



Community Newsletter

ROSSTWP.ORG

Spring 2023

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NEEDED

Ross Township is seeking residents and/or business owners to participate on a Public Safety Committee and a Fiscal Oversight Committee. These committees are created by the Board of Township Trustees in an effort to encourage citizen participation, provide opportunities to learn others' perspectives and priorities, and provide a resource for factual information about the state of the township.

Initially, we intend for each committee to have 3 members in addition to elected officials or staff from the township that will be supporting the group. The Township will generally provide background information and topics for

discussion, but the committee is expected to grow into that role over time.

Committees will meet monthly in the evening and as-needed. Committees may also meet at the same time if there is a topic that is relevant to both groups (for example, a discussion on public safety funding).

If you are interested in participating on a committee, please send a letter of interest by June 1, 2023 to Laurie Kile, Township Administrator, at lkile@rosstwp.org or Ross Township Administration, 4055 Hamilton Cleves Road, Fairfield, OH 45014.

LAND USE PLAN UPDATES

Ross Township updated the township's land use plan as part of a larger zoning preparation effort when residents were considering if the Township should take over zoning. In November 2022, residents voted against Township-controlled zoning, and Butler County continues to administer the Township's zoning program.

While the process for zoning consideration was underway, a draft of the updated township land use plan was completed, but not adopted pending the outcome of the ballot issue. If the Township had adopted zoning, then only the township would have to adopt the updated plan. Now that the county will control zoning in the township, the township wants to submit the draft plan to the county, for them to adopt, as a guiding document for land use in Ross Township (similar to how the existing plan was adopted).

On February 16, 2023 the Board of Trustees conducted a public hearing on proposed updates to the Ross Township Land Use Plan that was approved in 2008. Please go to <https://rosstwp.org/zoning/> to view the presentation and for additional information.

TRUSTEE NEEDED

The Ross Township Board of Trustees is accepting letters of interest and resumes of experience for the position of Trustee for Ross Township. The deadline for submission is May 15, 2023. The appointed Trustee will fill an unexpired term through December 31, 2023. Filling the remainder of the term through December 31, 2025 will be on the November 2023 ballot. Candidates must be a resident of Ross Township. Per Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Section 505.24, the annual salary for serving as a Ross Township trustee in 2023 is \$19,236.00.

Documents can be mailed to Township Administration at 4055 Hamilton Cleves Road, Fairfield, OH 45014 or emailed as PDFs to lkile@rosstwp.org. Questions can be directed to Township Administrator Laurie Kile at 513-863-2337 ext. 111 or by email referenced above.

Trustee Duties

According to the ORC, there shall be three elected trustees for a four-year term. The trustees have the legislative authority in the township. Under township responsibilities, the trustees oversee the care and maintenance of the township roads, fire and police protection, and appoint and hire employees. Other responsibilities include to make resolutions relative to the township business, provide for the general welfare of the township, and maintain records of all township business and activities.

BEFORE YOU LIGHT IT... KNOW OHIO'S OPEN BURNING REGULATIONS

Why is open burning a problem?

Open burning can release many kinds of toxic fumes. Leaves and plant materials send aloft millions of spores when they catch fire, causing many people with allergies to have difficulty breathing. The pollutants released by open burning also make it more difficult to meet health-based air quality standards, especially in or near large cities. The gases released by open burning can also corrode metal siding and damage paint on buildings.

What open burning is NEVER allowed?

Under Ohio law, these materials may not be burned anywhere in the state at any time:

- garbage—any wastes created in the process of handling, preparing, cooking or consuming food;
- materials containing rubber, grease and asphalt or made from petroleum, such as tires, cars and auto parts, plastics or plasticcoated wire; and
- dead animals—unless approved for control of disease by a governing agency.

Other restrictions:

- Open burning is not allowed when air pollution warnings, alerts or emergencies are in effect.
- Fires cannot obscure visibility for roadways.
- No wastes generated off the premises may be burned. For example, a tree trimming contractor may not haul branches and limbs to another site to burn.

Ohio's Annual Spring and Fall Burn Ban

Individuals that choose to conduct open burning in Ohio should be aware of rules and regulations that may affect them. Following are several regulatory items to consider:

- Ohio Revised Code 1503.18 prohibits most open burning in unincorporated areas in March, April, May, October, and November between 6am and 6pm. Open burning during these times may be permissible if conditions outlined in the exclusionary text are met. This code is under authority of the Ohio Division of Forestry.
- The Ohio EPA has authority regarding open burning under Ohio Administrative Code.

What can I burn? The following open fires are allowed inside a Township (Unrestricted Area) in the State of Ohio

Type of Fire	Inside a Township (Unrestricted Area)
Barbeques, campfires, cookouts	Wood stack no larger than 2 ft. high x 3 ft. wide. Use clean, seasoned firewood or equivalent.
Agricultural waste	Agricultural wastes and plant matter such as tree trimmings, stumps, brush, weeds, leaves, grass, shrubbery and material from crop or livestock production. This includes fence posts and scrap lumber, but does not include buildings, land clearing waste, dead animals or animal waste. Fire must be more than 1,000 feet from neighbor's inhabited building. <i>Provide notification to Ohio EPA if pile is greater than 20 ft. wide x 10 ft. high (4,000 cubic feet). This may take two weeks.</i>
Land-clearing waste	Plant matter such as tree trimmings, stumps, brush, weeds, leaves, grass, shrubbery and crop residues. <i>With prior written permission from Ohio EPA. This may take two weeks.</i>
Residential waste	Plant matter such as tree trimmings, stumps, brush, weeds, leaves, grass, shrubbery and crop residues. Also wastes such as wood or paper products that are generated by one-, two-, or three-family residences. Fire must be more than 1,000 feet from neighbor's inhabited building. <i>Provide notification to Ohio EPA if pile is greater than 10 ft. x 10 ft. x 10 ft. This may take two weeks.</i>
Ceremonial fires	Wood stack no larger than 5 ft. high x 5 ft. wide. Duration no longer than three hours. <i>No notification required.</i>



If you have any questions regarding the open burn standards, please contact **Fire Chief Steve Miller** at 513-863-3410.

2023 MEETING SCHEDULE

For 2023, the Ross Township Board of Trustees regular meetings will be held on the 1st Thursday of each month and work sessions will be conducted on the 3rd Thursday of each month, unless noticed differently. Meeting and work session agendas will be posted on the website at least one day prior to the meeting. The meetings and work sessions will commence at 6:00 p.m. at the Ross Township Administration Building, 4055 Hamilton Cleves Road. For more information, please refer to www.rosstwp.org.

ENERGY

Ross Township Announces Electric & Natural Gas Aggregation Plans - Authority to Aggregate

Ross Township Trustees recently voted to place on the November ballot the question of whether the township should engage in electric and natural gas aggregation. Aggregation is the process by which the township would negotiate a bulk price on the electric and natural gas commodities for its residents and small businesses. Individual consumers would then decide if they wanted to opt-out of the negotiated price and continue to provide for their own electric or natural gas supplies. If approved by the voters, residents would see no change in their electric or gas services. Duke Energy would continue to carry, service, and bill for the service.

Residents will see the following language on their ballots this November:

“Shall the Ross Township Board of Township Trustees have the authority, alone or jointly with the legislative authority of any other township or municipal corporation or county, to aggregate the retail electric (gas) loads located in the Township, and for that purpose, to enter into service agreements to facilitate for those loads the sale and purchase of Electricity (or Natural Gas), such aggregation to occur automatically except with respect to mercantile customers and except with respect to any person who affirmatively elects by a stated procedure to opt out of the aggregation program, as permitted by Section 4928.20 (or 4929.26) of the Ohio Revised Code?”

This is a completely voluntary program. Residents will be given the choice to opt-out of the program at any time if they do not wish to participate. For additional information go to <https://energyalliances.com/about-community-aggregation>.

What is Energy Choice?

Before competition was introduced, homes and businesses purchased their energy supply with the local utility company (Duke Energy).

In 1999, the Ohio General Assembly passed Senate Bill 3, which began the process of energy deregulation in Ohio.

Under the deregulated system, consumers in many areas of Ohio now have the freedom to choose their own energy supply and energy provider and to pursue pricing options and plans that may be lower and more strategic than what your utility currently offers.

Duke Energy will ensure that your energy supply is safely delivered to your home, track your energy usage, maintain the infrastructure, and service all equipment, such as meters, wires and pipelines, and will respond to any power outages. If you are facing a power outage or other problems, Duke Energy will still be your first point of contact. The contact number for Duke Energy is provided on your electricity bill. Of course, you are not required to switch to a new energy supplier.

Butler Rural customers will not be eligible for the Electric Aggregation, although those residents could be eligible for Natural Gas Aggregation. However, due to ballot guidelines BOTH AGGREGATION ISSUES will appear on all ballots in Ross Township.

SCAM ALERT

Door-to-door solicitors are everywhere and the phone calls to buy energy seem to never end. Don't be fooled by these offers. Some salespeople may display a solicitor's permit form or official looking badge. THE PERMIT IS NOT AN ENDORSEMENT and the badge may be misleading. They may claim they work with Duke Energy or XYZ Energy company and offer rates far below anything you presently are receiving. Please do not show them your Duke Energy bill. Also, beware of robo-calls and phone solicitors claiming that “your Duke account has been flagged for review.” This is also a scam by an unethical broker or supplier designed to mislead you.

If you have questions, don't hesitate to close the door on the scammers and call your local officials.

2023 TOWNSHIP ROAD PAVING PROJECTS

I am pleased to inform you that this summer we will be paving the following roads:

- Smith Rd from SR 128 to Sky Meadow Dr. – 2.890 miles
- Morgan Ross Rd from the County line to our maintenance line with Morgan Twp. – 2.870 miles

The total cost of this project is \$1,136,842.78 for a total of 5.76 miles, or \$197,368.54 per mile.

Ross Township received money from the State of Ohio from the **American Rescue Plan** and have committed \$825,000 of it towards paving. The Butler County Commissioners then split some of the **American Rescue Plan** funds they received with all of the townships to help with paving costs,

of which Ross Twp received \$273,940, bringing the total to \$1,098,940. The balance of \$37,902.78 will come from the Road Department budget.

With the ever-increasing price of paving, I applaud the Ross Township Trustees for taking this rare opportunity to apply extra funds to the Road budget for the paving needs of our community.

Please be cautious of our work crews out on the roads and have a safe summer.

Thank you,

Paul Bulach

Road Superintendent



4055 Hamilton Cleves Road
Fairfield, Ohio 45014

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ROSS TOWNSHIP CONTACTS

TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES:

Keith Ballauer W 513-863-2337x113 C 513-646-9242
John Fisher W 513-863-2337x114 C 513-341-8707
Jennifer Patterson W 513-863-2337x110 C 513-642-9171

FISCAL OFFICER:

Julie Joyce-Smith
W 513-863-2337x112

ADMINISTRATOR:

Laurie Kile
W 513-863-2337x111

NON-EMERGENCY:

Police Chief Burton Roberts W 513-863-2337x130
F 513-863-6378
Fire Chief Steve Miller W 513-863-3410x150
Road Superintendant Paul Bulach W 513-863-2337x180
Police Department W 513-863-2337
4055 Hamilton Cleves Rd.
Fire Station #1 W 513-275-1463
2565 Cincinnati-Brookville Rd.
Fire Station #2 W 513-863-3410
1308 Ross Millville Rd.

SCHOOL NUMBERS:

Ross Local Schools

District Offices 513-863-1253
Morgan Elementary 513-738-1986
Elda Elementary 513-738-1972
Ross Intermediate School 513-868-4550
Ross Middle School 513-863-1251
Ross High School 513-863-1252

Private Schools

Stephen T. Badin High School 513-863-3993
St. Joseph Elementary 513-863-8758
St. Peter in Chains 513-863-0685
Queen of Peace Elementary 513-863-8705

OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS:

Butler County Building & Zoning 513-887-3204
MRAA 513-738-1392
Rumpke 800-828-8171

EMERGENCY DIAL 911