

**CLINTON COUNTY REPUBLICAN PARTY
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

September 21, 2023 – 7:00 pm

Clinton County Courthouse

Approved 10/19/23

1. **Call to Order** – Chairman Steve Willis called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.
2. **Invocation** – Dan Smith
3. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Led by Sheriff Sean Dush
4. **Opening Remarks** – Chairman Willis
 - a) Regular agenda has been shortened in order to allow time for a closed session of the Executive Committee to review proposed revisions to CCRP Bylaws
 - b) The interruption and disrespect shown to County Treasurer Wiswasser at our last meeting was inexcusable.
 - c) New guidelines regarding Executive Committee meetings when General Membership is in attendance:
 - i) No interruptions of elected official during their report
 - ii) Courtesy during question-and-answer period after report
 - iii) We will allow open discussion by everyone for all matters being voted on
 - iv) After discussion, only Executive Committee members may make and vote on motions
 - v) People who do not comply will be asked to leave
 - vi) We will try to limit speaking time to 10 minutes for reports from officials
5. **Roll Call** –17 members of the Executive Committee were in attendance; a quorum was established.
6. **Approval of Agenda**
 - a) Chairman Willis presented an additional item to be added to the agenda: Consideration of Troy Stroud / Chuck Truesdell Endorsement for Eagle Township Supervisor to be added following the Treasurer’s Report [Motion to approve agenda with this addition: Bill Sherman; Second: Jim Barnard. Approved.]
7. **Approval of 8-17-23 Meeting Minutes** – Motion to approve agenda: Mark Balfanz; Second: Alan Cobb. Approved.
8. **Reports of Officers**
 - a) Treasurer’s Report – Treasurer Ben Wetmore reports the transfer of funds is now complete from Fifth Third to new accounts at Dart Bank, and PayPal funds will be mailed in the form of a check to Ben and then deposited into the political account at Dart. Our total position is \$12,332.20.
[Motion to accept treasurer’s report: Tim Roberts; Second: Alan Cobb. Approved.]
 - b) Stroud/Truesdell Endorsement by CCRP – Chairman Willis shared the following information:
 - i) Troy Stroud has asked for a formal endorsement from the CCRP to be used in his campaign messaging
 - ii) Stroud stepped forward early on to challenge Patti Schaffer and we have been working with him for months
 - iii) Stroud’s positions on pertinent issues: Against the Megasite; Supports Planning and Zoning at Township level
 - iv) Chuck Truesdell has not spoken with CCRP about his intention to run, nor asked for an endorsement
 - v) Truesdell has previously indicated he does not support Planning and Zoning at Township level as too restrictive
[Motion to for CCRP to formally endorse Troy Stroud for Eagle Twp Supervisor: Mark Balfanz; Second: Phil Bareham. Roll Call Vote:14 Yes; 0 No; 3 Abstentions. Approved.]

9. Chair's Report – Chairman Steve Willis and Vice-Chair Nancy Bareham

- a) State Party Update - MIGOP Leadership Conference on Mackinaw Island takes place this upcoming weekend. Nancy is attending and will report on it at our next meeting.
- b) GiveSendGo account for Clinton County Trump Presidential Elector Jim Renner has raised \$700, please donate if possible
- a) CCRP Eagle Days Tailgate – We had a decent turnout given the damp weather. We had many Eagle residents thank us for being there and supporting the recall of Supervisor Schafer, and their fight against the Megasite. Troy Stroud was present to campaign for Township Supervisor. We gained some new recruits from Eagle and Westphalia who are interested in getting involved with the CCRP.
- b) Check My Vote – The group will identify voter registrations that are not valid by going door-to-door asking if people still live at the address, and if not, they will be removed from the voter roll. Anne Hill will conduct a training session in Duplain Twp. More information coming at our next meeting.
- c) Good Neighbor Playbook – Steve sent an email this week with a link to register. (This is an online training tool developed by the MIGOP which includes 8 lessons/modules for new precinct delegates.)
- d) Candidate Recruitment – Commissioner Dwight Washington (Dem) has recently moved, so Steve has asked Clerk Deb Sutherland to determine if he is still living in Bath Twp. If not, Clerk Sutherland thinks the commissioners will name a replacement. Hoping for update soon.
- e) Wind and Solar Advisory Committee – Next and final meeting will take place 9/28/23. Outlook is murky currently. Governor Whitmer has signaled she may move to take control away from local municipalities and have wind and solar placement decisions made at state level. Nancy suggested citizen pushback on the state takeover may be effective – citing example of Democrat Karen Whitsett who did not vote in favor of the recent abortion bills, as a sign there are some Dems who do not necessarily support all of Whitmer's plans. Suggestion was made to call Whitsett's office to thank her (517-373-1008). Graham Filler's numbers were also shared in case anyone wishes to contact him (Office 517-373-1778; Cell 517-927-0875).

10. Committee Reports – postponed until October

11. Elected Officials Reports/State Party Candidates

- a) Tony Spagnuolo, Clinton County Prosecutor
 - i) Allegations that his office is not prosecuting Criminal Sexual Conduct (CSC), Domestic Violence, and Drug cases are false. He shared the low dismissal rates for each category to support his position.
 - ii) The issues in Eagle Township are prompting many calls to his office asking if any of the current Eagle Township Board members can be prosecuted. He explained his office cannot prosecute anything unless/until a police report is filed.
- b) Sean Dush, Clinton County Sheriff
 - i) His department is now fully staffed! He has received approval to add a new deputy every year for four years, and to offer top pay in order to recruit/hire officers from other departments.
 - ii) The law-and-order/non-woke policies of his department are a valuable recruiting tool.
 - iii) Truth in Sentencing was designed to keep bad people locked up, but now Bond Reform is making it difficult.
- c) Phil Hanes, Clinton County Drain Commissioner
 - i) Three of the five people in his office are new, so there is a lot of learning taking place.
 - ii) The assessing process is done for the year.
 - iii) Maintenance: brush control work is done; ditch cleaning and tree removal goes year-round.
- d) Val Vail-Shirey, Clinton County Commissioner
 - i) HR Committee: priority is to recruit and retain staff, currently working on budget

- ii) Wind and Solar Citizens Advisory Committee: she gave thanks to participants, many opinions being shared, a lot of learning taking place, hindered by inability to have exclusionary zoning. Final vote of what to present to Board of Commissioners (BOC) takes place 9/28/23. Her opinion is that townships and counties that have gone through similar efforts may be exempt from future state-controlled zoning.
- iii) Giffels and Webster Report (Eagle Twp Megasite) was received by the BOC with no further action.
- iv) Steve Willis asked if the BOC had discussed our CCRP Resolution which was sent to them last month asking them to declare Clinton County a Constitutional County. She was unaware of the resolution. Steve will resend the resolution to the same distribution as last month.
- f) David Seeger, DeWitt Township Trustee
 - i) The township budget is balanced.
 - ii) Funding for the police department is approved.
 - iii) The fire department will unionize, unsure what will result from this.
 - iv) Hotels are being given a chance to upgrade before being shut down.
- g) Steve Smith, DeWitt Township Trustee (former Police Officer)
 - i) Thanked the CCRP for its approach to thoughtful endorsement of candidates, and for tracking and tackling important issues.

12. Next CCRP Executive Committee Meeting - Thursday, October 19, 2023 – Clinton County Courthouse, St. Johns.

13. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn: Tim Roberts; Second: Mark Balfanz. Approved. (Adjourned at 8:35 pm)

Submitted by Secretary Missy Porterfield