

CUMRU TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING JUNE 22, 2026

The Special Meeting of the Cumru Township Board of Commissioners was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by President Andy Donnell. Other Commissioners in attendance were Vice-President Tonya L. Campbell, Mark Ferrero, and Greg Miller. Also attending were Interim Manager Peter Marshall, Bus/Personnel Administrator Kristin Yoder, and Special Projects/Asst. Secretary Patricia A. Wylezik-Pfeiffer. Commissioner Lisha L. Rowe and Solicitor Kelsey Frankowski were absent.

NOTICE:

Public comment will be accepted in person. Please include your first name, last name and address for all comments. Any comments without a name or address will not be considered. To accommodate as many people as possible, we request that each person's comments be limited to 3 minutes (resolution no. 301). The meeting comment period is limited to a total of 60 minutes. This time period may be extended at the discretion of the Commissioners. While public comments will be given due consideration, immediate responses will be made at the discretion of the Commissioners.

ADMINISTRATION

A.) Solar Panels on Township Buildings – consider proposals for purchase and installation

Mr. Miller gave a presentation about the solar power project.

The current electrical grid would still power the Township buildings. The solar power generated would go into the grid “bank” and offset the usage of the buildings. The summer months would generate more and the winter months would generate less.

A Solar Renewable Energy Certificate (SREC) is a tradeable financial certificate like stocks. 1 SREC is received for every MWh produced.

The panels carry a 30-year performance warranty and degrade at only 0.5% per year. The inverters carry a 25-year warranty.

The tilted metal roof of the Public Works build and the New Fire Station which has a metal roof were chosen for the project.

2 bids were received and the CoStars bid was selected.

The deadline for the IRA Tax Credit is 7/05/26.

Some of the incentive details:

- There is a 40% Federal Investment Tax Credit (ITC) bonus
- There is a 10% Energy Community Investment Tax Credit bonus
- The tax credit is in the form of cash rebates since the Township doesn't pay Federal taxes

- There is an option to “safe harbor” and complete later

The cost proposal was explained as follows:

- The New Fire Station project cost = \$650,578, the project after the incentives = \$325,289, the projected net annual benefit would be approximately \$43,900/year
- The Public Works building = \$198,954, the project after the incentives = \$99,477, the projected net annual benefit would be approximately \$8,440/year
- The Tax-Exempt Lease Purchase (TELP) payback period would be 10 years
- No new taxes, move 0.05 mils from General Fund to Debt Services

There are 2 options for handling the Federal tax rebate amount:

- Pay up front and wait to get reimbursed
- Take out a short-term bridge loan

The existing electricity budget would be used for the TELP payments so there would be no new tax burden on the residents.

Mr. Miller showed projected costs of doing nothing new for 30 years versus doing the project using the TELP. He calculated that the Township could save between \$1.7 and \$2.6 million over the 30 years by doing the solar projects.

Mr. Miller recommended starting the solar project installation in March 2027.

PUBLIC

Attendance: Donna M. Smith, Ronald Schmehl, Mike Nowotarski, Barb Dietrich, Todd Dietrich, Bev Leonti, Bruce Badgley, Joe Roland, and Matthew Carl.

A.) Ron Schmehl, a resident of Freemansville Rd., asked if structural engineers were consulted. He was concerned about the weight of the solar panels which he estimated to be approximately 3.5 lb./ sq. ft. causes damage to the roof and resulting in insurance problems.

Mr. Miller replied that the next step is to consult a structural engineer. Recommendations and inspections will follow.

Mr. Schmehl also voiced concern with roof leakage caused by the expansion and contraction of the metal roof where the holes will be drilled to attach the solar panels. He said that clamps could be used on the New Fire Station roof but not on the Public Works roof. He recommended placing the panels in the Schnader house yard. He said that the New Fire Station is an attractive building and asked why they would want to degrade it with solar panels.

Mr. Donnell answered that it was fiduciary duty over aesthetics.

Mr. Miller said that the roof is unused space and that ground mounts cost more.

Mr. Schmehl said that they would lose 10% due to the flat roof.

B.) Mike Nowotarski, a resident of Freemansville Rd., said that it was a good presentation. He hoped the numbers were correct and the Fire Station needs to pay its way.

C.) Todd Dietrich, a resident of Hilgert Ave., asked about the use of battery storage for backup.

Mr. Miller answered that the batteries don't justify the cost.

Mr. Dietrich recommended going out for bids because CoStars is not always the cheapest rate. He said that competitive bidding can save more money with more accurate bids with specifics.

Mr. Miller said that they received bids but did not do competitive bidding.

Mr. Marshall said that the rebate period is coming to an end so this was time sensitive.

Mr. Donnell explained that the solar rebates are part of the repealed legislature.

Mr. Schmehl brought up collusion since projects over \$24,900 are supposed to be advertised for competitive bidding.

Mr. Marshall explained that using CoStars eliminates the need for bidding because they have state-approved pricing.

Mr. Dietrich explained that CoStars can lower the price in competitive bidding.

The Commissioners had some discussion among themselves.

Mr. Ferrero asked about roof replacement after solar panels. The solar panels help extend the roof life.

Mr. Ferrero asked about replacement panels if they are damaged by weather. Mr. Miller said that the solar panels would be covered by an insurance policy.

Ms. Campbell asked about the costs of the Fire Station Utilities and Mr. Ferrero asked about the numbers in the presentation. There was discussion about rate of return and how long it would take to pay off the system. It was suggested that it would take 6 ½ years for the Fire Station and 11 years for the Public Works building.

Mr. Donnell asked about accelerated payments. Mr. Miller advised to wait and see.

Mr. Dietrich asked about leases versus loans and if there was a residual buyout involved. Someone in the audience said that it was a government building and they could work around regulations.

Mr. Ferrero asked about the next step in the process. Mr. Miller answered that Mr. Marshall would sign the paperwork to start the process if a motion is approved. Mr. Marshall said that they have 4 years to begin.

The solar panels have to be made in the USA to get the extra 10% rebate. Mr. Ferrero looked on the internet and found that some solar panels are produced in Georgia.

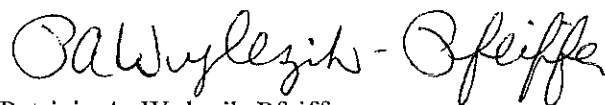
Ms. Campbell asked about the timeframe in order to be ready for next March. Mr. Miller said that they will try for next March but the contractor will decide the exact timeframe.

ON MOTION OF MR. MILLER, SECOND OF MR. DONNELL, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE PROPOSALS FOR THE SOLAR PROJECTS.

ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION OF MS. CAMPBELL, SECOND OF MR. DONNELL , A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 6:47 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia A. Wylezik-Pfeiffer
Assistant Secretary