



**Saugatuck Township  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, October 9, 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 6:01 PM

**Roll Call:**

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

Absent:

Also Present: Township Manager Daniel DeFranco (via Zoom), Recording Secretary Morgan Arens, Kathy Sturm, Elliott Sturm, Bobbi Gaunt, David Swan, Vicki Rosenburg, Kevin Whiteford, Scott Stearns.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of Agenda:**

Supervisor Bigford introduced the agenda.

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

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: 5-0.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Public Comment:**

- Vicki Rosenburg, a board member of the Saugatuck Dunes Coastal Alliance, addressed the Board, referencing prior communications from the Alliance concerning the North Shore marina project and urged the Board to take action.
- Kevin Whiteford, a candidate for state house representative, introduced himself to the Board, sharing his background, qualifications, and contact information.
- Scott Stearns discussed the bid tabulation for the Riverside/Dugout water main project, highlighting concerns around tree preservation and potential cost savings.

**Public Comment Closed**

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

1. Bills & Review of Invoices
  - a. Accounts Payable Invoices: \$228,014.41
  - b. Payroll (check register attached): \$59,292.57
  - c. EFT Bills: \$21,239.99
2. Approval of the Minutes: September 11, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes
3. Disbursements:
4. Reports:
  - a. Fire Board
  - b. Parks Commission
  - c. Interurban Board
5. Operations:
  - a. Electrical Inspector Agreement
6. Election Commission:
  - a. Resolution

A **Motion** was made by Marcy 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. Tri-Community Wildlife Management Committee**

The Township had one remaining appointment to the Tri-Community Wildlife Management Committee. The Board appointed Trustee Aldrich and Tony Schippa to serve on the advisory committee, which will operate with a defined sunset date, extendable only with Board approval. The open position was advertised, and the Township received one application from Beth Ramsson, a Township resident.

A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to approve the appointment of Beth Ramsson to the Tri-Community Wildlife Management Committee. Supported by Israels.

Discussion: None.

Voice Vote: 5-0

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**2. Water and Sewer Rate Study Proposal**

The Board reviewed a proposal from Bendzinski & Co. Municipal Finance Advisors to conduct rate studies for the Township's Water and Sewer systems. The Township, along with the Cities of Saugatuck, Douglas, and KLSWA, is updating existing Water and Sewer agreements, which will impact utility assets under Township responsibility. Consequently, current rates need to be adjusted to reflect these changes.

The proposal includes a \$2,500 fee for the water rate study, which will update the recent water rate study and establish rates on a MEU schedule. The sewer rate study, at \$10,500, will be more extensive since the Township has not updated sewer rates since 2017. These periodic rate studies are essential to ensure the Township is collecting sufficient funds to maintain its municipal utility system. The rate studies will commence once the updated Water and Sewer agreements are finalized, as they will clarify the Township's ownership of utility assets.

A **Motion** was made by Marcy to approve proposal from Bendzinski & Co. Municipal Finance Advisors to complete a Water Rate Study update for \$2,500 and Sewer Rate Study for \$10,500. Supported by Aldrich.

Discussion:

Voice Vote: 5-0

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**3. Proposed Revision to Consolidated Fee Schedule**

Township staff recommended revisions to the Consolidated Fee Schedule to increase fees for plumbing, mechanical, and electrical inspections and plan reviews. Contractors for these services had requested fee adjustments, and staff determined that increases are necessary to cover contractor costs and related administrative activities.

The proposed updates include raising inspection fees to \$125 and plan review fees to \$175. If approved, these changes would take effect on November 1, 2024.

A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to approve the adoption of Resolution No. 2024-25, a resolution adopting the Saugatuck Township revised Consolidated Fee Schedule. Supported by Israels.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Aldrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously

#### 4. DNR Grant Acceptance Resolution 2024-26

The Township received notice from the DNR that funding for its 2023 Trust Fund Grant to extend the Blue Star Trail has been approved by the State Legislature, with a project agreement forthcoming. To meet grant requirements, the Township must pass a resolution accepting the agreement's terms and committing to the local matching funds. The proposed resolution outlines the grant conditions, matching requirements, and the Township's commitment to allocate the necessary funds to complete the project.

A **Motion** was made by Aldrich to adopt Resolution No. 2024-26, a resolution to accept a Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund Grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Supported by Marcy.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Aldrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously

#### 5. Building Official/Asst. Zoning Administrator

The Board is considering the full-time employment of Leon Lawrence as the Township's Code Enforcement Officer. Since joining the Township in May, Lawrence has made significant progress in the Building and Zoning Department, handling code enforcement, plan reviews, building inspections, and addressing public inquiries on zoning and building codes. The packet includes an employment agreement, drafted by the Township Attorney, and a job description outlining his expanded role. The Board is asked to review the agreement and consider approving Lawrence's full-time position as Code Enforcement Officer.

A **Motion** was made by Marcy to approve the Code Enforcement Officer Employment Agreement for Leon Lawrence. Supported by Helmrich.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: 5-0

Motion Carried Unanimously

#### 6. Twp Hall Façade and Site Improvement Proposal

Saugatuck Township received three proposals in response to its Request for Proposal for architectural and landscape services to redesign the Township Hall façade and site. The Redesign Steering Committee evaluated the submissions based on criteria such as project team experience, availability, design philosophy, project understanding, experience with similar projects, and proposed fees. The firms' abilities to assist with grant identification and applications were also considered.

After thorough review, the Steering Committee recommended the Township Board accept Progressive AE's proposal. Progressive will complete design and construction documents for 6.5% of the project cost and provide construction management services for 8%. As the only firm offering construction management, Progressive will act as the General Contractor, handling all subcontractor coordination and reducing overall construction costs. Additionally, Progressive will assist with grant opportunities. The total service cost will be based on the project's final construction cost.

A **Motion** was made by Israels to accept Proposal from Progressive AE for Professional Architectural, Landscape, and Engineering Design Services for Redesign of the Saugatuck Township Hall façade and site, and

direct the Township manager to work with Progressive AE and the Township Attorney to develop a mutually acceptable agreement to be approved by the Township Board. Supported by Aldrich.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Aldrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously

#### **7. Bid Award Water System Improvement Riverside Dr/Dugout Rd**

On October 2, 2024, the Township opened bids for the Water System and Road Improvement project on Riverside Drive and Dugout Road. Four bids were submitted, with the lowest at \$661,273.15 from Site Works Solutions. After reviewing the bids, the Township Engineer recommended awarding the project to Site Works Solutions.

A **Motion** was made by Marcy to award the Water System Improvement Riverside Drive/Dugout Rd project to Site Works solutions at \$661,273.15. 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 September Planning Commission meetings, therefore no report.

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

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

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

- Marcy reported that after consulting with a Michigan Township Association attorney, it was recommended to eliminate the Open Board Report. She proposed adding this as an agenda item for the next meeting.
- Israels provided an update on election proceedings.

##### **Public Comment:**

- Elliott Sturm addressed the Tri-Community Wildlife Management Committee, wishing its members luck in their tasks.
- Leon Lawrence offered to provide his insights to the Tri-Community Wildlife Management Committee as a non-member, emphasizing his expertise in deer management.
- Scott Stearns inquired about the costs to property owners for the Riverside/Dugout project and sought details on the Allegan County Road Commission's input regarding specifics.

##### **Public Comment Closed**

**Adjournment:** Supervisor Bigford adjourned the meeting at 7:30 PM

## MOTIONS

1. A **Motion** was made by Israels to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Marcy.  
Discussion: None  
Voice Vote: 5-0.  
Motion Carried Unanimously.
2. A **Motion** was made by Marcy 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 Helmrich to approve the appointment of Beth Ramsson to the Tri-Community Wildlife Management Committee. Supported by Israels.  
Discussion: None.  
Voice Vote: 5-0  
Motion Carried Unanimously.
4. A **Motion** was made by Marcy to approve proposal from Bendzinski & Co. Municipal Finance Advisors to complete a Water Rate Study update for \$2,500 and Sewer Rate Study for \$10,500. Supported by Aldrich.  
Discussion:  
Voice Vote: 5-0  
Motion Carried Unanimously.
5. A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to approve the adoption of Resolution No. 2024-25, a resolution adopting the Saugatuck Township revised Consolidated Fee Schedule. Supported by Israels.  
Discussion: None  
Roll Call Vote:  
Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Aldrich, Marcy  
No:  
Motion Carried Unanimously
6. A **Motion** was made by Aldrich to adopt Resolution No. 2024-26, a resolution to accept a Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund Grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Supported by Marcy.  
Discussion: None  
Roll Call Vote:  
Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Aldrich, Marcy  
No:  
Motion Carried Unanimously
7. A **Motion** was made by Marcy to approve the Code Enforcement Officer Employment Agreement for Leon Lawrence. Supported by Helmrich.  
Discussion: None  
Voice Vote: 5-0  
Motion Carried Unanimously
8. A **Motion** was made by Israels to accept Proposal from Progressive AE for Professional Architectural, Landscape, and Engineering Design Services for Redesign of the Saugatuck Township Hall façade and site, and direct the Township manager to work with Progressive AE and the Township Attorney to develop a mutually acceptable agreement to be approved by the Township Board. Supported by Aldrich.  
Discussion: None  
Roll Call Vote:  
Yes: Bigford, Israels, Helmrich, Aldrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously

Respectfully,

*Morgan Coulston*, Recording Secretary

I, Rebecca Israels, Township Clerk, certify that these minutes were approved on November 16, 2024 by the Township Board.

*Rebecca Israels*  
Rebecca Israels, Township Clerk

*11/13/2024*  
Date