

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE WHEATFIELD TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Tuesday January 12, 2021 7:00PM

(Meeting held via ZOOM; link provided by supervisor Myer)

Supervisor Myer called meeting to order at 7:00PM. Roll call—Miller, Kapp, Allen, Myer and Henley-present.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Opened at 7:01PM.

Barb Bidigare read a statement condemning the violence at our nation's capitol last week and asked the board to denounce it also. She also stated that the township should set up a website for the sake of the public being able to stay informed. Supervisor Myer said violence should never be condoned to solve differences and that a township website is currently in the process of being created.

Steve Moreno asked if Wheatfield Township has done a survey of township residents regarding the wind farm issue and if so, what are the results. Supervisor Myer responded that we have not done a survey and that we are taking appropriate steps to manage the issue in consultation with our planner and attorney. Public comment closed at 7:07PM.

MINUTES:

Motion by Henley to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 8, 2020, seconded by Miller.

Roll call vote: Miller, Allen, Myer, Henley and Kapp-yes. Motion carried.

*Copies of the minutes are available at the township office.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Given by Miller. Summary:

- ✓ Independent Bank General Fund-fund balance equity:----- \$ 217,285.16
- ✓ Independent Bank Tax Roll Checking balance:----- \$1,339,840.37

Holly reported that the winter tax season is well underway. Residents are finding the additional options for paying to be convenient. The Cemetery certificate of deposit matures this month and Holly is looking at options for continued investment.

Motion by Kapp to approve the treasurer's report of December 31, 2020, seconded by Allen.

Roll call vote: Henley, Myer, Miller, Allen and Kapp-yes. Motion carried.

*Copies of the treasurer's report are available at the township office.

*******REPORTS*******

PLANNING COMMISSION: Given by Miller.

- ✓ No December meeting but there will be a meeting on January 21, 2021 at which they will be discussing the wind farm issue.

N.I.E.S.A.: Given by Henley and submitted in writing. The NIESA issues of note are:

- ✓ Vendor contracts-they are awaiting a legal opinion on this item.
- ✓ Two resolutions-honoring William Siegal and John Risch for their many years of faithful service.
- ✓ Personnel are receiving Covid vaccines.
- ✓ They continue to run behind on reimbursements.
- ✓ Fire calls in 2020-there were 62 in Wheatfield Township, which was 9.14% of NIESA's total calls.
- ✓ Total alarms-in 2020 there were 1,216. In 2019 there were 1,187.
- ✓ Financials-bank balance-\$629,000; biweekly payroll-\$18,000-19,000 recently.

*A copy of NIESA's minutes is available at the township office.

CEMETERY: No report.

- ✓ Dennis Cemetery:
- ✓ Cabot Cemetery: There are no lots available.
- ✓ Spaulding Cemetery: There are no lots available.

SUPERVISOR: Given by Myer and submitted in writing. Summary:

- ✓ There were four zoning approvals, two zoning inquiries and one enforcement issue in December.
- ✓ Wayne has consulted attorney Tom Hitch to begin work on resolving the Maple Island issue. Tom sent a letter on behalf of the township regarding the removal of the buildings (model homes) on the property.
- ✓ because they are in a state of advanced decay. This is an ongoing issue and Wayne will keep us updated.

*A copy of the supervisor's report is available at the township office.

CLERK: Given by Kapp and submitted in writing.

- ✓ The year-to-date report is attached. There were no items that needed to be addressed, and revenue sharing amounts are remaining at consistent at pre-Covid levels despite earlier forecasts that they would be far less.
- ✓ The business of the office goes on as usual under the current MDHHS executive order.
- ✓ 4th quarter and year-end reporting is underway. Employee W-2s have been prepared and either mailed to recipients or placed in mailboxes at the hall. Please see Denny if you have any questions.
- ✓ The post-Election risk limiting audit is just getting underway.
- ✓ Future tasks such as cleaning out office files, etc. are being scheduled as appropriate during the E.O.

*Copies of the clerk's report are available at the township office.

SHERIFF: Submitted in writing by Deputy Cheryl Huhn.

- ✓ Deputy Huhn said it was a surprisingly slow period.

*Copies of the Sheriff's report are available at the township office.

*****DISCUSSION ITEMS*****

1. *Appointments to the planning commission, the board of review, cemetery sexton and the Williamston Area Senior Center.*

~One term on the planning commission has expired and another will expire in January. Holly Miller was reelected township treasurer in November, but the appointment on the planning commission as board rep expired at the end of her previous term in office. She has served as the board rep for many years but said if another member will take her place, she is open to stepping down. Maynard Dyer has served for many years on the planning commission, but he said he's also ready to step down and let someone else serve. Township resident Kelly Travelbee has expressed interest in the planning commission member position and Denny Kapp volunteered to be the board's representative.

~Maynard Dyer is also ready to relinquish his role on the board of review following many years of service, and township resident Mitch Adelman has expressed interest in the position. These three appointments will each be an action item for tonight.

The board would like to express its immense gratitude to both Holly and Maynard for their many years of community service and the expertise they brought to these various positions, especially the years of study, research, numerous meetings and ultimate adoption of the current zoning ordinance. Both will be greatly missed. Thank you, Holly and Maynard!

~The Williamston Area Senior Center is organizing and installing a board of directors, of which Wheatfield Township has one seat, following the approval of their millage request last November. Board member John Allen has volunteered to fill this position. Move this item to action for tonight. **Thanks John!**

~The position of cemetery sexton is a transfer of duties from the current sexton, Violet Lentz to Polly Brainerd. Violet has been in the process of training Polly for several months. Move this item to action for tonight.

*Violet has been the cemetery sexton for the township since 1979, and it cannot be overstated by the board of trustees how much her service to the township in this capacity is appreciated. Violet is truly a volunteer/public servant extraordinaire, as she wears many volunteer hats in the township and throughout the entire community. Violet has recently been recognized by the Michigan Townships Association [insert "**and CivicPlus**", changed at board meeting by Miller with board approval] for her tremendous career in volunteerism! Congratulations Violet! We're so proud of you!*

2. *Assessing Reform.* A packet of information was distributed to board members prior to the meeting. Property Assessing Reform, P.A. 660 of 2018 provides a statutory framework to ensure proper assessing in order to guarantee the highest quality assessments for taxpayers as well as local units of government. Among other things, the Act defines the requirements for a local unit to be determined to be in substantial compliance with the General Property Tax Act, it provides timetables for audits (Audit of Minimum Assessing Requirements or AMARs) and follow-up audits as well as a process for bringing a local unit into compliance if they remain non-compliant after a follow-up review, also known as the designated assessor. The act also mandates training for local boards of review. The majority of the requirements of P.A. 660 go into effect in 2022, but the State Tax Commission is encouraging local units to begin preparing now and to put into place processes and procedures

to ensure they meet the statutory requirements by 2022. More documents will be distributed to board members following this meeting.

*******ACTION ITEMS*******

1. Payroll and Accounts payable (December 2020)

*Attachments: List of payroll and expenses

Motion by Henley to pay the December 2020 payroll and expenses, seconded by Allen.

Roll call vote: Myer, Allen, Miller, Henley and Kapp-yes. Motion carried.

2. Appointment to Planning Commission

Motion by Kapp to appoint Kelly Travelbee as member to the Wheatfield Township Planning Commission for a three-year term beginning in February 2021, seconded by Allen.

Roll call vote: Miller, Myer, Allen, Henley and Kapp-yes. Motion carried.

3. Appointment to the Planning Commission

Motion by Myer to appoint Denny Kapp as board representative to the Wheatfield Township Planning Commission for a four-year term beginning in January 2021 and concurrent the elected board member term, seconded by Henley.

Roll call vote: Allen, Henley, Miller, Myer and Kapp-yes. Motion carried.

4. Appointment to the Board of Review

Motion by Myer to appoint Mitch Adelman as member to the Wheatfield Township Board of Review for a two-year term beginning in January 2021, seconded by Henley.

Roll call vote: Miller, Allen, Myer, Henley and Kapp-yes. Motion carried.

5. Transfer of the duties of the Sexton

Motion by Kapp to transfer the duties of the Wheatfield Township Cemetery Sexton from Violet Lentz to Polly Brainerd beginning in January 2021, seconded by Henley.

Roll call vote: Allen, Henley, Miller, Myer and Kapp-yes. Motion carried.

Final Notes:

~Trustee Henley stated his agreement with the statement read by township resident Barb Bidigare and joined with her in condemning the violence that occurred at the Capitol Building in Washington D.C. last Wednesday. Others concurred.

~Treasurer Miller had the company of a bat in the township office for most of the meeting. 😊

Future Discussion Items:

1. Audit presentation.
2. Fire Code ordinance.

Motion to adjourn by Allen, seconded by Henley. All were in favor—motion carried.

Meeting ended at 7:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Kapp, Clerk

Date

Next board meeting:
Tuesday February 9, 2021 at 7:00 pm.