

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

Tuesday April 13, 2021 7:00PM

(Meeting held via ZOOM; link posted on the bulletin board and provided by supervisor Myer)

Supervisor Myer called meeting to order at 7:01PM. Roll call—Allen, Myer, Henley, Miller and Kapp-present.

Supervisor Myer welcomed all attendees to the meeting with the following statement:

“Welcome to the regular meeting of the Wheatfield Township Board of Trustees. I know that some of you may have come seeking information regarding proposed wind energy system development. A fact sheet is available by contacting the township regarding this issue. The fact sheet explains the board is following our process to address a lack of regulation in this area by placing the issue with the planning commission for their study, research and ultimately their recommendation to the board. This is the process followed anytime amending the zoning ordinance is considered.

Any member of the public can become informed of this or any activity by the township by attending our meetings, including the planning committee meetings, getting copies of agendas, minutes, or our FAQ on this issue, or by contacting board members or planning committee members with their questions.

As the process plays out, we will hold a public hearing(s) to get the community's feedback and continue to listen at public comment at all of our meetings.”

PUBLIC COMMENT: Opened at 7:08 pm by Supervisor Myer. “At this time in the meeting citizens have an opportunity to address the board regarding any item(s) of interest. It is the practice of the board not to dialogue with the public during the meeting, however questions or concerns at this time may be assigned for follow-up by the board at a later date. Due to the time constraints, we would ask that your comments be limited to 3 min to allow everyone to have an opportunity to speak that wishes to. Please use the raise hand feature and I will unmute those who wish to speak one at a time.”

Several attendees voiced similar concerns. A summary of comments follows:

- Some said they support the moratorium.
- Some said wind turbines are not the best use of farmland and harm the rural character of the community.
- Some asked for communication from the township, such as a survey or a website.
- Some voiced concern about property values, conflict of interest, records of leases, and said the township planner is speaking for the planning commission. Closed at 7:32 pm.

MINUTES:

Motion by Henley to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of March 10, 2021, seconded by Allen.

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

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

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

TREASURER’S REPORT: Given by Miller. Summary:

- ✓ Independent Bank General Fund-fund balance equity:----- \$237,113.85
- ✓ Independent Bank Tax Roll Checking balance:----- \$ 13,997.84

Motion by Henley to approve the treasurer’s report of March 31, 2021, seconded by Allen.

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

- ✓ Holly stated she has settled with all units, there are 36 delinquent parcels and we received the personal property reimbursement.

- ✓ Holly has invested \$100,000 in a 9-month Certificate of Deposit.

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

PLANNING COMMISSION: Given by Kapp.

- ✓ The Large Wind Energy Systems topic is still dominating the discussion. There were several attendees and a lot of public comment on this issue. A file with written comments is being kept at the office.
- ✓ The planning and zoning budget was approved and presented to the board this evening.

N.I.E.S.A.: Given by Henley.

- ✓ Don attended two meetings. He said NIESA has been very busy recently.
- ✓ NIESA has initiated a formal rehabilitation protocol for the first responders when they are on calls. They also have periodic health monitoring while on calls to address nourishment, dehydration, electrolytes, etc, so that the responders are at their top performance.
- ✓ One ambulance broke down while on a call, so they may be looking at purchasing two rather than one vehicle.
- ✓ Rep. Elissa Slotkin was at NIESA to assist with grant applications among other things.
- ✓ *A copy of NIESA's minutes is available at the township office.

CEMETERY: Given by Kapp.

Sexton Polly Brainerd has taken on the duties of sexton enthusiastically. She will continue cleaning the cemeteries, digging the cremation gravesites, coordinating the mowing, placing flags at the graves of veterans, etc. Polly found a source for urns to replace the broken ones at Dennis Cemetery entrance. Julia O'Connor will continue as her assistant and Violet will act as consultant for the time being. Polly has been issued a set of keys and business cards have been ordered. More flags for the cemeteries have been ordered.

✓ Dennis Cemetery:

✓ Cabot Cemetery: There are no lots available.

✓ Spaulding Cemetery: There was a funeral on March 27th. There are no lots available.

*A copy of the cemetery report is available at the township office.

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

- ✓ The level of activity for zoning administrator duties continues to be high.
- ✓ There were eleven zoning inquiries during the period and one zoning permit was issued. The zoning inquiries included fencing regulations, demolition requirements, land divisions and boundary adjustments, setbacks, home expansion regulations, zoning district & building requirements, and solar panels on a roof.
- ✓ The permit was for a pole barn.
- ✓ A survey for the U. S. Census bureau was completed and returned.
- ✓ There were several communications on the Large Wind Energy Systems issue.

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

CLERK: Given by Kapp and submitted in writing. Summary:

- ✓ There was a complaint about a flag that contained an obscenity in front of a residence on Bray Road.
- ✓ The mowing services agreement for the hall was completed.
- ✓ In preparation for reopening the hall for rentals we are working on deep cleaning and sanitizing all the kitchen items. I would like to schedule a complete floor cleaning. Polly Brainerd has agreed to perform most of the hall manager and custodial duties, but she will need a back-up person for times when she is away.
- ✓ Received and responded to two FOIAs; attended two informational sessions-one was a webinar on renewable energy and one was in person at NIESA with Representative Elissa Slotkin.
- ✓ The year-to-date report is attached.

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

SHERIFF: No report this month.

✓

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

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

1. **Large Wind Energy Systems (WES) Moratorium.** A draft ordinance, suggested by Mark Eidelson and furnished by Tom Hitch, was given to board members before this meeting. This ordinance is a starting place. Because this issue is very complex, the board wants to take the necessary time to thoroughly study and research all aspects of it. The planning commission is currently working on a draft of an amendment to the zoning ordinance to regulate large WES. There has been and continues to be a great deal of community interest in this issue. In reading through the moratorium ordinance there were a few minor changes to it that were suggested by board members. Henley said the title should specify Large Wind Energy

Systems so as not to unintentionally include small wind energy systems. Kapp suggested to replacing the word “turbines” in most places with the word “energy” and including the meteorological towers (MET) in the moratorium period. There were a few other minor suggestions for changes in the language. Denny will record the changes and redistribute the ordinance to board members for their review. All changes will be reviewed by Attorney Hitch prior to the adoption of a moratorium ordinance. The board representative will ask the planning commission for their input regarding the likely timeframe for the issue to receive full study and research before they make their recommendation to the board. The timeframe of the ordinance can be either extended or rescinded by the board if needed. This will be a discussion item at the next board meeting.

- 2.
- 3.

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

1. Payroll and Accounts payable (March 2021 payroll and expenses. Reports attached.

Motion Allen to pay the March 2021 Accounts Payable (payroll and expenses), seconded by Henley.

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

**Payroll and list of expenses attached.*

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

Meeting ended at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Kapp, Clerk

Date

Next board meeting:
Tuesday May 11, 2021 at 7:00 pm.