

**Westfield Township Trustees Special Meeting  
June 2, 2026**

**Meeting location: 6701 Greenwich Rd, Westfield Center OH**

**James Likley called the special meeting with Village Council of Westfield Center to order at 6:00 pm**

Roll call: Joseph Doty, James Likley, Kent Patterson

Others in attendance: Julie Carr, Legal Counsel Nathan Kott

This is a meeting to discuss funding for the fire district. Rick Robbs, Mayor of Westfield Center, wanted to stress that he supports the fire department. This meeting is about a financial commitment not our support for the fire department. He added that they provide exceptional service for the community.

Rick Robbs said the last contract was put in place in 2014 with the township. \$150,819 annually is paid to the township in quarterly installments. Which is based on the effective millage rate passed in 2012 by the residents of the township. He discussed the contract and what would happen if it was terminated and by whom.

Likley asked if the concerns of what can and cannot be done in the contract has been resolved with the Village? The village council shared they are confident with how the contract is worded.

Likley asked if legally the Village has concerns. Mayor Rick Robb said the township does not need the permission of the Village Council to place the levy on the ballot.

Likley shared that since November, individual conversations with council members and council meetings he shared his opinion that every person who is serviced by Westfield Fire and Rescue should be allowed to vote on the level of service they want. The township trustees want to maintain the current level of service for all residents. He shared the anticipated results in reductions if the levy does not pass- effecting staffing, scheduled coverage of both day and night, revenue from responding to calls, call response time increase, relying on other communities to respond for services and aging equipment out of service. The trustees have provided a 7-year budget projections.

Trustees goal- everyone being allowed to vote. Likley acknowledged that other levys for the fire district have failed, but this impacts all residents and all residents should be allowed to vote on this. Trustees have shared four different funding options.

Doty shared that the plan is for the present district structure to go away. There are some savings to be had by eliminating the district. He said the fire department would then be run similar to Seville-Guilford. Nathan Kott has confirmed that the district does not have to be dissolved unless the levy passes, which is done by the Board of Trustees. Kott shared that

dissolving the district would take effect in the following year July or later to meet the contract timeline.

If the levy does not pass, the township will need to decrease operating funds by 80-100k for the 2027 year, and the present district funding by the township and village would remain in place.

Karen Martin wanted to clarify that the residents of the Village would pay an income tax to the Village and property tax money toward the fire levy. Legal counsel said yes.

Karen asked if we would be having this discussion if the previous levies had passed- would we be dissolving the fire district and making it a fire department. Doty said when it comes to the fire department- anyone who is in the service area should be allowed to vote as it impacts everyone. He also looked at voting history and shared the past results.

Greg Oakes shared the reason the other levies have failed is because the millage was either too high and it was poorly campaigned in the community. Trustees agreed.

Craig Walkup asked when the decision will be made on exactly what millage the levy will be for. Likley shared that based on this conversation and reviewing the budget scenarios they will have a decision very soon. They just wanted to have the conversation and feedback from the Village first before voting as Trustees. Doty explained that the budget scenarios and numbers used were made with accurate quotes from manufacturers. They also reviewed present operating expenses and a 5% annual increase. Karen Martin asked about a joint district with the Township and Village. Likley shared there is another layer of bureaucracy and administrative cost that would have to be considered like a Fiscal Officer. Nathan Kott shared that a joint fire district would become a separate entity. The operating costs would be completely different and not the sole responsibility of the Township Fiscal Officer. Karen Martin asked if one of the current FO's would be allowed to take the role? Nathan Kott said yes, if they agreed to the additional responsibilities or pay.

The Village Council added they want the best for both the township and village. Likley said the trustees are representatives of the village residents the same as township residents when it comes to the fire department and every two years one or two of them is on the ballot township wide.

Rick Robbs shared the village would be putting up less than 50% of the budget if this passes and they want a seat at the table when it comes to the fire district. He said without a seat at the table he feels this is a deal breaker. Rick Robbs shared that the new leaders as trustees have not tried to pass a levy with the township and reminded them they campaigned on leadership in the township. He said the first levy attempt is pulling in the village instead of using their leadership in the community to pass a continuation levy. He said the Trustees would generate more money with a renewal that doesn't involve the village residents voting. He said making important decisions quickly end up in a bad decision and they are not ready to face the residents of the village with a proposal.

Doty said history has shown this would likely be a failing attempt. The Village Council shared that you haven't tried yet under your new leadership.

Karen Martin said successful levies take time and nothing has been done yet. Time is needed to get the information out there, but it needs to be the right plan. She said a renewal with increase levy would give us the time needed. Julie McNabb said she feels this is all to fast.

The Village Council said a renewal with increase is a chance to reset the revenue, which will keep the lights on longer for the Village to collaborate with the Township on a long-term solution. They said they appreciate the amount of work that has been put into this. They feel they just need more time to present to the Village in the proper way. A future contract can be what the township and village want it to be.

Village thanked the Trustees for the work that has been done.

Trustees thanked the Village for meeting.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Likley made a motion to adjourn at 7:03 pm

Doty seconded the motion.

Roll Call- Doty- aye, Patterson- aye, Likley- aye. Motion passed.

Minutes prepared by Township Administrator, Julie Carr.

Signed:

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**James Likley**

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**Joseph Doty**

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**Kent Patterson**

Date approved \_\_\_\_\_ 6/15/26 \_\_\_\_\_