

Watertown Township
2630 South Sandusky Rd
Sandusky, MI 48471
Tuesday, February 2, 2021 – 6:00 pm

The Watertown Township Board meeting was called to order by Supervisor, Scott Franzel at 6:00 pm. All present rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: Cambridge, Coats, Dixon, Franzel, Ross and Diaz

ABSENT: None

GUESTS: Jason Radloff, Dick Henderson, Gary Heberling and Roger Brown

MINUTES

Franzel requested approval of the January 5, 2021 regular scheduled Board Meeting Minutes.

***Coats made the motion to accept the January 5, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Dixon supported.

Ayes: Cambridge, Coats, Dixon, Franzel and Ross. Nays: None. Motion carried.

ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

***Dixon made the motion to accept the agenda as presented. Cambridge supported. Ayes: Cambridge, Coats, Dixon, Franzel and Ross. Nays: None. Motion carried

CORRESPONDENCE

Franzel:

- Presented a Drain Commissioner's letter notifying the township of drains being dug.
- Received a Board of Review Training Brochure. Trainings may be done virtually. Diaz reported that there are two signed up to attend the meeting this year. Anyone interested may sign up next year. The Board of Review Meeting commitments are 1 day in March - 9 am to 3 pm, 1 day in March - 3 pm to 9 pm and ½ hour evening meetings in July and December.
- Received a Letter of Introduction for spraying. Talked with Andrew Palmer from the Road Commission and they are all set for spring.
- Received religious advertisement.
- Received letter from Jim regarding a free Solar Application Meeting.

TREASURER

Coats requested approval of January 2021 checks number 16407 thru 16429 for a total amount of \$14,765.05

***Franzel made the motion to approve the paid bills as presented. Cambridge supported. Ayes: Cambridge, Coats, Dixon, Franzel and Ross. Nays: None. Motion carried

CLERK

Ross requested Board approval for the program insurance coverage options that are over and above the annual liability insurance. Typically, this is Casualty Limited Terrorism Coverage-\$40.00, Property Limited Terrorism Coverage-\$20.00 and Increased Non-Monetary Defense Coverage at \$100,000 plus \$100,000 Aggregate totaling \$250,000 coverage - \$250.00.

***Cambridge made the motion to approve the Terrorism Coverages plus the additional \$100,000 Non-Monetary. Franzel supported. Ayes: Cambridge, Coats, Dixon, Franzel and Ross. Nays: None. Motion carried

Ross reported:

- She took the PA116 information into Jody sent back a letter stating the item is on the agenda for the Sanilac County Planning Commission's February 18th meeting.
- Jody sent a revised list of Planning Committee Meeting Dates. She will post the list on the Watertown Township Hall Door.
- Culligan requested a key to get into the hall to maintain and service the water softener. Service is provided every 32 weeks. In November 2019 they put 10 bags of salt in the softener and then again in June 2020. One trip was made between those dates but no salt was needed. Discussion was held on the softener – Culligan provided versus Township owned. Ross will research if the Township owns the present softener, how much it costs for the service and for the salt.
- No bills to pay this month.

CEMETERY REPORT

Ross presented the cemetery activity through December 31, 2020 as submitted by Dick Henderson, Sexton:

- Plowed snow December 1st - \$10.00
- Emptied trash December 10th - \$10.00
- Plowed snow December 26th - \$30.00
- Burial on December 29th, Cemetery Section B, Township Winter Rate of \$725 applied,
- Sold a grave – Cemetery Section A, \$150 paid to Tammy Ross per instructions of Township Clerk
- Dead pine tree on North side needs to be removed by a tree service.
- December 2020 Sexton Pay \$675.00

Ross presented the cemetery activity through January 26, 2021 as submitted by Dick Henderson, Sexton:

- Plowed snow January 3rd - \$20.00
- Burial January 7th, Cemetery Section D, In Township Winter Rates of \$725 applied.
- Plowed snow Dec 26th, \$20.00.
- January 2021 Sexton Pay \$665.

SEWER REPORT

Bill Dixon reported:

- The Dell Street Lift Station is being monitored electronically daily
- Discussed the water line break. Dave Faber looked into the history and found that it appears as though it was an approximately 9,000 gallon overage. He will wait to get the water meter reading at the end of this month to confirm this information but if it is correct, the homeowner can expect a credit of 9,000 gallons.

WEBSITE

Cambridge reported that she:

- Added and archived agendas and minutes as appropriate.
- Posted as an announcement the Board of Review positions.
- Updated Township and Board of Review members and positions.
- Added Board and Fire Department Meeting Dates for the New Year.
- Add notice that meeting will be outside.

TAX ASSESSOR

Jeannie Diaz

- Presented a resolution for the updated Poverty Exemption Policy Guidelines for the Board's approval.

***Cambridge made the motion to approve the Poverty Exemption Policy and Guidelines as presented. Cambridge supported. Ayes: Cambridge, Coats, Dixon, Franzel and Ross. Nays: None. Motion carried

- Presented a resolution to allow all Township Residents to protest their tax evaluation by mail rather than at an in-person meeting.

***Cambridge made the motion to approve the resolution to allow all Township Residents to protest their tax evaluation by mail as presented. Dixon supported. Ayes: Cambridge, Coats, Dixon, Franzel and Ross. Nays: None. Motion carried

- Reported that the State of Michigan is requesting that the Poverty Application and Guidelines be added to the website. Diaz will give a copy to Cambridge to post.
- Reported that the State of Michigan is requesting that the Board of Review be conducted virtually as well as in-person. Per Board consensus, there is no internet service at the hall, therefore the Board of Review meetings will be done in person, by appointment or by mail in protest.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Gary Heberling, Commissioner reported:

- Commissioner's approved all open positions for county parks
- Voted that the County Pay Schedule is to be followed for new employees
- Approved the Annual Blue Water Conservation District Contract.
- Hired Nick Lusher to be the new custodian at the courthouse.
- COVID 19 financials for 2020 that affected our County.
 - Loss of State Revenue Sharing of \$211,000\.
 - Census sweep dog licensing \$25,000.
 - Federal Bed Rental down substantial due to COVID of \$434,000.
 - Charge for Services down \$188,000.
 - Total loss of \$858,000
 - CARES ACT did bring funds back to the county but the bottom line is still a loss of \$435,707.
- Mr. Heberling and another commissioner wrote a letter to Governor Whitmer thanking her for taking care of us and keeping COVID down but also requesting she consider relaxing restrictions on regions and counties with low COVID test counts. After meeting with the Board of Commissioners, the request was turned into a petition to request that the emergency authority of the Michigan Health Department Service Director have a time limit and then that authority be turned over to local health department directors. Thus, giving each county/region control depending on their circumstances.
- Thanked the Health Department and McKenzie Hospital for their excellent job.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Jason Radloff asked about the application process for the big solar farm. Franzel said there is no application process at this time. The company is having a pre-application meeting, but nothing further is known.
- Jeannie Diaz – What is the township requiring? Franzel – The Township has a solar ordinance but whether they will comply with the ordinance is in question. Everything has to be presented to the Planning Commission before it goes to the Township Board.

ZONING

Franzel reported:

- Had a blight report on Elk Creek Road. He investigated it and that there are 5 cars in the yard but 4 had current license plates. Therefore, it is not a blight issue.
- Had a request for a home roof top solar panel installation. Everything looked good. The homeowner needs to turn in the application and fee.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Sexton discussion – Dixon contacted 4 different vendors for the removal of the dead pine tree and stump in the cemetery. Low bid was Patterson Tree Service for \$650. After talking with Supervisor Franzel, Dixon authorized the tree removal.
2. Lawn mowing discussion – Dixon discussed a RFP for the service to be advertised on the website and small ad in the paper. Franzel – Legal council has recommended that all contracted jobs be bid out yearly. Coats commented that a two or three year contracts may get a better quote. Further discussion was held. Board members organize a list of contracted job needs and duties.
3. Meeting Schedule – Ross reported that the 2021 meeting schedule was posted on the door of the hall, and there are not any special or regular elections for the 2021 year.
4. Upcoming Plans for Improvements (spending).
Coats requested Board input on Township needs to be budgeted for during the upcoming fiscal year.
 - Franzel - Continue adding road signs as needed.
 - Ross - Make the election drop box permanent drop box with a cement pad and waterproof cover.
 - Dixon – Budget for yearly removal of old or dangerous trees in the cemetery.
 - Franzel – Increase road limestone budget.
 - Dixon – Extra road paving.
 - Ross – LED sign outside the Township Hall.
5. Board/Other Board Budget and Job
 - Franzel – Spoke about job bids already
 - Franzel – Believes all other Board stipends should go from \$35 to \$50. Dixon suggested that possibly restructuring the other boards to have less members and then the raise to \$50 each would not be a budget increase. Discussion was held on how this might be accomplished.

***Dixon made the motion to increase other Board Member’s meeting stipend to \$50.00 per meeting.

Cambridge supported. Ayes: Cambridge, Coats, Dixon, Franzel and Ross. Nays: None. Motion carried

6. TEC Fiber Ordinance
 - Franzel reported that he received a Fiber Ordinance from the Thumb Electric Company for the Board’s consideration. This ordinance would give TEC the authorization to market and supply electricity and broad band internet through and over existing equipment owned and operated by a public entity. This matter was tabled pending review and negotiation.
7. Board of Review (new member needed still)
 - Franzel asked Jason Radloff if he would like to joint the Board of Review. Mr. Radloff will consider the opportunity.

ADJOURN

***Dixon made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:01 p.m. Cambridge supported. Ayes: Cambridge, Coats, Dixon, Franzel and Ross. Nays: None. Motion carried

Next Board Meeting is Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Tammy Ross, Clerk