

THORNAPPLE TOWNSHIP BOARD

Regular Meeting, Monday, October 8, 2018

1. The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Bremer at 7:01 p.m. at the Township Hall, followed by the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag by those present.
2. Present: Mike Bremer, Deb Buckowing, Curt Campbell, Ross DeMaagd, Jake Jelsema, Sandy Rairigh, and Cindy Willshire. Also present: Catherine Getty, Chief Randy Eaton, Royal Shilton, Charity Shilton, Duane Weeks, Todd Hulst, Ian Watson, Eric Schaefer, Sheriff Dar Leaf, Stephanie Skidmore, and Dan Parker.
3. **MOTION** by Campbell, support by Buckowing to approve the Printed Agenda as Amended with the addition of the Barry County Sheriff's Department 2017 Annual Report under Reserve Time and Todd Hulst to 10.a. **MOTION APPROVED** with 7 yes voice votes.
4. **MOTION** by Buckowing, support by Willshire to approve the Consent Agenda as Printed. **MOTION APPROVED** with 7 yes voice votes.

First Public Comment

5. Bremer introduced Ian Watson to the Board as the new Sun and News Reporter assigned to the Township Board meetings.

County Report

6. Commissioner Parker reported on the activities of the Barry County Commissioners, including but not limited to, the Barry County Parks and Recreation Board's Survey and Budget.

Reserved Time

7. Barry County Sheriff Dar Leaf provided a power point presentation on his Department's 2017 Annual Report.

Discussion/Payment of Current Bills

8. **MOTION** by Buckowing, support by DeMaagd to pay current bills totaling \$233,882.49. Roll call vote: Bremer, yes; Willshire, yes; Buckowing, yes; Jelsema, yes; DeMaagd, yes; Campbell, yes; Rairigh, yes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Clerk's Report

9. Todd Hulst, Duncan Lake Sewer Authority: Bremer welcomed Todd Hulst to the Duncan Lake Sewer Authority and expressed his gratitude for Hulst serving on the Authority.

Treasurer's Report

10. Buckowing provided an overview of the proposed Thornapple Township Investment and Depository Designation Resolution. Buckowing explained that the Resolution was drafted based upon an example recently provided by the Michigan Township Association. In addition to the Resolution, there is an Investment policy acknowledgement that must be signed by financial institutions that the Township does business. Buckowing discussed the Certificates of Deposit that matured at the

end of September. Rather than chasing rates, Buckowing suggested utilizing a Money Market Account with a rate of 2.15% to invest the funds. Buckowing stated that the rate will not go down, however, it may increase, and the Township is limited as to the number of withdrawals per year.

MOTION by Buckowing, support by DeMaagd to transfer \$502,187.50 into a Money Market Account at Chemical Bank at a rate of 2.15%. **MOTION APPROVED** with 7 yes voice votes.

Emergency Services Report

11. Motion to accept the bid from Dependable Fire Protection in the amount of \$33,000.00 to replace the deteriorating fire suppression system currently above the equipment bay of the TTES building. **MOTION** by Buckowing, support by Willshire to accept the bid from Dependable Fire Protection in the amount of \$33,000.00 to replace the deteriorating fire suppression system currently above the equipment bay of the TTES building. Discussion centered on which general ledger account to apply this expense. Buckowing, Eaton and Willshire will meet to discuss and determine the appropriate general ledger account to apply this expense. Roll call vote: Bremer, yes; Willshire, yes; Buckowing, yes; Jelsema, yes; DeMaagd, yes; Campbell, yes; Rairigh, yes. **MOTION CARRIED.**
12. Motion to approve the required pre-hire screenings for paid-on-call applicant Tobias DeGroot. **MOTION** by Buckowing, support by Campbell to approve the required pre-hire screenings for paid-on-call applicant Tobias DeGroot pending a successful interview with the TTES officers. **MOTION APPROVED** with 7 yes voice votes. Eaton indicated that three internal candidates have expressed interest in the full-time position made available by E. Daniels' 30-day resignation notice. Daniels will continue to be employed by TTES on a strictly paid-on-call basis after November 1, 2018. Bremer inquired whether the Township will perform an internal background check if an applicant is promoted from a paid-on-call basis to full-time basis. **MOTION** by Rairigh, support by Jelsema to ensure or implement background screens for the full-time employee that will replace Eric Daniels. **MOTION APPROVED** with 7 yes voice votes.

Planning and Zoning Report

13. Zoning Administrator's Report: Distributed within Consent Agenda.
14. JPA Update: Getty provided an update of the status of the JPA and stated that the committee has met a couple of times this summer and early fall to discuss potential extension of utilities. Getty discussed her memorandum and flowchart to the Township Trustees dated October 8, 2018. Based upon this information, Getty was hoping to receive a consensus from the Trustees whether the committee was on the right track with this proposed plan. Bremer verified that the proposed plan would only occur with the full consent of the impacted property owner. Jelsema asked who would be the players in a shared services agreement. Weeks stated that it would be the developer and the Village of Middleville. Jelsema stated that he was pleased with the end result that is detailed in the October 8, 2018 memorandum and feels that it is a reasonable process. Bremer stated that the Board is supportive of this process and proposal. Weeks stated that the Board should expect reports from Getty and Weeks on a regular basis.

Unfinished Business

15. Strategic Planning – Ad-hoc committee for Goal 3: Parks and Rec. and Goal 5: Board Procedures and Best Practices for Meetings. Bremer stated that he does not have any official updates and needs to reach out to landowners adjacent to the Thornapple River to determine whether any land acquisition is possible for a township park/canoe launch.

16. Employee health benefits conversation: Bremer apologized for his absence at the Board's Special Meeting on health insurance in September. Campbell indicated that his preference was to continue the existing plan and funding for the upcoming year, however, the staff needs to recognize that there may be changes in the future. Jelsema indicated that many government bodies have moved to shared expenses in regards to health care insurance. Jelsema indicated that the Township's health care coverage is better than what is offered to State of Michigan employees. Jelsema felt that other options should be explored to save money, however, the TTES debate must be included in this discussion. Rairigh stated that she would love to give the employees the 'Cadillac' version but the employees' salaries are higher than the average township residents. Rairigh stated that from her personal research the average income of Thornapple Township residents is \$20,353.00 while the average household's income is \$50,441.00. Rairigh did acknowledge that the Township does have a higher than normal percentage of retired individuals. Bremer ask R. Shilton to provide his input as the representative for the TTES full time employees. R. Shilton stated that the pay is comparable to other EMS companies, however, the insurance package is the big draw especially to individuals with families. Rairigh stated that wages are currently being reviewed for TTES employees. Bremer stated that there are two plans that the board can either vote on now or at the November board meeting. Rairigh asked if the insurance brokers could be invited to the board meeting to give an overview of the plans. Eaton reminded the board that TTES has three candidates that are interested in the full time open position and the postponement of the health insurance vote to November would be a hindrance to the interview process. Rairigh expressed frustration that meetings were not held in July to start the health insurance conversation earlier to ensure the best plan was selected. Buckowing reminded the Board that approximately \$400.00 was spent on a special meeting in September, at which time those concerns and requests should have been brought up for discussion. DeMaagd stated that employee income is comparable to the community's and would like the board to remember that the residents normally vote for everything service related. DeMaagd stated the skill set of the staff and officers should also be considered. DeMaagd stated that he would like to vote on the plan tonight and would like the Board to be more proactive with doing future research as to potential plans. **MOTION** by DeMaagd, support by Campbell to approve the fully funded health insurance policy for township employees with the understanding that future benefits will be examined. Rairigh inquired whether dental/vision benefits would be included in this amount. Dental/vision benefits are an additional amount that is charged on a monthly basis. Buckowing stated that it would be beneficial to also look at agents, providers, plans and options for next year. Willshire reminded Eaton that the new full time TTES employee will be subject to the required thirty day waiting period for health insurance. Roll call vote: Bremer, yes; Willshire, yes; Buckowing, yes; Jelsema, no; DeMaagd, yes; Campbell, yes; Rairigh, yes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

New Business

17. Budget amendments: Willshire provided an overview of the proposed Budget amendments. Amendments include:
- a. 101-276-931.000 increase of \$2,900.00
 - b. 220-442-801.000 increase of \$2,100.00
 - c. 101-265-970.000 decrease of \$8,000.00

- d. 101-299-808.000 increase of \$9,000.00
- e. 101-299-979.000 decrease of \$2,000.00
- f. 101-299-905.000 increase of \$1,000.00
- g. **MOTION** by Buckowing, support by Rairigh to approve the presented budget amendments. Willshire indicated that the Board did not budget for the expansion of the cemetery and currently, the Township has incurred expenses from moving donated trees from Bradford White to the new section of the cemetery. **MOTION APPROVED** with 7 yes voice votes.

Committee Reports

- 18. Administration: None
- 19. Cemetery: Willshire stated that NTA Management will be working with Bryan Finkbeiner to install water lines in the new section of the cemetery. Willshire expressed gratitude to the Village of Middleville's Department of Public Works for their assistance in burrowing under the impacted cemetery roads to run these water lines.
- 20. Elections: Willshire stated that 439 absentee ballots have been distributed to date and 113 ballots have been returned.
- 21. Emergency Services: No further updates.
- 22. Finance: No further updates.
- 23. Parks and Recreation Representative: Bremer stated that Select Baseball tryouts have been completed and Tom Ackerman has resigned from the TAPRC Board.
- 24. Personnel – Compensation: Committee has met and currently going over wages.
- 25. Property, Public Utilities: Jelsema stated he would like to set a date for the next Property and Public Utilities committee meeting at the conclusion of the board meeting. Jelsema was informed that the Township Hall's roof has a leak above the Supervisor's desk that will need to be fixed. Getty inquired whether the Property and Public Utilities committee was working on ensuring the Township Hall's front entryway that was handicapped accessible. Jelsema stated that it might be Spring 2019 by the time construction begins. Rairigh indicated that a door bell on the front of the building may be a temporary solution to this issue.
- 26. Roads and Highways: Campbell indicated that he will be attending the Duncan Lake Neighborhood Association meeting to listen to resident feedback and concerns about the road conditions of Noffke Drive. Discussion centered on Moe Road and the recent rain that the Township experienced. Rairigh and Eaton indicated that there were a few 'washouts' however the road was in good condition. Rairigh and Eaton did not foresee a need for an additional dust control treatment prior to next year but felt that grading might be needed.

SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Rairigh asked Weeks regarding the status of the Bradford White Corporation's mixing zone proposal. Weeks stated that Bradford White withdrew its request to utilize the Thornapple River as a mixing zone.

POLL OF MEMBERS:

Jake Jelsema, Trustee: Jelsema asked clarifying questions regarding Weeks' comments centering on Bradford White's proposed "mixing zone" within the Thornapple River.

Sandra Rairigh, Trustee: None.

Curt Campbell, Trustee: None.

Ross DeMaagd, Trustee: None.

Deb Buckowing, Treasurer: None.

Cindy Willshire, Clerk: None.

Mike Bremer, Supervisor: Bremer stated that the My Middleville Fall Festival is looking for volunteers on Saturday, October 13, 2018.

MOTION by Buckowing, support by Campbell to adjourn the meeting. **MOTION APPROVED** with 7 yes voice votes.

Adjournment of meeting by Supervisor at 9:27 p.m.

Stephanie L. Skidmore, Recording Secretary

Approved: 11/12/2018