



Saugatuck Township
Strategic Planning Workshop
Wednesday, March 26, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.
SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP HALL
3461 Blue Star Highway Saugatuck, MI 49453

1) Call to Order

2) Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance

3) Approval of Agenda

4) Consent Agenda

- 1) Approval of Minutes
 - i) March 12, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
- 2) Allegan County Road Commission Work Order
- 3) Resolution of Support for 123.Net's BEAD Program Grant Application

5) Public Comments

The Board requests that speakers respect the three-minute time limit for individual comments and the five-minute time limit for an individual speaking on behalf of a group. This is not a question-and-answer session, it is an opportunity to voice your thoughts with the Township Board.

6) Action Items

N/A

7) Discussion Items

- 1) Strategic Planning Discussion

8) Public Comments

9) Adjourn

NOTICE OF WORKSHOP MEETING

Saugatuck Township Board
3461 Blue Star Hwy
Saugatuck, MI 49453
(269) 857-7721

The Saugatuck Township Board
will hold a Workshop on:

Wednesday, March 26, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

The purpose of this Workshop is Strategic Planning.

This notice is posted in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Public Act 267 of 1976, as amended, MCL 41.72a(2) and (3), and the Americans With Disabilities Act. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Saugatuck Township Board by writing or calling the Township Clerk, (269) 857-7721.

Posted on March 24, 2025

Cindy Osman, Clerk



**Saugatuck Township
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Present: Supervisor Abby Bigford, Clerk Cindy Osman, Treasurer Jon Helmrich, Trustee Brenda Marcy, and Trustee Stacey Aldrich (attended via Zoom, non-voting).

Absent:

Also Present: Manager Daniel DeFranco, Recording Secretary Morgan Coulston, Brad Lubbers, Kathy Sturm, Elliott Sturm, Tyler DeNooyer, Jacob Boer, Bill Garrity.

Reports: Supervisor Bigford opened the floor for reports.

- 1. Lisa Mize, Director of Saugatuck-Douglas Convention and Visitors Bureau**
Mize presented the CVB's 2025 Marketing Plan Overview and highlighted 2024 initiatives, including digital advertising and the discovery guide.
- 2. Treasurer's Report**
Helmrich gave an update on the Township finances; the report is on file.
- 3. Planning Commission**
Due to Clerk Osman's absence at the Planning Commission meeting, Helmrich, who attended as a civilian, offered a brief summary.
- 4. Manager's Report**
Township Manager DeFranco gave an update on the Township projects; the report is on file.

Public Comment:

- Allegan County Commissioner Brad Lubbers provided an update on county activities and highlighted key points from the County Commission newsletter.

Public Comment Closed

Agenda Approval:

Supervisor Bigford introduced the agenda.

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

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: 4-0.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

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

- 1. Bills & Review of Invoices**
 - a) Total Bills and Payroll: \$167,282.79
- 2. Approval of Minutes**
 - a) February 11, 2025, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
 - b) February 12, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
 - c) March 3, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes
- 3. Disbursements**

- a) \$3.19M

4. Reports

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Road Commission | e) Interurban Board |
| b) Fire Board | f) Harbor Authority |
| c) Parks Commission | g) KLSWA Commission |
| d) Emergency Services Committee | h) Tri-Community Wildlife Committee |

5. Correspondence

- a) Larry Edris, former Chair of the Saugatuck Township Planning Commission and former Board President of Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy – in favor of the park acquisition.

6. Operations

- | | |
|--|---|
| a) Streetlight Resolution 2025-04 | c) Memorandum of Agreement for School Summer Tax Collection |
| b) Consolidated Fee Schedule Update.
Res. 2025-05 | |

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

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: 4-0.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Fiduciary Oversight: N/A

Policy Development, Evaluation, and Actions: N/A

Legislative Actions (Ordinances): N/A

Strategic Discussions and Actions:

1. Blue Star Hwy Infrastructure Planning

The Township considered additional improvements to the Blue Star Corridor to align with the County Drain Office's planned Blue Star County Drain project. Proposed enhancements included enclosing open drainage ditches and installing approximately one mile of sidewalk along the east side of Blue Star Highway between Old Allegan Road and 134th Avenue.

Inquiries from property owners and ongoing planning efforts, such as the Blue Star Corridor Safety Plan and Housing Study, prompted discussions about extending sewer lines, installing curb and gutter, and adding stormwater drainage to better serve the corridor's future needs.

Township Engineer Tyler DeNooyer presented a potential plan with a map, while Manager DeFranco outlined the rationale for the improvements. The Board discussed options, costs, and the project's long-term impact. They requested additional information from the Manager and Engineer for further consideration.

Professional Development: N/A

Other Unfinished Business: N/A

Other New Business:

1. Trust Fund Application Park Acquisition Public Hearing

A public hearing was held to gather comments on the 2025 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Acquisition Grant Application, which proposed acquiring a 119-acre property along the Kalamazoo River in Saugatuck Township. The hearing had been publicly noticed in the local newspaper, on the Township website, and via eblast.

Supervisor Bigford opened the public hearing at 7:01 PM.

- Jim Searing, Parks Commission Chair, voiced strong support for the project, emphasizing the growing need for parks as more people move to the area. He described the opportunity as a “once in a lifetime” chance.
- Kathy Sturm praised the project, calling it an exceptional and wonderful opportunity.

Supervisor Bigford closed the public hearing at 7:09 PM.

2. Trust Fund Application Park Acquisition, Res. 2025-06

The Township had an opportunity to purchase approximately 119 acres along the Kalamazoo River, a site identified as a priority for outdoor recreation in the recently updated Parks and Recreation Plan.

Staff recommended submitting an application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) Acquisition Grant, which could cover up to 75% of the property's acquisition cost. The Township had discussed the project with the DNR, which believed it would be a competitive grant application due to the site's location and recreational potential.

Before this agenda item, the Board held a public hearing on the grant submission and received public input.

The Board was asked to consider authorizing the submission of the MNRTF Acquisition Grant application, which included adopting a resolution committing the Township to a local match of up to \$1,000,000, funded through the Parks and Trails Millage.

A **Motion** was made by Osman to adopt Resolution 2025-06 a Resolution to authorize submission of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Acquisition Grant. Supported by Marcy.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Osman, Helmrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

3. Trust Fund Application Blue Star Trail Public Hearing

Saugatuck Township partnered with the City of the Village of Douglas and the Friends of the Blue Star Trail to plan and construct a three-mile extension of the Blue Star Trail, extending from Wiley Road in Douglas to 124th Avenue (M-89) in Saugatuck Township.

The Friends of the Blue Star Trail funded Prein&Newhof to design the extension, and a preliminary plan was included in the Board packet. The total project cost was estimated at \$3,839,107, with approximately 2.5 miles of the trail in Saugatuck Township estimated at \$3,224,300. Construction was scheduled for Spring 2027.

Saugatuck Township and the City of Douglas jointly applied for a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant to cover 80% of construction costs. To further support the project, the Township proposed applying for a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) Development Grant, requesting \$400,000. If awarded, the Township would need to commit \$244,900 in local funds for its share of the project.

Supervisor Bigford opened the public hearing at 7:15 PM. With no public comment, he closed the hearing at 7:16 PM.

4. Trust Fund Application Blue Star Trail, Res. 2025-07

Before this agenda item, the Board held a public hearing on the Township's proposal to apply for a \$400,000 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) Development Grant to support the construction of 2.5 miles of non-motorized path from 129th Avenue to 124th Avenue (M-89) in Saugatuck Township.

The Board was asked to consider adopting Resolution 2025-07, authorizing the submission of the grant application.

A **Motion** was made by Marcy to adopt Resolution 2025-07 a Resolution to authorize submission of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Development Grant. Supported by Helmrich.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bigford, Osman, Helmrich, Marcy

No:

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Future Topics: N/A

Public Comment:

- Jim Searing expressed support for proactive sewer expansion, emphasizing the importance of addressing it early to avoid the potential disruption of digging up Blue Star Hwy twice during future development.
- Bill Garrity inquired about the status of the Blue Star Drain project.
- Elliott Sturm asked about the 50 MPH speed limit sign on Blue Star Hwy south of the roundabout and who would be responsible for its removal.
- Kathy Sturm addressed the sewer proposal and Blue Star Hwy, highlighting the need for curbs to prevent parking on the shoulders and to stop illegal passing on the right.

Public Comment Closed

Board Member Comments:

- Helmrich discussed the upcoming Tri-Community sessions with Joey Andrew's office, noting that meetings would be starting soon.
- Marcy expressed gratitude to Manager DeFranco for his exceptional support to the community, commending his consistent dedication and willingness to go above and beyond.

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

MOTIONS

1. A **Motion** was made by Osman to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Marcy.
Discussion: None
Voice Vote: 4-0.
Motion Carried Unanimously.
2. A **Motion** was made by Helmrich to approve the consent agenda as presented. Supported by Osman.
Discussion: None
Voice Vote: 4-0.
Motion Carried Unanimously.
3. A **Motion** was made by Osman to adopt Resolution 2025-06 a Resolution to authorize submission of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Acquisition Grant. Supported by Marcy.
Discussion: None
Roll Call Vote:
Yes: Bigford, Osman, Helmrich, Marcy
No:
Motion Carried Unanimously.
4. A **Motion** was made by Marcy to adopt Resolution 2025-07 a Resolution to authorize submission of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Development Grant. Supported by Helmrich.
Discussion: None
Roll Call Vote:
Yes: Bigford, Osman, Helmrich, Marcy
No:
Motion Carried Unanimously.

Respectfully,

Morgan Coulston

Recording Secretary

I, Cindy Osman, Township Clerk, certify that these minutes were approved on April 9, 2025 by the Township Board.

Township Clerk

Date



FROM: Daniel DeFranco, Township Manager

MEETING DATE: March 26th, 2025

SUBJECT: Gravel Work Order

DESCRIPTION:

For Board consideration is approval of a gravel control work order from the Allegan County Road Commission (ACRC). Gravel projects reflect work to be completed on local roads and will be funded through the Township's Road Millage. The road condition was reviewed by the Township Engineer and gravel work is recommended. Gravel project is as follows:

- 1) **Riverside Road** – Arrowhead Drive to 128th Avenue, surface with 22A Modified at the rate of 1.000 cyd/mile

Total estimated cost for gravel project: \$30,000

The above road projects will be funded in fiscal year 25-26'. The Board should consider approving the gravel control work order from the Allegan County Road Commission.

BUDGET ACTION REQUIRED

Project to be included in the FY 25-26' Road Fund Budget

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REVIEW

N/A

ENGINEER REVIEW

Work recommended by Township Engineer

Sample Motion:

"Move to approve the Gravel Work Order from the Allegan County Road Commission."

Attached:

1. *Gravel Work Order*

**TOWNSHIP WORK ORDER FOR CONSTRUCTION or
SPECIAL MAINTENANCE ON PUBLIC ROADS**

Note: One copy of this form is furnished. The Township Supervisor and Clerk are to sign, date, and return **1 copy** to the Road Commission by **email, fax or US Mail** for approval and signature. An approved copy will be returned to the Township Board. This is legal proof that the Township Board is in full compliance with the laws regarding contractual relations with the County Road Commission.

To: Board of County Road Commissioners of Allegan County
1308 Lincoln Road
Allegan, Michigan 49010

Under provisions of the general highway laws and specifically Act No. 51 P.A. 1951 as amended, the following road work was authorized by the Township Board under date of _____.

Gravel Project(s) _____

Riverside Road- Arrowhead Drive to 128th Avenue, surface with 22A Modified at the rate of 1,000 cyd/mile, approximately 1.22 miles, 1,200 cyd.
Construction Est. \$30,000

Township Supervisor

Date

Township Clerk

Date

Approved by _____, Chairman
Board of County Road Commissioners of Allegan County

Date _____



FROM: Daniel DeFranco, Township Manager

MEETING DATE: March 26th, 2025

SUBJECT: Resolution of Support for 123.Net Grant Application

DESCRIPTION:

For Board consideration is a resolution of support for 123.Net's application to the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program.

123.Net is in the process of installing broadband internet throughout Allegan County with the financial support of Allegan County and the BEAD program. There are still outstanding addresses in Allegan County not served by broadband, and 123.Net seeks to submit a new proposal to the BEAD program to further extend broadband in Allegan County.

The resolution of support for consideration was prepared by Allegan County and does not require a local fund commitment.

BUDGET ACTION REQUIRED

N/A

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REVIEW

N/A

ENGINEER REVIEW

N/A

Sample Motion:

"Move to adopt Resolution 2025-08, a resolution of support for 123NET's Application for the Broadband Equity Access & Deployment (BEAD) Grant Program toward the Allegan County Broadband Wired Infrastructure Expansion Project."

Attached:

1. Resolution 2025-08

SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP
COUNTY OF ALLEGAN
STATE OF MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-08

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT

for 123NET's Application for the Broadband Equity Access & Deployment (BEAD) Grant Program toward the Allegan County Broadband Wired Infrastructure Expansion Project.

WHEREAS, Saugatuck Township is located in Allegan County where over 3,000 homes and businesses are eligible for BEAD grant funding; and

WHEREAS, the digital divide is exacerbating the homework and learning gap for students without high-speed internet access at home; and educators are burdened with having to develop instruction for students both with and without high-speed internet at home; and

WHEREAS, businesses need the surrounding communities to have broadband internet to attract employees and many residents need high-speed internet to be able to work from their homes; and

WHEREAS, many residents need high-speed internet for virtual medical appointments; and

WHEREAS, the points outlined above, in concert with many other known benefits of high-speed internet access which contribute to quality of life, demonstrate an urgent need for affordable, reliable high-speed internet access at homes and businesses; and

WHEREAS, Allegan County has entered into a Public Private Partnership Agreement with 123NET in support of building broadband infrastructure throughout Allegan County utilizing the Realizing Opportunities with Broadband Infrastructure Networks (ROBIN.)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, as the duly elected township board of the Township of Saugatuck support the BEAD grant application from 123NET of Southfield, Michigan to secure funding toward the Allegan County Broadband Wired Infrastructure Expansion project.

AYES:

NAYES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED THIS 26 DAY OF MARCH, 2025

Signed:_____

Abby Bigford, Township Supervisor

Signed:_____

Cindy Osman, Township Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I, Cindy Osman, the duly elected Clerk of Saugatuck Township do hereby certify the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Saugatuck Township Board of Trustees at a regular meeting held March 26, 2025, in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, as amended. The minutes of the meeting were kept and will be or have been made available as required by said Act.

Signed: _____

Cindy Osman, Township Clerk