insurance payments to cover the destroyed goods are earmarked to support intended toy recipients.

Norwich Township Fire Department onboarded 8 new firefighters with two more starting by the 29th, moving closer to operational readiness of Medic 84 to distribute emergency runs more evenly.

Audience Participation

Melissa Brinkerhoff, Brown Township's Big Darby Accord Advisory Panel representative gave a report. The panel reviewed three development cases, approving two with conditions: Prairie Elm (63 units over 23 acres) and Olive Farm Estates (Davis Road). The third case was just a review, a subdivision on Hubbard Road.

Concerns were raised about the lack of a health department report and the adequacy of HOA funding for road maintenance for Olive Farm Estates.

Ramire Fitzpatrick, a Planning Administrator with Franklin County, let Melissa know he plans to make sure his department acts in good faith by including Brown Township in informal technical reviews to improve transparency and cooperation.

Zoning Commission Update

Trustee Marsh reported that Verdantas feels comfortable with the May 2026 deadline for completing Brown Township's zoning resolution.

Developments

Michaella Radich with the Franklin County Auditor's office let Trustee Marsh know that they will be meeting with the prosecutor's office to decide how to rectify misdirected real estate taxes for a subdivision in Brown Township.

Chief Baird confirmed that Roberts Road running through Alton Place will be two lanes with parallel on-street parking and most likely a lowered speed limit of 25 mph.

Newsletter

Articles for the winter newsletter will include dates for Mando Ditch petition meetings with Franklin County Drainage Engineers, block watch, Big Darby amendment, an invitation to participate in invasive species removal in Brown Township's nature preserve, and possibly radon information.

Roads

Trustee Martin does not plan to contract with Franklin County Engineers for any township road work in 2026 as they currently seem to be in good repair.

Trustee Martin will review the concrete driveway policy provided by Cole Gillfillan.

Cole Gillfillan, with Earthcraft, submitted a bid to remove a 3300-foot fence line for \$8,800. Trustee Sayre made a motion to accept the bid. Trustee Marsh seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried.

Anthony Sasson, a resident, offered to provide volunteers to remove and treat invasives in the Brown Township nature preserve. He will coordinate with Cole Gillfillan to remove the debris and cut down bigger trees.

Oath of Office for Newly Re-elected Trustee Marsh and Trustee Martin

Board Chairman Joe Martin administered the Oath of Office to swear in Trustee Marsh and Board Vice-Chairman Pam Sayre administered the Oath of Office to swear in Trustee Martin for a four-year term as a result of the November 4, 2025 election. The term runs from 01/01/2026 until 12/31/2030. Congratulations to Trustees Pete Marsh and Joe Martin.

2026 Meeting Schedule

The board approved the 2026 meeting schedule provided by Heidi Feathers, Township Office Assistant.

Annual Salary & Wage Review

Don Williams's hourly rate will increase from \$33 to \$40, reflecting his lead role including snowplowing and facility care.

Glenn Elfrink's rate will rise from \$33 to \$35.

Tom Jantz's rate remains at \$33 as a new employee yet to record hours.

Scott Dever's rate remains at \$125 per mowing.

Bonuses for road crew and mowing staff were allocated: \$750 for Don, \$500 for Glenn, and \$250 for Scott, based on prior year hours and salary appropriations.

The office assistant, Heidi Feathers, will receive a \$200 bonus.

Elected Official insurance benefits will remain unchanged for 2026.

2026 Temporary Appropriations

Trustee Sayre made a motion to accept Resolution 18-2025 to adopt the 2026 temporary appropriations in the amount of \$1,001,456.03. Trustee Marsh seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried.

Old Business

Fiscal Officer Kent reported that Brian Zets (township attorney) will provide a resolution for the trustees to donate the old board room chairs.

Trustee Sayre shared a letter from Franklin County Development with the rest of the board regarding two new certified annexations from Brown Township to the City of Hilliard. One off of Elliott Road, and the other for the new Brown Elementary on Walker Road.

New Business

The newly established Brown Township Community Food Drive received board approval to use the township's name for a spring event planned for April, aiming to address food insecurity.

Organizers Matthew and Nicole reported raising over 1,046 pounds of goods during their pilot drive and are coordinating with local churches, schools, and the Methodist church for storage and distribution.

The drive will leverage neighborhood canvassing with flyers and QR codes to facilitate donations and pickups. The township will promote the event in the spring newsletter with a March 15 deadline for submissions to ensure community awareness.

Fire Chief Baird suggested partnering with the schools in Brown Township, and that the food pantry could handle pickups reducing logistical burden on volunteers.

Trustee Martin shared that the Franklin County Drainage Engineers will be using the Dever Building for Mando Ditch petition meetings on February 2, 3, 10, and 12.

Trustee Sayre made a motion to accept Resolution 19-2025 to employ Brosius, Johnson & Griggs, LLC as Township legal counsel. Trustee Marsh seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried.

Big Darby Accord Amendment Concerns

Several attendees expressed significant concern over the rushed timeline and lack of transparency regarding the 181-page Big Darby Accord amendment released on December 9, 2025, with public comments due by January 16, 2026.

Melissa Brinkerhoff, Anthony Sasson, and Cynthia Vermillion highlighted insufficient time for thorough review amid holiday commitments and the complexity of changes affecting land use, septic systems, and environmental protections.

Key issues include unclear development limits, inadequate scientific testing, and the absence of comprehensive water quality data, with ongoing studies from ODNR and Columbus expected in early 2026.

There is concern that the amendment conflates environmental goals with housing supply objectives, potentially threatening watershed protection.

A joint response effort is underway, led by Brown Township and involving local governments, schools, and emergency services, to address land use, infrastructure, and environmental impacts in a coordinated manner. The board anticipates requesting an extension for public comment to at least February 2026 to allow proper stakeholder engagement and data review.

The amendment's lack of public availability and limited meetings have reduced transparency and community participation, prompting calls for additional mixed-stakeholder forums and clearer communication.

The joint response will emphasize preserving the watershed's integrity and scrutinize proposed housing density increases, contrasting with prior land use agreements and zoning frameworks.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Trustee Martin asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Marsh made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Sayre seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.



Joe Martin, Chair



Becky Kent, Fiscal Officer

All formal actions of the Trustees/ Fiscal Officer of Brown Township concerning and relating to the adoption of resolutions and/or motions passed at this meeting were adopted in a meeting open to the public, in compliance with the law, including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.