

Elizabeth Township Quarterly

Spring 2005

THOUGHTS FROM THE TRUSTEE PRESIDENT

For many people, spring is a time of renewal, and in our rural community, we know spring is a time of busy activity to sow seeds for future growth. This spring newsletter offers us an opportunity to reflect upon our 2004 accomplishments and share with you the goals for the remainder of 2005.

2004 was a banner year for the township, both in terms of activity and accomplishments. Some highlights of the year include:

- We implemented the farmland preservation committee, which helped two farms achieve protected status, resulting in the preservation of 167 acres of farmland. In fact, the only two farms selected from Miami County were from our township.
- The township acquired the Miami East South Elementary (formerly Elizabeth school) and has formed an active Community Building Committee. The committee surveyed residents during the November election and is working toward identifying appropriate uses of the building and property. Additionally, the building is undergoing renovation; refinishing the gymnasium floor, routine painting and replacement of ceiling tiles are among the tasks completed thus far.
- We created a farmland conservancy board, which is working toward achieving 501(c)3 (nonprofit) status. Officers are Ric Wallace, Carl Newbright and Lori Byg.
- We held a grand opening of the township's emergency medical service and firehouse, which serves the township and the surrounding area. In less than a year, the EMS performed 85 runs, with an average response time of five minutes.

For 2005, our strategy remains much the same. We continue to focus on:

- Maintaining the integrity of our rural township.
- Assisting residents in the preservation of farmland.
- Scheduling routine maintenance of township roads.
- Coordinating joint efforts with the Miami County engineer's department to improve portions of Rudy Road, as well as replacement of the Rudy Road bridge.
- Supporting township committees in the development of a community center.
- Continuing responsible management of township funds.

As mentioned above, the EMS unit has been an excellent addition to the township by providing high-quality medical care in a timely manner. We have received positive comments from many of the residents who have utilized the service. With regard to fire service, however, we are reviewing our coverage. The service received from our local fire departments (Casstown and Christiansburg) has been – and continues to be – of dependable high quality and is further enhanced by the presence of our fast-responding EMS unit. Based upon the data we have collected, the trustees have decided to continue utilizing the services of the local fire departments, thereby focusing our efforts on EMS service. We will continue addressing issues on how to better utilize our township fire truck.

We have made a lot of accomplishments and we look forward to many more throughout a busy 2005. It is an exciting time to be a resident of Elizabeth Township, and it is a pleasure to serve this community. Speaking on behalf of all the trustees, we appreciate your support. We continually strive to serve the township to the best of our abilities. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or comments.

Respectfully, Ron Swallow

PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENTS

The township's zoning board will hold a public hearing on proposed amendments to the township's zoning resolution at ___ p.m. June ___ at the former Elizabeth/Miami East South Elementary school, 5760 Walnut Grove Road. The zoning board is expected to make a decision on the proposed amendments at the meeting or within 30 days thereafter.

COMMUNITY PICNIC

Township residents are invited to a community picnic from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. July 10 at the former Miami East South Elementary building, 5760 Walnut Grove Road. Picnic fare will be served. Midway games and rides, a live band, and a disc jockey will all be on hand at various times during the afternoon. Residents will have an opportunity to view the progress of the building renovation. Free tickets may be picked up from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on June 18 and June 25 at the township house, 5710 Walnut Grove Road, or by contacting picnic committee members Carol Sutherly (339-5888), Lou Ann Jess (335-1165), or Patty Taynor (335-6013).

FARMLAND PRESERVATION UPDATE

Owners of three of five township farms entered into Ohio's competitive purchase of development rights program have received notification that their farms have been tentatively selected. (See future newsletters for more information.) Through the program, landowners can preserve their farmland by selling their development rights while retaining ownership of their land. This year, the township is willing to contribute 30 percent of the value of the development rights for farms selected through the program. Last year, two farms in the township were selected for the program.

MONTHLY TRUSTEE WORKSHOPS BEING HELD

Due to an increasing number of projects, township trustees have begun holding workshops at 8 p.m. on the second Monday of each month. The workshops are open to the public.

A REMINDER TO RESIDENTS OPERATING BUSINESSES IN THE TOWNSHIP

If you own and/or are operating a business in Elizabeth Township, please check with the township zoning inspector to make sure it is in compliance with township zoning laws. The zoning inspector, Gerald Thorstad, can be reached at 335-6760.

RESIDENTIAL GROWTH IN THE TOWNSHIP

Building permits for 40 new houses in Elizabeth Township were issued between 2000 and 2004. The township ranked eighth out of Miami County's 12 townships in the number of building permits issued during that five-year period. Elizabeth had four permits issued in 2000, four in 2001, six in 2002, 11 in 2003 and 15 in 2004. The township ranked third behind Concord and Monroe townships in building permits issued in 2004.

NOTES FROM RECENT TRUSTEE MEETINGS

Though taken directly from the township clerk's minutes, the following notes represent highlights - not a comprehensive account - of recent township trustee meetings:

Fire & Ambulance

- Trustees discontinued use of the township's fire engine on Jan. 1. Operating the township's fire engine required the dispatching of an ambulance to the scene of the fire as well. The township does not have enough New Carlisle fire department employees based at the township's station to operate both a fire truck and an ambulance. Last year, the township was able to operate its fire truck because Christiansburg provided an ambulance on fire runs. However, trustees decided there were too few fire runs to justify contracting with

Christiansburg for ambulance service in 2005 when the township had its own ambulance. Trustees are deciding whether to sell the township's fire truck or have it manned by volunteers. New Carlisle, Casstown and Christiansburg will continue to provide fire protection to the township.

- Trustees are considering a proposal by MedFlight to locate a helicopter pad in the township.
- Trustees approved the purchase of five radios for the township EMS service at a cost of \$768.75 each, for a total cost of \$3,843.75.

Conversion of former Elizabeth school

- Trustees voted to set aside \$12,000 for expenses associated with a community picnic planned for July at the former school.
- Trustees voted to accept Trader Builders Inc.'s bid of \$12,160 on metal for the gymnasium ceiling. The trustees also accepted Trader's bid of \$1,100 to paint the walls of the school's conference room and office, repair drywall, and remove and reinstall shelving.
- Trustees approved ordering a sign identical to that originally located on the Elizabeth school building. The original sign was removed by the Miami East school district. The new sign will cost \$3,707 and will be made by Piqua Classic Monument.
- Trustees approved paying Choice One Engineering of Sidney \$2,200 to do a survey for a mound system at the former school and apply to the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Trustees approved hiring D.A. Roberts & Assoc. to refinish the gymnasium and hall floors, as well as three classroom floors at a total cost of \$6,600.
- The township paid the Thornbrooke Group \$2,061 to survey the building.
- The following building subcommittees have formed: township historical society museum, daycare center, fitness center, meeting rooms/gym, and picnic.

Roads

- Trustees approved paying Choice One Engineering \$19,350 for the township's 2005 side ditch reconstruction projects on Hufford, McCandliss and Gearhart roads.

Personnel

- Trustees elected Ron Swallow as president of the trustees and David Wagner as vice president for 2005.
- Trustees approved the following hourly wage schedule for township workers in 2005: man labor, \$8; tractor including driver, \$22; chain saw operator, \$12; power mower with operator, \$22.
- Trustees approved compensating members of the township zoning boards \$50 per meeting and the secretary \$75 per meeting plus reimbursement for expenses.

Of interest

- Trustees accepted a bid from Lawn Tenders to mow township cemeteries, the yard at the former Miami East South Elementary, and the McKendree Church Cemetery at a cost of \$24 per hour.
- Trustees approved a contract with Miami East Diamond Sports to allow the use of the baseball diamonds east of the school from March to July 2005.
- The Miami County sheriff's office is charging the township \$87,416 for added police protection in 2005.
- The township had \$38.52 million in its general fund as of March 31.

BILLS GREATER THAN \$5,000

- City of New Carlisle (1st quarter 2005, fire protection): \$77,500
- Christiansburg Fire Co. (1st half 2005, fire protection): \$10,838
- Casstown Volunteer Fire Protection (1st half 2005, fire protection) \$10,838
- Trader Builders Inc. (work at former Elizabeth school): \$34,886
- Jess Construction (salt bin, EMS building): \$34,255

BUILDING PERMITS/VARIANCES

The following applications have been approved by the township's zoning inspector:

- J. Randolph and Linda Mott, new house, 1350 S. Hufford Road
- Jeff McCuistion, new house, 8055 Walnut Grove Road
- Elizabeth Township Trustees, salt bin, 2289 Children's Home Road, \$48,000.

ZONING UPDATE

The township zoning board met on Feb. 15 and March 21 to discuss township zoning regulations. At the board's request, township attorney John Fulker is putting together a draft of possible revisions to the township zoning code.

The township zoning board of appeals on March 22 approved an application for a conditional use at 700 N. State Route 201. Maureen and David Amirault proposed a private equestrian dressage training facility for the property. The conditional use was approved with the following stipulations: the business must employ no more than five people, the facility must be set back at least 100 feet from property lines, and the sign must be conforming.

CONTACT US

Beginning with this newsletter, all quarterly newsletters will be mailed to all township households (previously, they were mailed only to registered voters). If you know of a township landowner who lives outside the township, but who would like to receive the next newsletter, please contact the township trustees by phone (335-1920), fax (335-1927) or e-mail at elitzshp@voyager.net

Trustees meet at 8 p.m. on the first and third Wednesdays of each month through the end of November at the township house, 5710 Walnut Grove Road (meetings begin at 7 p.m. December through March). Work sessions are held at 8 p.m. on the second Monday of each month. If you would like to be placed on a meeting's agenda, please contact the township trustee office with as much advance notice as possible. Your trustees are Paul Gearhardt (335-2108), Ron Swallow (339-1084) and Dave Wagner (857-9371). Your clerk is Larry Lavender (845-0047).

Elizabeth Twp. Trustees
5710 Walnut Grove Road
Troy, OH 45373