



**Saugatuck Township
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.
Saugatuck Township Hall
Meeting held in person & via Zoom**

Call to Order: Supervisor Bigford called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Roll Call:

Present: Supervisor Bigford, Clerk Israels, Treasurer Helmrich, and Trustee Marcy.

Absent: Trustee Aldrich

Also Present: Township Manager Daniel DeFranco, Recording Secretary Morgan Arens, Andrew Milauckas, Holly Anderson, Theresa Osborne, Deb Minton, Jim Searing, Larry Sybesma, Tyler DeNooyer, Phyllis Yff, Greg Janik, Jane Dickie, Joe Aernouts, Bobbie Gaunt, Chris Clark, Dayle Harrison, Dean Kapenga, Scott Wierenga.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Agenda:

Supervisor Bigford introduced the agenda.

A **Motion** was made by Marcy to approve the agenda as amended. Supported by Helmrich.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: 4-0.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Public Comment:

- Deb Minton expressed her support for the Township's acquisition of a new Township Park and urged the Board to terminate the marina permit.
- Terry Osborne echoed support for the Township's pursuit of a new Township Park and urged the Board to terminate the marina permit.
- Chris Clark commended the Parks Commission and Board, endorsing the purchase of Pine Trail Park as a new Township Park.
- Jane Dickier voiced her support for a new park and expressed pride in the Township Board, believing they will make decisions beneficial to the community.
- Dean Kapenga provided an update on County Commission activities and praised the Board.
- Dayle Harrison shared information about housing and requested clarification on the draft Zoning Ordinance.
- Scott Wierenga reiterated support for the Township's acquisition of a new Township Park and urged the Board to terminate the marina permit.

Public Comment Closed

Approval of Consent Agenda: Supervisor Bigford introduced the consent agenda.

Israels asked if Manager DeFranco would prefer his review session be in a closed session, which he agreed with.

A **Motion** was made by Marcy to approve the consent agenda as amended. Supported by Israels.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: 4-0.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Presentations: Recognition of Interurban Director

The Board expressed their gratitude to Phyllis Yff, Interurban Director, for her dedicated years of service as she prepares for retirement. They presented her with a certificate of recognition and a token of gratitude, acknowledging her invaluable contributions. Yff expressed her appreciation to the Board for their unwavering support and conveyed her gratitude to the community for the memorable journey.

New Business:**1. Water Service Fee Resolution 2024-06**

The Board considered increasing the Township's monthly service fee for public water users from \$8 to \$15. This recommendation was based on the Township's recently adopted Water Asset Management Plan (WAMP) and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), developed in collaboration with Prein&Newhof and Baker Tilly. Ensuring adequate funding for the Water Project Fund is a financially responsible approach that allows the Township to address water system improvements promptly, resulting in long-term cost savings for residents.

A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to adopt Resolution No. 2024-06 A Resolution to set rates, fees, and charges for Township water system customers. Supported by Marcy

Discussion: None.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

2. Sybesma Hearing

Mr. Larry Sybesma, owner of property in the C-3 Zoning District of Saugatuck Township, contacted the Township Clerk via certified mail to request a hearing regarding proposed Zoning Ordinance changes affecting his property in the C-3 District.

A 20-minute hearing before the Township Board was granted to Mr. Sybesma for the evening.

Notification of the scheduled hearing was sent to Mr. Sybesma by first-class mail 15 days prior to the hearing.

Sybesma expressed gratitude to the Board for granting his request and provided background information. He shared his vision for his property and expressed concerns about the new Zoning Ordinance's limitations. Sybesma outlined specific sections of concern and requested that the Board address his issues.

3. Resolution to Adopt Comprehensive Rewrite of Zoning Ordinance and Public Hearing

The Board considered Resolution No. 2024-07, adopting a Comprehensive Rewrite of the Saugatuck Township Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map. The draft ordinance, unanimously recommended by the Planning Commission after a public hearing in February, is under review.

This public hearing allows the Township Supervisor to open it following the Zoning Consultant's presentation. The Board initiated the Zoning Ordinance update process in February 2020, aligning with its inclusion in the Strategic Plan. The Planning Commission, tasked with reviewing the Master Plan to support it through zoning, began earnestly in May 2020, culminating in the submission of the final draft for Board consideration.

Consultant David Jirousek and Zoning Administrator Lynee Wells presented the evolution from the old Zoning Ordinance to the changes in the new one.

Supervisor Bigford commenced the Public Hearing at 7:33 PM, with the following public comments:

- Josh Molnar, a consultant hired by a Township resident to review the Zoning Ordinance, outlined findings regarding density in R4. He disagreed with the interpretation of it.
- Andrew Milauckas expressed frustration over perceived oversight of his requests regarding R4 lot sizes, disagreed with Zoning Administrator Wells' interpretations, and felt unheard during the process.
- Larry Sybesma urged a reevaluation of the Zoning Ordinance and disagreed with Consultant Jirousek.
- Dayle Harrison addressed rural character, R2 lot size requirements, and accessory dwelling units.
- Joe Milauckas raised longstanding R4 issues, feeling ignored and questioning procedures and the new Zoning Ordinance.

Supervisor Bigford closed the Public Hearing at 8 PM.

Consultant Jirousek clarified his and Zoning Administrator Wells' interpretation of density bonus. DeFranco emphasized adherence to established procedures and decorum throughout the process, ensuring fairness.

Helmrich underscored the multi-year process's flexibility, allowing changes at any time.

A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to adopt Resolution 2024-07, a resolution to adopt a comprehensive rewrite of the Saugatuck Township Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map. Supported by Marcy.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously

4. Ordinance To Impose a Temporary Moratorium on The Acceptance of New Building and Zoning Applications for Projects Located Within the State-Designated Critical Sand Dune Areas, Or That Involve Excavation or Alteration of The Lake Michigan Shoreline

Zoning Administrator Wells provided an overview to the Board. The Board considered instituting a 6-month moratorium on accepting new building and zoning applications for projects within state-designated critical sand dune areas or involving excavation or alteration of the Lake Michigan shoreline. The Planning Commission recommended adopting this temporary moratorium as part of their motion to recommend adoption of the updated Zoning Ordinance to the Board.

If adopted, the Planning Commission would expedite discussions on these topics and adhere to the 6-month period. They would also deliberate on whether imposing zoning restrictions beyond state regulations of the Critical Dune area is appropriate, noting that any ordinance change would require approval from the DNR.

A **Motion** was made by Marcy to adopt Ordinance 2024-01 to impose a temporary moratorium on the acceptance of new building and zoning applications for projects located within the state-designated critical sand dune areas, or that involve excavation or alteration of the Lake Michigan Shoreline.

Supported by Israels.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy.

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

5. Cemetery Landscape Services Agreement

The Board considered a 3-year agreement with Heavener Property Services for landscape maintenance at the Riverside and Douglas Cemeteries. This agreement was sought to fulfill the Township's obligations in separate agreements with the Cities of Saugatuck and Douglas to bid out the cemetery

landscape services contract every three years. The terms of the agreement with Heavener outlined the scope of work specified in the RFP published on January 12th, 2024. Under the agreement, the Township would pay a monthly fee of \$3,053.00 for the first year, with a 2% increase above inflation for each of the subsequent two years.

A **Motion** was made by Israels to execute Contractor Services Agreement with Heavener Property Services for a three-year term commencing on April 1, 2024 and expiring on March 31st, 2027.

Supported by Helmrich.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

6. No Parking Along BSH Resolution 2024-08

The resolution presented to the Board requested the Allegan County Road Commission to install "no parking" signs along Blue Star Highway in two specific areas: (1) from Wiley Road south to 126th and (2) from Old Allegan Road to 135th. Installing these signs would enable parking enforcement along the highway, which is currently unregulated due to the absence of such signage.

As Blue Star Highway falls under the jurisdiction of the Road Commission, the Township initiated the process by formally requesting the installation of "no parking" signs via resolution. Helmrich inquired about the possibility of forwarding this request to Commissioner Kapenga as well.

A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to adopt Resolution 2024-08, a resolution to request the installation of no parking along Blue Star Highway by the Allegan County Road Commission. Supported by Israels.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

7. MNRTF Acquisition Grant Public Hearing

Supervisor Bigford initiated the Public Hearing on the 2024 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Acquisition Grant Application to gather public input on the grant proposal to acquire a 22.5-acre property on the Kalamazoo River in Saugatuck Township at 8:59 PM. The following individuals provided public comments:

- Bobbie Gaunt expressed support for the purchase of a new park and conveyed excitement about the Township's opportunity.
- Holly Anderson echoed Bobbie Gaunt's sentiments and shared her enthusiasm.
- Jim Searing, Parks Commission Chair, affirmed unanimous support from the Parks Commission for adding another park.
- Ken Butler, Parks Commission Vice Chair, voiced support for the endeavor and readiness to advocate for this opportunity.
- Dayle Harrison expressed enthusiasm for the idea and wished the Township success.
- Scott Stearns highlighted the benefits for the community and emphasized the importance of conservation efforts.

Supervisor Bigford concluded the Public Hearing at 9:06 PM.

8. MNRTF Acquisition Grant Submission Resolution 2024-09

The Saugatuck Township Parks Commission was presented with an opportunity to acquire an approximately 22.25-acre property along the Kalamazoo River, boasting significant outdoor recreational potential. This property offered rare direct access to the Kalamazoo River and was situated adjacent to other conserved natural areas accessible to the public.

At their March regular meeting, the Parks Commission unanimously adopted a resolution recommending that the Township Board authorize the submission of a Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund Acquisition Grant. This grant could cover 75% of the acquisition cost of the property. Discussions with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) indicated that the acquisition could be a competitive grant application, given its prime location on the Kalamazoo River and its abundant recreational opportunities. The Township Board should consider authorizing the submission of a MNRTF Acquisition Grant for the 22.25-acre property. Adoption of a resolution to authorize the grant application would also commit the Township to providing up to \$1,000,000 in local matching funds, sourced from the Parks and Trails Millage.

A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to adopt Resolution 2024-09 a Resolution to authorize submission of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Acquisition Grant. Supported by Marcy.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy.

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

9. Lead Service Line Verification (Potholing) Bid Award

The Board considered awarding a contract to Plummer's Environmental Services to pothole 128 water service lines as part of the required 20% water service line material inventory and verification mandated by the State of Michigan. In August 2023, the Board had accepted a proposal from Prein&Newhof to assist with this inventory and verification process, with an estimated cost for potholing work ranging from \$40,000 to \$80,000.

After soliciting bids for the project, the Township received four responses. These bids were publicly opened on March 4th, revealing that Plummer's Environmental Services submitted the lowest bid at \$58,256.00, averaging approximately \$450 per line. Plummer's will also conduct similar potholing work for the City of Douglas at a comparable rate.

A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to award Plummer's Environmental Services a contract to pothole 128 water service lines at \$58,256.00 and issue Notice of Award. Supported by Marcy.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy.

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Old Business: None.

Reports: Supervisor Bigford opened the floor for reports.

– **Treasurer's Report**

Helmrich gave an update on the Township finances; the report is on file.

– **Planning Commission**

Helmrich gave an overview of the Planning Commission reviewing the Draft Zoning Ordinance.

– **Manager’s Report**

Township Manager DeFranco gave an update on the Township projects; the report is on file.

– **Open Board Report:**

- The Board explored plans to visit fellow Board and Commissions from the Township and neighboring local municipalities.
- Israels provided an update on the February election and introduced new election protection measures.

Public Comment:

- Andrew Milauckas expressed frustration with the handling of his concerns, particularly disagreeing with Zoning Administrator Wells and feeling that the report deserved more time.
- Dayle Harrison commended the Board but expressed discomfort with the steep density calculation.
- Greg Janik voiced support for Manager DeFranco, praising his performance.

Public Comment Closed

Adjournment: Supervisor Bigford adjourned the meeting at 9:46 PM

MOTIONS

1. A **Motion** was made by Marcy to approve the agenda as amended. Supported by Helmrich.
Discussion: None
Voice Vote: 4-0.
Motion Carried Unanimously.
2. A **Motion** was made by Marcy to approve the consent agenda as amended. Supported by Israels.
Discussion: None
Voice Vote: 4-0.
Motion Carried Unanimously.
3. A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to adopt Resolution No. 2024-06 A Resolution to set rates, fees, and charges for Township water system customers. Supported by Marcy
Discussion: None.
Roll Call Vote:
Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy
No:
Motion Carried Unanimously.
4. A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to adopt Resolution 2024-07, a resolution to adopt a comprehensive rewrite of the Saugatuck Township Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map. Supported by Marcy.
Discussion: None
Roll Call Vote:
Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy
No:
Motion Carried Unanimously
5. A **Motion** was made by Marcy to adopt Ordinance 2024-01 to impose a temporary moratorium on the acceptance of new building and zoning applications for projects located within the state-designated critical sand dune areas, or that involve excavation or alteration of the Lake Michigan Shoreline. Supported by Israels.
Discussion: None
Roll Call Vote:
Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy.
No:
Motion Carried Unanimously.
6. A **Motion** was made by Israels to execute Contractor Services Agreement with Heavener Property Services for a three-year term commencing on April 1, 2024 and expiring on March 31st, 2027. Supported by Helmrich.
Discussion: None
Roll Call Vote:
Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy
No:
Motion Carried Unanimously.
7. A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to adopt Resolution 2024-08, a resolution to request the installation of no parking along Blue Star Highway by the Allegan County Road Commission. Supported by Israels.
Discussion: None
Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

8. A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to adopt Resolution 2024-09 a Resolution to authorize submission of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Acquisition Grant. Supported by Marcy.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy.

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

9. A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to award Plummer's Environmental Services a contract to pothole 128 water service lines at \$58,256.00 and issue Notice of Award. Supported by Marcy.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Marcy.

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Respectfully,


Morgan Arens, Recording Secretary

I, Rebecca Israels, Township Clerk, certify that these minutes were approved on April 10, 2024 by the Township Board.


Rebecca Israels, Township Clerk

3.29.24
Date