

RESOLUTION 2014-18

WESTFIELD TOWNSHIP'S OPEN RECORDS MISSION STATEMENT, STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND POLICY

The Westfield Township Board of Trustees, Medina County, Ohio met in the Regular Meeting April 21, 2014 @ 7:00 pm at 6699 Buffham Road with the following members present:

JAMES LIKLEY - MICHAEL SCHMIDT - WILLIAM THOMBS

Trustee Likley offered the following resolution and moved the adoption of same which was seconded by Trustee Schmidt.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Westfield Township hereby adopts the following Open Records Mission Statement, Principles, and Policy as set forth below:

OPEN RECORDS MISSION STATEMENT:

Consistent with the premise that government at all levels exists first and foremost to serve the interest of the people, it is Westfield Township's mission and intent to all times fully comply with and abide by both the spirit and the letter of the Ohio Open Records Act and Open Meeting Act.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES:

In order to accomplish the mission of fully complying with both the spirit and letter of the Open Records and Open Meetings Acts, we do hereby adopt the following Statement of Principles by Resolution:

Westfield Township

- Will ensure that all personnel become and remain fully trained in and aware of the provisions of the acts;
- Will do nothing that abridges the public's right to obtain information about their government or that inhibits or discourages citizen from doing so;
- Will do everything possible to aid those who are seeking information, including but not limited to, fully explaining the scope and operation of the act and assisting citizens in the formulation of the request;
- Will construe the provisions of the act in a manner that favors compliance with the request for information;
- Will seek guidance from Medina County Prosecutor's Office or the Office of the Ohio Attorney General whenever a question arises about the application of the acts or about the appropriateness of a request for information;
- Will clearly and concisely state the reason or reasons why a request for information has been denied in writing.

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OPEN RECORDS POLICY

It is the policy of this office to adhere to the state's Public Records Act. All exemptions to openness are to be construed in their narrowest sense and any denial of public records in response to a valid request must be accompanied by an explanation, including legal authority, as outlined in the Ohio Revised Code. The explanation will be in writing.

- I. This office, in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code, defines records as including the following: Any document – paper, electronic (including, but not limited to e-mail), or other format that is created or received by, or comes under the jurisdiction of a public office that documents the organization, function, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the office. All records of Westfield Township are public unless they are specifically exempt from disclosure under the Ohio Revised Code.
- II. It is the policy of Westfield Township that, as required by Ohio law, records will be organized and maintained so that they are readily available for inspection and copying. Records retention schedule are updated as needed and available upon request.
- III. Although no specific language is required to make a request, the requester must at least identify the records requested with sufficient clarity to allow the public officer to identify, retrieve, and review the records. If it is not clear what records are being sought, the records custodian will contact the requester for clarification and will assist the requester in revising the request by informing the requester of the manner in which the office keeps its records.
- IV. The requester does not have to put the request in writing, and does not have to provide his or her identity or the intended use of the requested public record. It is Westfield Township's general policy that this information not be requested.
- V. Public records from Westfield Township shall be available for inspection during the regular business hours, Tuesday & Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1st and 3rd Monday 5:00 to 6:00 pm prior to Trustees meeting, with the exception of published holidays or inadvertent days when the office is closed. Appointment may be arranged by calling the office @ 330-887-5562. Public records must be made available within a reasonable period of time. "Prompt" and "reasonable" take into account the volume of records requested; the proximity of the location where the records are stored; and the necessity for any legal review of the records requested.
- VI. Each request should be evaluated for an estimated length of time required to gather the records. Routine request for records will be satisfied immediately if feasible to do so. If fewer than 20 pages of copies are requested, they will be made as quickly as the equipment allows. All requests for public records will be satisfied or acknowledge in writing by Westfield Township within a reasonable period of time following the office's receipt of the request. If a request is deemed significantly beyond "routine", such as seeking a voluminous number of copies or requires extensive research, the acknowledgement will include the following:

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1. An estimated number of business days it will take to satisfy the request.
 2. An estimated cost if copies are requested
 3. Any items within the request that may be exempted from disclosure.
- VII.** Any denial of public records request will include an explanation, including legal authority. If portions of a record are public and portions are exempt, the exempt portions are to be redacted and the rest released. If there are redactions, each redaction must be accompanied by a supporting explanation, including legal authority.
- VIII.** Those seeking public records will be charged only the actual cost of making the copies. Westfield Township's Cost Schedule for Public Records is as follows:
1. The charge for paper copies will be five (5) cents per page.
 2. The charge for downloaded computer files to a compact disk (if available) will be one dollar (\$1.00) per disk.
 3. There is no charge for documents (if available) to be e-mailed.
 4. Documents requested to be mailed will be charged the actual cost of postage and mailing supplies.
- IX.** Documents in electronic mail format are records as defined by the Ohio Revised Code when their content relates to the business of the office. The key issue of electronic mail format is content. If an e-mail or other electronic communication involves the business of public office, it is a record of that office.
- X.** Westfield Township recognizes the legal and non-legal consequences of failure to properly respond to a public records request.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Westfield Township Board of Trustees, Westfield Township Medina County, Ohio that the above mentioned Resolution be adopted and in full force.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

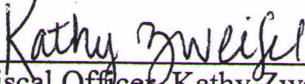
Likley, Yes

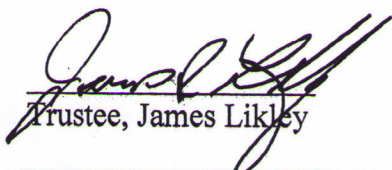
Schmidt, Yes

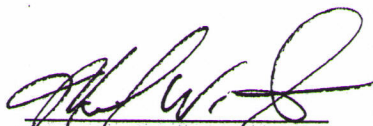
Thombs, Yes

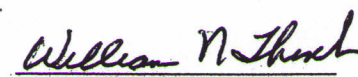
Adopted: April 21, 2014

ATTEST:


Fiscal Officer, Kathy Zweifel


Trustee, James Likley


Trustee, Michael Schmidt


Trustee, William Thombs