

MINUTES OF THE AU GRES TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING February 14th, 2023 ~ 7:00 P.M.

IN ATTENDANCE: Supervisor Jim Herzog, Clerk Michael Oxley, Treasurer Patricia Tremble, Trustee Penny Kurchak and Trustee Jan Bullock

ABSENT: None

ATTENDEES: Bill Bullock, Jeff Czymbor, Dave Enos, Art Gallop, Aurette Gates, and Derek Porritt

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting began at 7:00pm with the pledge of allegiance. Followed by a moment of silence for the victims of the Michigan State University shooting on February 13th.

APPROVAL of AGENDA: Motion made by Treasurer Patricia Tremble to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Trustee Penny Kurchak. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Agenda approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Aurette Gates asked about the pending water meter the city is planning to install on the line coming into the township, would we pay for it? Clerk Michael Oxley says he hopes the city will go 50/50 on the cost, also plans to apply for state grant monies.

APPROVAL of the MINUTES: Motion made by Trustee Jan Bullock the January 2023 minutes. Motion supported by Kurchak. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Minutes approved.

PAYMENT OF BOOK OF BILLS: Motion made by Tremble to approve the January 2023 book of bills as presented. Motion supported by Oxley. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Motion approved

TREASURER'S REPORT: Read by Treasurer Patricia Tremble. Motion made by Oxley to approve the treasurer's report as presented. Supported by Kurchak. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Motion approved

BOARD REPORTS:

AUGRES-SIMS-WHITNEY FIRE AUTHORITY: Meeting held at the Whitney Fire Hall, called to order by Olen Swartz. Treasurer's report was given by Tom Brandimore. Advising that \$50,000 out of the \$300,000 in the Huron Community Bank be put into a CD, which would keep the bank balance below the FDIC guaranteed \$250,000. Adding that the 2023 Whitney Township hall rent was due (\$8641.12) and that the Consumers Energy bill for December was \$862.78, and increase from December of 2021.

Fire Chief Kurt Hummerickhouse reported that there were 80 fire calls in 2022 (4 of which were in December). Also that there are two new members in recruit training (one male, one female).

Kurt reported taking the ladder truck to the Sagining Eagles Landing Casino to show Tribal leaders that the 110 foot ladder could reach the top floor of the hotel if necessary.

The board approved a letter to be sent out to all marijuana facilities in Au Gres Township stating they would be charged for false alarm calls going forward.

There was discussion on the need to replace some of the turnout gear for the fire fighters (cost for one set is about \$22,000) and that the cost should be figured into the next budget.

Next Fire Board meeting is on Thursday February 16th at the Au Gres Fire Hall.

HERITAGE ROUTE AUTHORITY: Reported by Jan Bullock: Meeting discussion is much the same every month. Minutes of the last meeting is in the agenda packet. The County-Wide Garage sale was discussed thanks to requests from Heather Bauman, and is intended to be back on (after not having it in past years due to the covid pandemic). The Farmer's Market is trying to get more vendors to attend as well as crafters by waving the entry fee this season. Bullock ended by reporting that the LED Depot sign is up and running, and there will be stone pillars added when the weather warms up.

CEMETERY REPORT: Penny Kurchak stated that the cemetery looks good - under the snow. More discussion about the log pile, and how the downed trees from the Amen drain would soon be hidden by spring growth.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: Art Gallop Zoning Administrator reporting. Gallop reported a resident on Rumsey road (**Girding?**) wanting to put up a garage for his boat, but already has three

structures on property. One structure is an unused historic icehouse, and asked if that could exempt the resident, and allow the garage as the third structure. Nothing to report on the Lola Lane buyer wanting to build a house. A zoning permit was issued to Brian Knoll for an addition to his house. Gallop ended discussing the townships approach to 'Tiny Houses', as there is nothing in the Zoning Ordinance. Oxley suggested bringing that up to the Planning Commission at the next meeting.

CORRECT THIS IN JAN MINUTES and reprint.

Keith Edmonds inquired about building a new garage. And the usual phone calls about setbacks, and what can and cannot be done per zoning.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: .

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. MDOT Right-of-Way Permit. Oxley referenced a MDOT letter. Completing the form included with the letter would allow for parades and other functions on US-23. Adding that we have never filled out this form before, as we never have activities on the roadway. Board decision was not to file the form.
- b. Herzog made a request from the board to increase the cost of a Zoning Permit (formerly Land Use Permit) from \$35.00 to \$50.00. Oxley added that as far back as 2009 the charge has been \$35. The fee pays the Zoning Administrator for the work he does, involving phone call time and site visits. Motion made by Bullock to increase the charge for one zoning permit to \$50.00. Motion supported by Oxley. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Motion approved. Changes to be made in the newsletter.
 1. Solar Farms motion to adopt a moratorium until a township solar ordinance could be written and adopted. Oxley reported that the Planning Commission had been tasked to write a Solar Ordinance for the township as landowners in Au Gres township were being signed up for potential/future solar farms. As the township had no ordinance, and the writing of an ordinance takes time and research the Planning Commission recommended to the board: *{from minutes of the December 5th 2022 PC meeting}* "Recommend to the township Board of Trustees to declare a moratorium on commercial solar farms until the time that a township solar ordinance can be implemented". After discussion and agreement for the need Oxley made the motion. Motion supported by Tremble. Roll Call Vote: Kurchak~Yes, Tremble~Yes, Herzog~Yes, Bullock~Yes, Oxley~Yes. All yeas. No nays. Motion approved.
 2. Cost of Living (COLA) increase in township board members salary. Herzog reported that the federal cola for the year was 8.7% and made notice to the attendees that a request for comparable pay increases would be requested at the township Annual Meeting on March 14th. This 30 day notice is required by state law for general law townships. Oxley referred board members to an analysis sheet in their packets. Monthly increases in payroll would be \$325.00 (yearly would add up to \$3900.00). Discussion and questions from the attendees followed.
- c. Budget review meeting. Oxley requested agreement that the last Saturday in February be the day of our annual budget review meeting. Held on a Saturday due to how long it takes to work through all of the funds, line by line and propose expenditures for the next fiscal year. Oxley to post a sign that the budget review meeting will be on February 25th, 2023 9:00AM.

BOARD COMMENT: Bullock questioned whether we could increase worker pay outside of the annual meeting. Oxley said yes, only board member pay increases need be approved by the township electors (AGTwp registered voters).

Bullock motioned to increase clerical worker pay by \$1.00 to \$12.00/hr. This would apply to anyone assisting a board member with clerical work within at the township hall. Motion supported by Oxley. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Motion approved.

Oxley motioned to increase the Planning Commission board members' pay from \$25 to \$50 per regular meeting. Pointing out that the service they provide is not just to show up for meetings, but to read and digest handouts, which is done at home on their own time. Motion supported by Kurchak. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Motion approved.

Bullock motioned to increase the janitorial worker's rate to \$16/hr. Currently cleaning the hall is paid for 4 hours pay per month, while the actual time it takes is often more than four hours. Motion supported by Tremble. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Motion approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Aretta Gates asked about the possibility of getting a cell tower in the township as many of us do not get cell phone reception. Oxley explained that we tried when Tom Pawlaczyk was supervisor and none of the companies were interested in investing.

Dave Enos asked about progress on Shenfield Road. Herzog explained that we me with SSI who is working on the drawings and legal descriptions for the required land divisions for the road right-of-ways.

And are awaiting a call to meet with Brian B at SSI when they have the work completed. Oxley added that the next step afterwards is to meet with the engineer at the road commission to be certain that the drawing would meet all the specifications that the Road Commission requires.

Derek Porritt inquired of Art Gallop and Jeff Czymbor about all the fill dirt that is being added to the properties to the north of his home, where Czymbor is building three rental units. How water run-off will be flooding his property. Further inquiring about driveways that are being put in as well. Much discussion followed with EGLE permitting and site visits by Nicole King being referenced and questioned.

ADJOURNMENT: TIME – 8:30pm. Motion made by Tremble to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Kurchak. Voice vote: All yeas. No Nays. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes approved at the regular Board of Trustees Meeting on _____

James Herzog, Supervisor _____

Michael Oxley, Clerk _____