

Canaan Township

2021 Year End Review

The year of 2021 was another interesting year of navigating the continuing Coronavirus Pandemic and all the rules, regulations, and funding that was provided to local governments.

In January, the fiscal officer gathered information for the 2019/2020 audit to be prepared by Wilson, Phillips, and Agin, CPA's Inc. A full financial audit was required for those two years. Some years the audit is smaller and called Agreed Upon Procedures. The final audit was received in April and is posted on the township website.

In March of 2021, The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP), which President Biden signed on March 11, 2021, provided a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus rescue package designed to facilitate the United States' recovery from the devastating economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The township again found itself watching, navigating, and processing the information coming to us from the federal, state, and local government. It was uncertain if townships were even going to be eligible to receive any funds from this latest rescue package. It was finally announced in July that every township in Ohio was officially eligible to receive a direct allotment of ARP funding based on population. Step-by-step guidance was received from the OTA on how to receive the funds, how to report the funds and follow compliance as well as examples of eligible uses from US Treasury guidance. It seemed that more solid information and guidance was provided with this rescue package (versus the CARES Act last year) and the trustees felt more comfortable moving forward to apply for the funds. The trustees passed a resolution on July 13, 2021 to apply for these funds for Canaan Township. This money is to be received in two tranches with the first tranche received on July 22, 2021 in the amount of \$50,123.38. The second tranche of a similar amount is expected to be received a year later in July 2022. The township is still seeking guidance on the proper expenditure of these funds. The township has until December 31, 2024 to obligate all the ARP money and until December 31, 2026 to actually spend the money. Guidance is being sought through the County Prosecutor on spending the funds. Since the township hall is a public facility and is a place for congregate settings, it appears that upgrades to the HVAC system and well as some other updates to the doors, flooring, and lighting may be an eligible use of the funds. The trustees are in the process of gathering quotes for some of these projects but will not move forward until they receive an answer from the County Prosecutor.

The trustees found out in the spring that their application for OPWC funds for the paving of two miles of Township Road 60 (between TR 67 and CR 59) was denied. The township has received funding 7 out of the last 10 years they have applied, for which we are grateful.

In July, despite not receiving funding from OPWC for paving this year, the township was able to pave 4 roads in the township: Township Roads 65, 71, 72, and a portion of 74. The township again piggybacked off the county bid and this year Kokosing paved the roads. The total cost for all 4 roads was \$93,522.51. The total miles paved was approximately 3.37 miles.

The township learned of a new grant opportunity for road funding through the ODOT Stimulus Grant for townships. The trustees have applied for these funds to pave and widen Township Road 60 between Township Road 67 and County Road 61, a one-mile stretch. Funds from the ODOT Grant, if received, will be 100% with no matching funds from the township required. The engineer's estimate for this project is \$145,832.50 and is for road widening and paving as well as tile replacement at TR 65 and TR 60. If the grant is awarded, the township should know by February 2022.

The township again applied for the OPWC grant for 2022 for the other mile of Township Road 60 between County Road 61 and County Road 59. This will be for paving and tree trimming and the engineer's estimate is \$120,152.45. If awarded, the township will be responsible to provide 26% of the bid awarded and the OPWC grant monies will cover 74% of the costs. If both grants are received and these portions of Township Road 60 are paved, this will complete the paving and widening of the total 5 miles of Township Road 60. The township should know sometime early in the spring of 2022 if they were awarded these grants.

The trustees contracted this year with Mitchell Trucking for snow plowing and ice removal, Gene Ebert for mowing at the cemeteries and township hall, and Matt Strine for spraying of the weeds along the roadways and in the cemeteries. We appreciate the services provided by these independent contractor's and companies.

A Cemetery Grant was applied for and received in the amount of \$1,000.00. The grant money will be used to offset the cost of installing a driveway in the new section of the N. Canaan Cemetery.

A new trustee, Tyler Levering, was elected to the Canaan Township Board in November. Tyler will begin his first term on 1/1/2022 and will replace Edward Sayers. Mr. Sayers will be retiring after 42 plus years of faithful service to the residents of Canaan Township. On behalf of the residents of Canaan Township, we would like to thank Mr. Sayers for his many years of work to better our community.

As 2021 ends, it is always exciting to look to a new year and the changes and progress that it might bring. The trustees and the fiscal officer are privileged to be of service to the residents of Canaan Township. As always, residents are invited to attend our monthly meetings, the second Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. We hope to see you there!