

Watertown Township
2630 South Sandusky Rd
Sandusky, MI 48471

Public Accuracy Testing at 5:30 pm
Board Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 6, 2024 –6:00 pm

The Watertown Township meeting for Public Accuracy testing began at 5:30 pm and was conducted by Clerk Ross and Deputy Clerk and Co-Chair Election Inspector Cole. The Accuracy test was completed by 6:00 pm and it was determined that all the equipment was working properly. The documents were signed by the township Election Commission: Clerk Ross, Deputy Clerk Cole and Treasurer Coats. All ballots and signed testing documents were placed in the ballot container and sealed by Clerk Ross. The Public Accuracy test was adjourned at 6:00 pm and the Regular Board meeting immediately followed.

PRESENT: Cambridge, Coats, Cole, Dixon, and Ross

ABSENT: Diaz

GUESTS: Dick Henderson, Scott Kenny, Mike and Christine Papp, Rick Pangburn, Jeff Renaudin, Matt Cole, Don and Diane Ferguson, Dorothy and Greg Thorley, Jim Hacker, Mike Vanetta, Jim Cambridge, Bill Parrish, Edward Morgan.

1. AGENDA

Bill Dixon requested that:

- Drain Commission be placed under Correspondence, Letter B
- Custer Master Plan be placed under Correspondence, Letter C
- Michigan Pipe be placed under Correspondence, Letter D
- BRDO Administrator be placed under Correspondence, Letter E.

*** Motion by Cambridge supported by Cole approve the minutes as amended. All in favor. Motion carried.

2. BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES: CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL

Dixon requested approval of the January 2, 2024 Minutes.

*** Motion by Coats supported by Cambridge to approve the minutes as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

3. PUBLIC OFFICIAL

Dixon Reported - County Commissioner, Gary Heberling was not able to be at this meeting and sent his regrets. He plans to attend the regular March 2024 meeting.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Township resident Michael Vanetta requested approval to remove fallen wood from the township woods. Due to a neighbor dispute the practice of allowing residents to remove the wood was stopped. However, he would like to see it reinstated. Resident Edward Morgan is also interested in cleaning out some of the woods. This would not only help township residents, but also clean the woods so that residents can enjoy the trails. Coats suggested checking with the insurance company for any liability issues.

- Township Resident Diane Ferguson – Commented that she hopes the issue with Commissioner Heberling speaking earlier in the meeting has been resolved.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE**

- a) Applied Imaging Printer/Copier Annual Usage Statement: Monthly Average (563 b/w 131 cmyk)
Dixon Reported - Applied Imaging submitted the Annual Usage Statement. The average copies made by the township is 563 black & white and 131 color copies per month. The township does not have a service plan, but pays by the copy.
- b) Drain Commission
Dixon Reported - Drain Commissioner, Doug Sweet sent a noticed to landowners adjacent to the Smith Drain that, weather permitting, John Harding Excavating will be taking care of the drain starting on or about January 18th.
- c) Custer Master Plan
Dixon Reported - As required by statue, Taylor Butterfield, P.C. provided the township with notice that they are commencing to work on the Custer Township Master Plan.
- d) Michigan Pipe
Dixon Reported – Michigan Pipe and Valve sent a notice of a new procedure for payment of invoices.
- e) BRDO Administrator
Dixon Reported - BRDO Administrator sent notice regarding a class action lawsuit that has been filed against several banking institutes regarding conspiring to fix rates on variable rate loans. However, the township has not borrowed funds so is not in the class action suit.

4. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a) Set Date for Annual Clean-Up Day CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL
Dixon Reported - September 14, 2024 has been suggested for the date and that the notice be included with the Summer Tax Bills.

*** Motion by Cambridge, supported by Coats to hold the 4th Annual Watertown Clean-Up day on September 14, 2024. All in favor. Motion carried.

Cambridge suggested not printing the flyer until after the June Board Meeting in case a change may occur.

- b) Insurance Audit Completed
 - Dixon Reported that the insurance audit from the Michigan Township Participating plan was completed last month. There are a number of communications and recommendations that the insurance auditor suggests. Some of the suggestions may not directly apply to our township, but he would like to discuss the suggestions.
 1. The Insurance Company would like the Township to disclosure to potential employees that their Consumer Report Profile will be obtained.
 2. There are FREE Human Resources Risk Management Services for Public Entities
 3. The Insurance Company recommends using I-Chat background checks are used for prospective employees
 4. Liability Assessment & Liability Reduction Recommendations to help reduce exposure.
 5. The Insurance Company would like the Board to pass a Municipal Representative Concealed Firearm Prohibition Policy enacted. This policy would only prohibit Township Employees from carrying a firearm while performing township duties.
 6. The Insurance Company would like the Board to consider Social Media Policy Recommendations.
- c) Recreation Plan
 - Dixon Reported – The Recreation Plan is completed and uploaded to the MI-Grants website. If the DNR accepts the plan, the Spicer Group will finalize the plan and mail/deliver the final Recreation Plan copies.

- d) 2024 DNR Grant Workshop
 - Dixon Reported – He plans to attend a grant workshop on February 7, 2024 from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. The no-cost grant workshop details the information needed to apply for the Recreation Grant. Spicer Group representative Jessica Huffnagle will also assist in applying for the grant.
- f) 11 Watertown Rd. – Dick Henderson Zoning Complaint
 - Dixon Reported – He had a conversation with the Township Attorney. There were additional issues brought up during the Planning Commission Meeting that have to be considered before he can issue an opinion.
- g) Township Snow Removal Service Procedures – Contract
 - Dixon Reported – Scott Franzel offered to do the township hall for \$50 each plow. He recommends a different company plow the cemetery if needed.

*** Motion by Cambridge, supported by Coats to approve Scott Franzel to plow the Township Hall Parking Lot when needed for \$50 each time and to ask John Harding, Cemetery Sexton if he would be interested in plowing the township cemetery when/if needed. All in favor. Motion carried.

5. OLD BUSINESS

- a) Sylvan Dr. Dangerous Buildings complaint (on-going)
 - Dixon Reported - The Township Attorney, Kyle O'Mara has not received a response to the enforcement letter he sent. Dixon requested that he take the next step to continue the enforcement efforts on the dangerous property on Sylvan Drive.
- b) ARPA Grant Fund
 - Dixon Reported – He spoke with Chris Townley at Townley Engineering Systems about the township's GIS Geo-location & Asset Inventory. Townley's goal is to have everything done by July 30, 2024. Dixon requested that Townley Engineering make a recommendation to the Board in respect to video taping of the underground assets, as well as, any recommendations they may have as far as lift station modifications or other needs.

TREASURER'S REPORT/POSSIBLE ACTION

Coats requested approval of the January 2024 checks number 17464 thru 17492 for a total amount of \$17,855.80.

*** Motion by Cambridge, Supported by Cole to approve the December 2023 checks as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

CLERK'S REPORT/POSSIBLE ACTION

- a) Approval of current month claims

*** Motion by Cambridge, Supported by Cole to approve payment of the monthly claims as presented. All in favor. Motion carried

- b) Election Update

Tammy Ross, Clerk noted for the record that the Presidential Primary will be held on Tuesday, February 27, 2024. The Public Accuracy Testing will take place on Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at 5:15 p.m. before the regular Board Meeting. Notice of the Public Accuracy Meeting will be published in the Tribune – Recorder.

Ross presented the following election inspector candidates to the Board

Susan Cole

Taylor Foster

Dawn Grabitz
Cheryl Heberling
Heidi Fetting
Sheryl Hooper
Nicole Markel

Kortney Ball
Sheila Hendershot
Lisa Kenny
Tammy Ross

Clerk Ross requests approval of election inspectors for the February 27, 2027 Presidential Primary Elections

*** Motion by Ross, Supported by Coats to approve the election inspectors as presented. All in favor.
Motion carried

CEMETERY REPORT/POSSIBLE ACTION

- a) Burials & Lot Sales
 - No burials
- b) Headstone Repair
 - No update

Cambridge reported she spoke with Sexton John Harding in regards to the changes in the Out of Township Burial Fee Changes that started on January 1, 2024.

SEWER REPORT/POSSIBLE ACTION

James Hacker reported that

- He handed out a meter to a resident to replace a broken one. The meter was installed by the homeowner. Dixon asked if the homeowner should be charged for the meter. Coats believes a policy should be made and homeowners notified. Jim Hacker will research this.
- Received a correspondence from Raco Dixon reported the Raco renewal invoice for monitoring the lift station will be sent to PO Box 47 and will be \$450.

PLANNING BOARD/POSSIBLE ACTION

- a) 1/18/2024 PC Meeting Summary

Cambridge reported that

- Regarding the Interim Zoning Administrator. On August 1, 2023, the Township Board approved assigning zoning duties to the Planning Commission, with Jim Hacker as Interim Zoning Administrator, until such time as a replacement Zoning Administrator can be hired.
- Per the Michigan Township Association, the law does not require a Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission Member or Zoning Board of Appeals Member to take an oath of office.
- The township's insurance policy has multiple lines of liability coverage and covers elected or appointed officials.

- b) Master Plan Timeline from Spicer

- Dixon Reported - A draft has been sent for the Master Plan. Any comments or changes should be submitted ASAP. The goal is that the Planning Commission will meet on February 15 to consider changes and recommend a draft to the Township Board. On March 4th the Township Board will put the draft out for the 63-day review period. On May 6th the 63-day review period ends. Spicer Group will gather any comment made and on May 16th the Planning Commission will review and consider adoption of the Master Plan.

- c) ITC Transmission Company's Attorney "Final Letter" Substation.

- Dixon Reported – He is not aware of a previous letter from ITC with respect to this. According to his understanding a substation is a permitted use in all districts, but since there isn't a land use permit filed for ITC for a substation, the Board can not act on it. There are many issues that need to be clarified also with respect to zoning and the order of the application process. Cambridge reported she emailed the correspondence to Foster Swift for their review.

*** Motion by Coats, supported by Ross to approve the engineer firm attend every Planning Commission Meeting where Samsung Solar is being discussed. All in favor. Motion carried.

- d) Solar Ordinance Attorney and Engineer Request for 2/15/24 Meeting
 - Cambridge reported that she had tentatively requested the engineering firm attend the meeting on February 15th and they responded that the date is ok. However, Foster Swift cannot make that date in person, but may be able to do a zoon meeting.
- e) Planning Commission Special Meeting Authorization(s) to Expedite Solar Special Use Application.
 - Jim Hacker reported that if all information is back and questions are answered the Planning Commission may call a special meeting specifically to consider the Solar Use Application.

*** Motion by Coats, supported by Cole to approve that Rebecca Cambridge and/or Jim Hacker may call a special Planning Commission Meeting to work on the Solar Use Application. All in favor. Motion carried.

WEBSITE REPORT/POSSIBLE ACTION

Cambridge reported she

- f) Added proposed and approved minutes
- g) Added 2024 Poverty Exemptions and Guidelines
- h) Added Public Accuracy Election Testing Notice to the calendar
- i) Achieved minutes as appropriate.

TAX ASSESSOR/POSSIBLE ACTION

No report

OTHER GOOD OF THE ORDER

Dixon explained that this item is meant to be a time to discuss any other issues not on the agenda. An example is – He received a call from Township Resident Michael Stacer regarding his concerned about the condition of Gates Road this winter. This brought to mind that Gates Road may be an entrance to the proposed hospital and the work that may be required to update the road. Ross brought up the condition of Dell Street. The concerns will be passed on to the Road Commission

Road brining dates for 2024 are May 2nd, July 9th, and August 20th. The dates are dependent on the weather and Road Commission activities. Matt Grabitz is the new Road Commission contact for Watertown Township.

ADJOURN

***Coats made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m. Cambridge supported. All in favor. Motion carried

UPCOMING MEETINGS.

Regular Board Meeting – Tuesday, March 5, 2024 at 6 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Ross, Clerk