

Harlem Twp. remains focused on strategic planning

By Gary Budzak - January 22, 2025

GALENA — The Harlem Township Board of Trustees will hold its initial Strategic Planning meeting on Saturday, Jan. 25.

The meeting is slated for 8 a.m. to noon at the Harlem Township Firehouse, 3883 S. State Route 605, Galena. It is open to the public and available on Zoom.

In the leadup to this meeting, here are highlights of recent trustee actions, culled from records of proceedings:

- On Oct. 16, trustee business included the item “continue discussions on strategic planning.”

Economic Development Officer Jim Steelesmith said he met two days earlier with Galena officials.

“At this meeting with Galena, we were able to identify the Northwest Trenton Road Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and overlay area for Galena,” the minutes said. “Engineers from Galena have already done the calculations for the sewer in this area and believe that they can service us without any problems. We will need to work on a sewer agreement and some economic agreements with them going forward. This has been a great start with them, and we are all encouraged that we can get this organized.”

- A special trustee meeting on Oct. 18 dealt with public service updates.
- At another special meeting on Nov. 13, the trustees approved the Bandit Properties LLC rezoning of 6.6 acres from Farm Residential to Planned Commercial District.

“There will be a 30-day referendum period before this change becomes effective,” the resolution said.

- On Nov. 20, the trustees were to discuss the use of Crossroads Community Planning for the remainder of their contract to lead in strategic planning from Dec. 2024 to June/July 2025 (this was approved on Dec. 18). During his report, Steelesmith said he met with the Delaware County Regional Sewer District.

“We discussed the new sewer trunk coming into Harlem Township along with the geography and geology involved in getting it placed,” minutes said.

“The placement of the sewer lines is a challenge considering all the thought and engineering that need to be done to accomplish this. We also discussed that Columbus wants a connection to the line so that they may have sewer service to the very northern edge of Franklin County, along Smothers Road and south...”

- In a special meeting on Dec. 11, the trustees discussed the 2025 budgets before going into executive session.
- For Dec. 18, the trustees approved the roadwork estimate for 2025 of \$297,660 from the Delaware County Engineers Office. They also hired a professional planner to review/audit the process and products created by Crossroads.
- The trustees held an organizational meeting on Jan. 18.

- At a regular meeting on Jan. 15, the trustees were to hear from Delaware County Administrator Tracie Davies about the county's "role in the Harlem Township strategic planning process, development in the region, and building relationships with neighboring municipalities," the agenda said.

In other business, the trustees were to consider resolutions for Harlem Township to join the Delaware County Foundation "to enable charitable give to township projects," TIF letters to Big Walnut and Johnstown-Monroe school districts, and approval of a five-year plan update from the Delaware Knox Marion Morrow Joint Solid Waste Management District.