

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS



BROWN TOWNSHIP REGULAR SESSION

Held: January 20, 2026

The Brown Township Board of Trustees convened in regular session on Tuesday, January 20, 2026 from 7:00 p.m. to 7:50 p.m. in the second-floor meeting room at 2491 Walker Rd Hilliard, Ohio 43026. Fiscal Officer Kent called the meeting to order with the following members present:

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

Nominations for 2026 Trustee Chairs

Fiscal Officer Kent asked for nominations for the 2026 Chair of the Brown Township Board of Trustees position. Trustee Martin nominated Trustee Pam Sayre for the Chair position and made a motion for her appointment. Trustee Marsh seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried.

The meeting was then turned over to Chair Sayre who asked for a nomination for the position of Vice-Chair. Trustee Martin nominated Trustee Pete Marsh for the Vice-Chair position and made a motion for his appointment. Trustee Sayre seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Trustee Marsh made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2025 Regular Session and January 15, 2026 Special Meeting. Trustee Martin seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried.

Fiscal Actions

Bills were presented for payment. Trustee Martin 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 January 2026 payroll report. Trustee Marsh made a motion to approve the payroll report. Trustee Martin 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 December 2025. Trustee Martin 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 12/15/2025-1/20/2026, there were 84 self-initiated runs, 20 reports taken, and 12 arrests/citations in Brown Township.

Incidents:

- 3 thefts reported, including 1 stolen trailer and 1 stolen check from mailbox with fraudulent alteration from \$150 to \$15,000 under detective investigation.
- Repeated theft from cell phone tower with copper wire stolen; possible unauthorized access to lock combinations suspected.

- 16 crashes reported; 9 occurred on I-70.
- 1 OVI arrest related to a crash at the intersection of Feder and Amity Roads.

Enforcement Efforts:

- Ongoing enforcement on Walker Road during school lunch hours (10:30 a.m. to noon) addressing speeding complaints; recent citations issued for speeds of 73+ mph.
- Will continue heavy enforcement for remainder of school year or until issue is resolved.

Community Support:

- Warming centers available through local libraries and churches for homeless individuals during cold weather.
- Sheriff's office participated in Operation Santa Sled on December 23rd, coordinating with city fire and Washington Township fire departments to provide community visibility and support to Nationwide Children's Hospital.

Public Resources:

- Encouraged public use of Sheriff's Office App for community safety alerts, crash notifications on I-70 and I-270, and suspect identification assistance.

Norwich Fire Department Report

Norwich Assistant Fire Chief Jake Wells was present for the meeting. Norwich Fire Department answered 6,562 runs in 2025, representing a 400-run increase from 2024.

Staffing Updates:

- 10 new full-time firefighters hired; Station 84 is now fully staffed.
- New medic unit placed in service as of January 1, 2026.
- Backup engine and medic positioned at Station 84 for improved response time and equipment redundancy.
- Additional 4 firefighters to be hired by March to achieve full staffing of 113 personnel.
- Total of 23 firefighters hired during 2025; Norwich Fire Department is the second-largest full-time department in central Ohio, second only to Columbus.
- 112 of 113 personnel are medics.

Capital Projects:

- New 36-foot training tower to be installed at Station 84, anticipated completion March or April 2026.
- Original concrete pad was removed and will be replaced due to installation defects (fiber balls found in concrete).
- Training tower will be used for live burns and firefighter training.
- Tower logo incorporates all 3 Hilliard school mascots to create "the den" and recognize partnership with schools.

Public tours of newly-built Station 84 available upon request.

Audience Participation

No formal audience participation.

Big Darby Accord Advisory Panel Report

Melissa Brinkerhoff, Big Darby Accord Advisory Panel representative for Brown Township, updated the board on two cases reviewed at the panel's last meeting.

Hubbard Road Development (17 acres):

- Small development case first heard in December for review prior to panel vote.
- Prairie Township supportive of project.

- Applicant made recommended changes; approved by panel.

Anderson Farms Development:

- 1,174 units on 150 acres with 25 acres off-site.
- Expected to return for further review next month.
- Fire and police protection jurisdiction unclear (Columbus vs. Norwich).
- Far West Side Area Commission Chair Sharon Rastetter presented significant concerns.
- Hilliard City Schools Superintendent Dave Stewart presented concerns regarding school capacity constraints.
- The development's current plan is over-density and has insufficient open space.
- Off-site open space (25 acres on Walker Road) held only by covenant with property owners, not in permanent conservation easement as typically required (Metro Parks, City of Hilliard, Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District).

Melissa recommended that the trustees consider pausing additional case reviews during the Big Darby Accord amendment process to prevent developer pressure for expedited approval. She also encouraged residents to attend Big Darby Accord Panel meetings and submit written feedback on Anderson Farms amendment. Panel meetings are open to the public.

Melissa read a statement by panel member Anthony Sasson:

Thank you for your attention to the draft Big Darby Accord Amendment of December 9, 2025, and your letter of January 16, 2026, with your response to MKSK on the draft.

The Accord Amendment draft process should be paused to allow more time for review of the 12/9/2025 draft and allow for comprehensive and substantive review and comments. We need to ensure that any Amendment is adequate for protection at the level needed.

The 2025 Amendment process (such as the workshops) was not adequate for discussion of the substance of the draft or understanding of others' positions and perspectives.

The Amendment does not ensure the Integrated Prioritization System (IPS) will be considered, or not adequately. This significant tool was presented January 12 in Hilliard. It includes perhaps the most extensive water quality analysis done for central Ohio. Addressing the IPS should not be left until after the Amendment is made final.

The results of the recent ODNR-funded survey of Hellbranch Run mussels should be adequate cause for a pause in the Amendment process. This is a major decline in the number of mussel species and individuals in Hellbranch Run and should be a signal of problems that must be answered now.

The Amendment does not adequately review the status of rare and sensitive species and high biodiversity and establish measures that clearly provide protection for these features. Rare and sensitive species and high biodiversity are the reasons that there is a Big Darby Accord. These iconic features must first be protected before the Amendment can proceed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Zoning Commission Update

Trustee Marsh reported the Zoning Commission's last meeting focused primarily on reviewing conservation development requirements for larger parcels with multiple units. Commission will meet again in February with date to be determined.

Hampton Reserve

Franklin County Auditor responded to property tax misallocation affecting 92 parcels. Hampton Reserve properties were incorrectly assessed as Norwich Township; corrections to be made for current tax year.

Auditor is investigating two separate accounting issues:

1. Individual parcels reviewed over 5-year period for potential overpayments; affected homeowners to be notified.
2. Aggregate analysis of Real Estate Taxes sent to Norwich Township instead of Brown Township over a 30-year period (since Hampton Reserve opening); auditor lacks statutory authority to retroactively redistribute funds but will provide calculation to township for further action.

Newsletter

March 15 deadline for submissions. Topics: Norwich Fire training tower and Big Darby Accord amendment.

Old Business

Trustee Martin shared that a mock up of how the Dever Building sign will be hung is available for review. The security system equipment has been restored.

New Business

Trustee Martin made a motion to adopt Resolution 1-2026 – Donation of Old Board Chairs. Trustee Marsh seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried. Heidi Feathers, Assistant to the Trustees, will coordinate pick up.


Trustee Marsh made a motion to accept the 2025 Mileage Certification for Brown Township sent by Ohio Department of Transportation. Trustee Martin seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried.


Township Website Evaluation:

- Trustee Martin reported contact with website evaluation company identified in OTA magazine. Company based in Ann Arbor, Michigan; primarily serves Michigan municipalities but expanding service area.
- Free website compliance review completed; township website currently 70% ADA compliant.
- Trustees authorized request for formal proposal from company.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Trustee Sayre asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Marsh made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Martin seconded the motion. Motion passed three AYES, no NAYS. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.


Pam Sayre, 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.