



**Saugatuck Township  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, August 14, 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, Trustee Marcy, and Trustee Aldrich.

Absent:

Also Present: Township Manager Daniel DeFranco, Recording Secretary Morgan Arens, John Doerer, Cindy Stearns, Tony Schippa, Scott Wierenga, Susan Haas, Roy McIlwaine, John Williams, Scott Stearns.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of Agenda:**

Supervisor Bigford introduced the agenda.

A **Motion** was made by Marcy to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Aldrich.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: 5-0.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Public Comment:**

- Tony Schippa discussed the new agreement and pilot program involving the Township, Saugatuck Township Fire District, and Life EMS. He provided an overview of the program's history, the process leading up to its implementation, and its current status, as well as future expectations.

**Public Comment Closed**

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

A **Motion** was made by Israels to approve the consent agenda as presented. Supported by Helmrich.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: 5-0.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Presentations:** None.

**New Business:**

**1. Commission and Board Appointments**

**a. Board of Review**

The Township was tasked with appointing a new member to the Board of Review to fill a vacancy for a term expiring on December 31, 2024. Tracy Slais, currently serving as an alternate on the Board of Review, submitted her application for consideration for full membership.

A **Motion** was made by Aldrich to appoint Tracy Slais to the Board of Review for a term set to expire on December 31, 2024. Supported by Israels.

Discussion: None.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Aldrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**b. Zoning Board of Appeals**

The Township needed to make two appointments to the Zoning Board of Appeals to fill vacancies for full 3-year terms expiring on June 30, 2027. Denise Webster, the current Planning Commission Representative on the ZBA, and Tammy Kerr, both with terms nearing expiration, applied for reappointment.

A **Motion** was made by Marcy to appoint Denise Webster and Tammy Kerr to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a term set to expire on June 30, 2027. Supported by Aldrich.

Discussion: None.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Aldrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**2. Riverside Dr/Dugout Rd SAD Public Hearing and Resolutions 2024-20**

On July 10, 2023, the Board of Trustees held a public hearing and adopted Resolutions 2024-16 and 2024-17, which confirmed plans for public improvements, cost estimates, and the final determination of a Special Assessment District (SAD). In accordance with these resolutions, a public hearing was scheduled for this evening, with proper notice given more than 10 days in advance and notifications mailed to all property owners within the proposed SAD.

Supervisor Bigford opened the hearing at 6:44 PM, where the following public comments were made:

- Scott Stearns expressed concerns about tree removal and weighed the project's costs against its ecological benefits.
- John Doerer inquired about the logistics of the water main project.
- Roy McIlwaine commended the Board, Township Manager, and Township Engineer for their commitment to making the project effective and informative for residents.
- Scott Wierenga, who has worked closely with Township officials, emphasized the importance of ensuring emergency vehicle access over tree preservation, while acknowledging the value of both. He looked forward to the project's completion.
- Susan Hass, though resistant to change, expressed appreciation for the efforts made and understood the necessity of the project.

Following the closure of the public hearing at 6:56 PM, the Board considered adopting Resolution 2024-20, a *Resolution for Confirmation of Special Assessment Roll; Lien; Payment and Collection of Special Assessment*.

A **Motion** was made by Marcy to adopt Resolution 2024-20, a *Resolution for Confirmation of Special Assessment Roll; Lien; Payment and Collection of Special Assessment*. Supported by Israels.

Discussion: Helmrich acknowledged the unfortunate loss of trees but expressed his belief that the project was necessary.

Voice Vote: 5-0

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**3. Blue Star Hwy Sidewalk**

The Board had previously instructed the Township Engineer to draft a preliminary plan for installing 5-foot sidewalks on the east side of Blue Star Hwy, north of the Old Allegan Rd intersection, in coordination with the proposed Blue Star Drain.

They reviewed preliminary drawings, a memo, and an estimate for enclosing the existing drain ditch and constructing approximately 2,300 feet of sidewalk. Constructing the sidewalk alongside the Blue Star Drain offered significant cost savings by eliminating duplicate mobilization and restoration efforts. If the Board chose

to pair these projects, funds were available in the Road Fund Balance, though the estimate excluded the Township's portion of the Blue Star Drain construction costs.

The Board considered whether to move forward with developing engineering plans for the sidewalk and enclosed drain, as well as communicating with the County Drain Office to integrate these improvements into the Blue Star Drain project. Discussions included logistics and potential extensions of the project.

A **Motion** was made by Marcy to authorize the Township Manager to work with Engineer and Drain Office to finalize engineering plans for approximately 2,300ft of sidewalk on the east side of Blue Star Hwy, a pedestrian crosswalk, and enclosed drains and request County Drain Office includes this work in the construction of the Blue Star Drain. Supported by Israels.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: 5-0

Motion Carried Unanimously

#### **4. Township Building and Site Update**

The Board's Strategic Plan included updating the Township Hall exterior and redeveloping the site to enhance the building's visibility, align with the redevelopment objectives for Blue Star Hwy as a neighborhood corridor, and improve overall aesthetics.

The Board reviewed a draft Request for Proposal (RFP) for the project. The Manager would amend the RFP based on Board input and, if approved, publish it to solicit proposals. Funding for the project had been allocated in the Capital Project Fund.

To facilitate the review of proposals and oversee the project, it was recommended to form a Steering Committee, prioritizing community members with experience in architecture, interior design, and landscape design.

A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to authorize Township Manager to publish a Request for Proposal to update the Township Hall Exterior and Site, assemble a Steering Committee to oversee project, and bring proposal for work to Township Board for review and approval. Supported by Aldrich.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: 5-0

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**

There was no July Planning Commission meeting, therefore no report.

##### **Manager's Report**

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

##### **Open Board Report:**

- Bigford paid tribute to Allegan County Commissioner Dean Kapenga, highlighting his many years of service and contributions to the community.
- Aldrich echoed Bigford's sentiments and expressed gratitude to DeFranco for his diligent communication with the community on various projects.
- Israels also honored Commissioner Kapenga's legacy and provided an update and summary of the August Michigan Primary election.
- Helmrich reminded everyone about the upcoming Allegan County Democratic Party event.



**Public Comment:** None. **Public Comment Closed**

**Adjournment:** Supervisor Bigford adjourned the meeting at 7:52 PM

## MOTIONS

1. A **Motion** was made by Marcy to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Aldrich.  
Discussion: None  
Voice Vote: 5-0.  
Motion Carried Unanimously.
2. A **Motion** was made by Israels to approve the consent agenda as presented. Supported by Helmrich.  
Discussion: None  
Voice Vote: 5-0.  
Motion Carried Unanimously.
3. A **Motion** was made by Aldrich to approve the appointment of Tracy Slais to the Board of Review for a term set to expire on December 31, 2024. Supported by Israels.  
Discussion: None.  
Roll Call Vote:  
Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Aldrich, Marcy
4. A **Motion** was made by Marcy to approve the appointment of Denise Webster and Tammy Kerr to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a term set to expire on June 30, 2027. Supported by Aldrich.  
Discussion: None.  
Roll Call Vote:  
Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Aldrich, Marcy  
No:  
Motion Carried Unanimously.
5. A **Motion** was made by Marcy to adopt Resolution 2024-20, *a Resolution for Confirmation of Special Assessment Roll; Lien; Payment and Collection of Special Assessment*. Supported by Israels.  
Discussion: Helmrich acknowledged the unfortunate loss of trees but expressed his belief that the project was necessary.  
Voice Vote: 5-0  
Motion Carried Unanimously.
6. A **Motion** was made by Marcy to authorize the Township Manager to work with Engineer and Drain Office to finalize engineering plans for approximately 2,300ft of sidewalk on the east side of Blue Star Hwy, a pedestrian crosswalk, and enclosed drains and request County Drain Office includes this work in the construction of the Blue Star Drain. Supported by Israels.  
Discussion: None  
Voice Vote: 5-0  
Motion Carried Unanimously
7. A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to authorize Township Manager to publish a Request for Proposal to update the Township Hall Exterior and Site, assemble a Steering Committee to oversee project, and bring proposal for work to Township Board for review and approval. Supported by Aldrich.  
Discussion: None  
Voice Vote: 5-0  
Motion Carried Unanimously

Respectfully,

Morgan Coulston, *Recording Secretary*



I, Rebecca Israels, Township Clerk, certify that these minutes were approved on September 11, 2024 by the Township Board.

Rebecca Israels  
Rebecca Israels, Township Clerk

9-11-24  
Date