

Saugatuck Township Board Meeting
Wednesday October 14, 2020, 6pm
Saugatuck Township Hall, 3461 Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck, MI 49453
Approved Minutes

Supervisor Osman called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

All board members present

Presentations

Tri-Community Trails Master Plan- Jon Vanderbeek-presented to the Township Board about his progress pursuing trail easements associated with his Trails Master Plan. A video recording of his presentation can be viewed on YouTube. Also, Mr. Dan Callam (Outdoor Discovery Center) updated the Township Board on the status of the Lower Kalamazoo River Greenway Plan. The Township Board endorsed this plan via resolution in February 2020.

Public Comment

none

Approval of Agenda

Marcy asked to have item 11 a removed from the agenda due to anticipated changes to the Open Meetings Act. *Bigford moved to approve the agenda as amended (remove item 11 a). Discussion: none. Approved 5-0.*

Invoices

Aldrich– Moved to approve all bills and payroll in the amount of \$86,999.86 as presented. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: none. Approved 5-0.

Treasurer's Report

General Fund bank balance is \$2.7M – Remains Flat to previous month of August. Revenue for first Quarter was 14% below budget (reminder: only Winter taxes include the Township except for light districts and admin fee) while expenses are 13% below budget. CD value is \$763K up slightly from August. Summer Tax deadline has passed. We received 89% of billed parcel payments. A second notice will go out in November to those still outstanding. Two Summer tax disbursements to approve: #6 for \$1,612,218 total and #7 for \$2,093,959.07 which goes out next week. Approval vote is necessary. *Helmrich moved to approve Summer Tax Disbursements #6 for \$1,612,218 and #7 for \$2,093,959.07. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: none. Approved 5-0.*

Financial Investment Strategy Plan. We are reactivating our Michigan CLASS pool account with \$1M from checking account. This account is totally liquid and accessible. Currently the Township has 77% of its financial assets in a simple checking account; by comparison, Douglas has 12%. We have established a relationship with municipal financial advisor, D. A. Davidson in Chicago (Douglas is a client) and MBS for future investing in municipal bonds, treasuries, and other CDs. Goals for 2021: Class- 30%, CDs/Bonds with muni advisor – 20%, CDs direct – 30%, and cash in bank – 20%. We will pursue a ladder of investments strategy which balances higher interest rates, long-term, with potential cash needs in the shorter term.

Minutes *Aldrich moved to approve the minutes as presented from the September 9, 2020 Saugatuck Township Board meeting. Supported by Helmrich. Approved 5-0.*

Interurban Board Appointment

The Interurban Board term expiration was acknowledged at the September 9 Township Board meeting. This opening was posted consistent with the Township's adopted appointment policy. The appointment term is for four years. Lori Babinski was the only applicant. Lori was in attendance and expressed that she was honored to serve on the Interurban Board and would like to continue. The director of the Interurban appreciates all that Lori does and fully endorses her being reappointed. *Marcy moved to appoint Lori Babinski to the Interurban Transit Authority Board as a Saugatuck Township Representative for a term of four (4) years (October 1, 2020- September 30, 2024). Supported by Bigford. Discussion: Bigford expressed her gratitude to Babinski. Approved 5-0.*

Ambulance Special Assessment

Graham- Annually the Township collects a special assessment to fund ambulance service for the southern half of the Township. It is good practice for the Township annually adopt a resolution to confirm the special assessment roll and levying assessment for the special assessment district. A public hearing is required as the cost of the service has increased more than 10%. Attached is a resolution to confirm the special assessment roll and levying assessment for Saugatuck Township's ambulance special assessment district. Osman opened the public hearing and invited the audience to speak about the Ambulance Special Assessment if desired. No public comment. Osman closed the public hearing. *Aldrich moved to approve the adoption of Resolution 2020-11, a resolution to confirm the Township's ambulance special assessment roll and levying assessment for 2020, as presented. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: Bigford- when you look at what an average household is paying for quality ambulance service, the price seems totally appropriate and reasonable. Is thankful that Schippa has secured this service for the Township. Helmrich thanked Schippa and Graham for all of their work on this issue. Roll Call Vote: All yes. Approved 5-0.*

Buoy Management Services Agreement

Graham- at the June 10 Township Board meeting the "no wake buoy" budget amendments were approved. Also, the Board authorized the Township Manager to proceed with purchasing the necessary buoy equipment and having it installed in the Kalamazoo River. Staff was also directed to explore options related to reducing the financial burden of this service on the Township moving forward. Several individuals volunteered to assist the Township Board with this process. Staff has worked with legal counsel to prepare an agreement for volunteers to manage the installation, removal, and storage of the buoys for your consideration. We are so fortunate to have residents willing to volunteer their time to help with this process. Helmrich – what is the term of the agreement? Graham – it's until we would decide to end it or the volunteers would decide to end it. Helmrich – is there a mechanism in place for replacing volunteers if they decide to stop providing this service? Graham – once volunteer agreements are approved it is easy to amend them. Aldrich – this will be an interesting experiment to see how well utilizing volunteers works. *Helmrich moved to authorize the Township Manager to sign and execute the proposed Buoy Management Services Agreement, as presented, with the identified volunteers. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: none. Approved 5-0.*

Farmland Open Space Application

Osman – this is essentially a formality. This allows the State to refund some tax dollars to land owners who agree to keep using their land for farming purposes. Graham – this is consistent with the Tri-Community Master Plan. Helmrich – has this been done in the Township before? Osman – yes, I believe so. Helmrich – so the land owner pays their full tax bill and then they are given some refund from the state, correct? Graham – yes. *Bigford moved to approve the Application for a Farmland Agreement*

associated with the approx. 75 acres of property located at 2538 64th Street, as submitted by Mr. Bradley Young, and authorize the Township Clerk to sign the application and submit it to the Farmland Program Office, as applicable. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: none. Approved 5-0.

Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Q1 Budget Review and Amendment Requests

Graham – On June 10, the Board adopted the FY 2020-2021 budget. The General Appropriations Act tasks the Township Manager with periodically reporting on the status of financial operations. Invoice logs, check registers, and a payroll summary are included with the monthly meeting materials. A more detailed budget report is presented to the Township Board quarterly. Nothing has stood out to me as abnormal or noteworthy. The Township may authorize budget amendments to fulfill the Township’s mission as required by law and/or as defined by the goals and priorities identified by the Township Board. The Budget Amendment Spreadsheet includes the requested budget amendments at this time. The amendments are associated with elections and planting trees at the Township Hall. *Aldrich moved to approve the requested Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Q1 Budget Amendments, as submitted. Supported by Helmrich. Discussion: none. Approved. 5-0.*

Eliminating the Township Constable Position

Helmrich- currently there is a Constable Position on our ballots for Saugatuck Township. This position was defunded and thus eliminated in 2012. There was never a formal Resolution to eliminate the Constable position. Thinks that this is confusing to voters. Would like to formally eliminate this position. Graham – obviously it’s too late to remove this position from the Ballots for this current election. If the Board so desires, I can work with legal counsel and prepare a Resolution to eliminate the Constable Position and present it at a later meeting. *Helmrich moved to direct staff to work with legal counsel to prepare a Resolution to formally remove the Constable Position from future elections and possibly present it at the next Township Board meeting. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: Bigford – we need to be professional. This is confusing to voters. It is time. Approved 5-0.*

Millage Planning

Osman – Graham has done a great job of preparing this information regarding our millages and when they expire. Graham – In February, the Township Board Adopted the 2020 Township goals. This memorandum serves to provide information on the three Special Township Millages. Information regarding the expirations, lengths, rates, estimated revenue and the previous ballot language is provided for the Cemetery Millage and the two Road Millages. Also included is an election calendar. Should the Township Board decide to pursue a cemetery millage renewal in May 2021, I recommend directing staff to work with legal counsel to prepare ballot language to bring before the Township Board for review and consideration no later than January 2021. I also included the MTA’s “An Introduction to Township Millage Questions”. It is a dry document, but is very helpful in understanding Millages. Helmrich- what is the process for deciding what election we would want to have this millage on? Graham- There is a section in the MTA’s included publication that covers preferences for election dates. May or August 2021 would both be options for the Board to consider. *Bigford moved to direct staff to prepare ballot language for the Cemetery Millage Renewal for the January meeting. Supported by Helmrich. Discussion: none. Approved 5-0.*

Planning Commission

Helmrich- Met via Zoom on September 28. Big turnout. There were 27 participants on the call. Public comment was mostly related to 2 retail marijuana applicants. There were a few people who spoke about the possible miniature golf course planned to go in across the street from the township hall. We had a special approval use and site plan review for Just Barns- recreational marijuana, and JARS Holding,

also for recreational marijuana. Both were debated, discussed, and ultimately approved with 5-0 votes. Special approval use and site plan review for AIX Design for a potential miniature golf business on Clearbrook Drive and Blue Star Hwy. That was also passed 5-0. There was further discussion on the Planning Commissions goal to allow for attainable housing in the Township and possible ordinance changes that would diminish the minimum home sizes and allow secondary structures on lots. There was further Master Plan review discussion including developing subcommittees to address the Blue Star Highway corridor, the rural landscape of the Township, housing and agriculture and nature. Chair Israels requested that each member of the Planning Commission volunteer to serve on at least one of these subcommittees and to submit to her their personal top priorities concerning the Master Plan. Our next Planning Commission meeting will be on Monday, October 26 at 7pm.

Road Commission

Graham- Trustee Marcy and I both attended the kick off meeting with our engineering firm Prein and Newhoff to review the data and to begin to review the multi-year road plan that the Township Board authorized at the July meeting. There is some road work taking place in the Township this week. This work is associated with the Township's resurfacing projects and will impact Sambrook Lane, Whiteside Lane, Keppel Lane, 128th Ave, Clearbrook Drive, and Clearbrook Court. They are anticipated to be done by the end of this week, weather permitting.

Fire Board

September was a month above the average call volume. We ended up with 77 calls, year to date call volume is 640, 14 % down compared to last year. Type of calls are lopsided this month, EMS counts for 67% of our volume, Motor Vehicle Incidents (MVI) are in the lower ranges, only 4 for September. Special Events ticked up 2 in September both around Labor Day Weekend. Our Boat so far has logged 18 calls for the year.

Parks Commission

Graham- Included in the packet is an email from Jim Searing, Parks Commission Chairperson. Wants to highlight in that communication that the Parks Commission has a letter to the editor of the Commercial Record to thank the family and friends of Art Lane who have made donations in his memory to our parks.

Emergency Services Committee

Tony Schippa- Wants to give an update on how things have been going since Life Ambulance started servicing the Southern half of our Township. Things have been going very well. Has spoke with several fire departments and they are happy with EMS workers. Response times are getting shorter. Is impressed with the communication between the ambulance crews. Questions are answered regarding calls very promptly. Reviewed the reasons for the change in providers. Charges billed to individuals were much higher at AMR. Estimated 1 million savings per year to the public by going with Life Ambulance. Life Ambulance directors are easily accessible for communication/meetings. The other municipalities in the Emergency Services Committee are happy with the service Life Ambulance is providing.

Interurban Board

Report is part of the packet. On page 163.

Open Board Report

Osman- expressed her gratitude to Graham for being flexible in making meetings happen whether remotely or in person.

Helmrich – expressed his condolences and appreciation to Phil Quade’s family for his work as Township Manager for many years.

Manager Report

Graham reviewed the 2020 Township Board Goals Q3 Progress Update and projects tracker. Has begun discussions with a facilitator regarding a 2021 Goals Setting workshop. The Board prefers to meet on 12/5. We hope to meet in the Library’s new space. At the January meeting will present a report on how we progressed on our goals over the year.

Fall Clean-up day will be this Saturday on 63rd Street from 8am-11am. ID’s will be checked and only one person will be allowed in at a time. Flower bulbs continue to be available at the Township for individuals to plant at the cemetery. Cemetery tree project is scheduled to begin on Monday the 19th. A segment of the bike trail near the Fire Station continues to crumble. It is scheduled to be repaired this Friday. The Friends of the Blue Star Trail are contributing to the cost of this. Also wanted to acknowledge the work and dedication to the Township of Phil Quade.

Public Comments:

Tobias Hutchins – Spoke supporting the Fennville 2017 Bond Update. Reviewed all the ways that the proposal would support classrooms and improve the greater-Fennville area.

Meeting Adjourned – time not noted

Recording Secretary: Abby Bigford
Saugatuck Township Clerk
November 3, 2020