

**Fredonia Township Board-Regular Meeting
May 18, 2020 6:30 PM
Fredonia Township Hall
8803 17 Mile Rd, Marshall, MI 49068**

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS present: Doug Damon, Supervisor Cathy Combs, Clerk JC Skowron, Treasurer Ken Huestis, Trustee Terry Day, Trustee

STAFF present: Phil Damon, Fire Chief Jacob Washburn, Deputy Supervisor/FD Training Officer Dan Livingston Sr., Calhoun County Planning Commission George Crandall, Twp. Planning Committee; Robert Hawley, Zoning Administrator/Ordinance Officer

CALL TO ORDER: 6:30 PM

AGENDA – Additions/Deletions:

Adding: *Road Project; *Tax cashed last summer; *Signature Rights; *Old Business: Salary reductions

PLEDGE OF ALLIGENCE:

PUBLIC COMMENT (ONLY FOR ITEMS ON AGENDA (3 MIN) No discussion or comments during business portion of the meeting:

Dan Livingston Sr. wanted to know the following:

*#1: Tax Administration Fee: Doug advised discussing 1% tax admin fee as instilled for winter taxes. Dan states not appropriate based on economic hardships state, local, federal, and county government.

#2: IT/Sexton positions: Doug advised to discuss assignment of duties for each position

#3: Website: Doug advised discussing who will be handling website

#4: Set Date for Zoning Change: Dan asked if residents be able to discuss: Doug advised that Robert Hawley, Zoning Administrator will discuss when Fredonia residents be able to review changes prior to board vote.

#5: Budget: Budget Hearing: Doug advised would discuss when the hearing will take place.

#6: Approval of tax rate: Wanted to know if going up or staying the same. Doug explained would discuss during new business.

#7: Refuse Service: Doug advised clerk will discuss

Jerry Diver asked about:

#5: Budget: Jerry asked if there has been several budget meetings that the public has not been able to comment: Doug advised that the advisory consisting of 5 members has met, no decisions were made as budget is a board decision. A budget hearing will be set to discuss with public.

Paul Baronowski asked:

Tax admin fee: Paul advised that this was voted in for 1 year term only for budget shortfall and wanted to know what changed the positions of the Supervisor to implement the admin fee. Also, with the positions that have been eliminated, why is the board now appointing the positions vs. posting the positions? Doug advised will review each item under new business.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS REGULAR BOARD MEETING-4/9/2020, 4/27/2020, 5/8/2020:

Ken made motion and Terry supported to accept the 4/9/2020 minutes as printed. No discussion.

Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; Terry-Yes; Ken-Yes; JC-Yes;

Ken made motion and Terry supported to accept the 4/27/2020 minutes as printed. No discussion. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; Terry-Yes; Ken-Yes; JC-Yes

APPROVED

Terry made a motion and Ken supported to accept the 5/8/2020 minutes as printed. Cathy mentioned that one of the minutes will show teleconference/electronic vs. hall address. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Terry-Yes; Ken-Yes; JC-Yes **APPROVED AS READ**

FINANCIAL REPORT: JC advised will be waiting for actual in-person meeting.

PLACED ON FILE FOR AUDIT

READING OF THE BILLS: Cathy explained as of 4/21/2020 total of \$3,189.02. Doug made motion and Ken supported to pay bills as submitted and any other normal bills; Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Ken-Yes; Terry-Yes. **APPROVED AS READ**

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Inspector Fees:** Doug advised that financial advisory reviewed and Cindy Thomas explained they initially discussed to increase inspector fee \$25 as township is responsible and then they would be paid but not taxed on township portion. In addition, would add an admin fee to the current inspector fee. Doug made motion to put in effect immediately that the inspector fee would remain the same, only provide 1099 form for portion that the inspector is paid and include an administrative fee; Terry supported motion made by Doug. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Ken-Yes; Terry-Yes. Motion carried unanimously.
 2. **Salary reductions:** Doug explained after speaking with MTA that election officials cannot be changed unless a written statement by them, an appointed trustee/office is the same as an elected official. Fire department captains for example to reduce salary \$50 would be a 50% reduction and would not recommend reducing their salaries. However, Doug advised he would reduce his salary by \$50 (1st quarter of fiscal year-July/Aug/Sept) and will submit a letter to the clerk. Explained other positions can also submit a letter to the clerk.
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NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Tax Administration Fee:** Doug advised last year on June 20, 2019 the resolution was brought to the board to raise ½ % for summer taxes and 1% for winter taxes. MTA was contacted and mileage is not applicable, just a board vote. Doug made motion and JC supported to instill a permanent 1% percent for summer and winter property taxes. More discussion held on timing of admin fee, economic hardships and waiting to see later in the year, past resolution states ½ % for summer and 1% for winter taxes, Doug advised he understands and the motion is 1%. Advisory board explained that the 1% admin fee needed based on state revenue cuts to balance budget. Roll call vote: Cathy-No; JC-Yes; Terry-No; Ken-No; Doug-Yes: Motion defeated.
JC made motion to implement the 1% administration fee for summer and winter taxes and reviewed on an annual basis, Doug supported motion. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Terry-Yes; Ken-Yes; Doug-Yes. Motion carried unanimously.
2. **IT/Sexton positions/responsibilities:** Doug volunteered with help from Phil and Jacob to resume the Sexton duties at no additional compensation. IT-Doug has asked Roger Smith to assist with day to day activities and work with Carl Damon with no additional compensation. Any issues that cannot be resolved will be brought to the board for further handling of duties/issues. Terry made a motion and Cathy supported to have Doug resume the responsibilities for the Sexton position with help from Jacob and Phil; Roger Smith to accept responsibilities of IT position with help from Carl Damon at no

additional compensation for either. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Terry-Yes; Ken-Yes; Doug-Yes. Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Website:** Doug advised that the website has been up and is very good. Cost to maintain is \$16 a month. Doug asked for discussion on what to do with website, board voted to have Pam removed from web on May 8. Jacob states he received agenda and put on web and would keep doing same. Terry made motion to keep Web and have Jacob continue updating website. JC supported motion made by Terry. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Ken-Yes; Terry-Yes; Doug-Yes. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Set Date for Zoning Change:** Robert Hawley asked if board reviewed the master plan and until board approves then will not be able to open to public. Also, approval needed to move change property on F. Drive which is part of mobile home Park to agricultural so house can be built on property. Mobile Home Park would not be affected by the change only the portion where home would be built.

Power line essential services of the ordinance and have a set back with requirements, will use the property line as close as possible so property owner can utilize their property as possible, proposing more clarification between essential services development vs. to essential services building. For an example: ordinance defines a pole as structural Height restriction only 15' where poles are 90'. Project plan would be presented to planning commission with route map showing location of project, provide information on public utility, location of any lightning, using existing utility equipment on route, general description of project, and any other information of details needing review and approval by planning commission. Planning commission would like support tonight to set up public hearing so residents and board could hear more information of what is being proposed. Doug advised that June 24, 6:30 PM is a recommended date to set hearing, review, send plan to County and then board would approve. George will call Jill to have ad in paper.

5. **Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance:** Doug discussed to allow planning commission and Robert Hawley to distribute the master plan prior to public hearing. Ken made motion and JC supported to allow the master plan and zoning ordinance for public distribution, post copy of proposed master plan on website for review by public Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Ken-Yes; Terry-Yes. Motion carried unanimously. Just east of house that is being remodeled on F. Drive South that is by a field and rezone to agricultural. Doug made a motion and Terry supported to change to rezone to agricultural property located on F. Drive South. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Terry-Yes; Ken-Yes; Doug-Yes. Motion carried unanimously.
6. **Budget: Budget Hearing:** June 1, 2020 at township hall and will be put in Advisor this week. The proposed budget will be on township hall and on website.
7. **Approval of tax rate:** JC advised deduction fraction is .9647 vs .9830 then will submit form to county. Next step would be complete form to equalization department. Doug moved to pass the tax rate of .9647 with JC supporting for 2020-2021. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Terry-Yes; Ken-Yes; Doug – Yes. Motion carried unanimously.
8. **Refuse Service:** Scooter's Refuse is paid on a monthly basis. With reviewing how to reduce costs for the township, Cathy contacted Scooter's and if township paid them yearly, township would save \$82 which is equal to 1 month. Cathy made motion to pay Scooter's Refuse Service for the year saving township \$82 = to 1 month. Doug supported motion made. Discussion held, Cindy Thomas mentioned with if paid beginning now, there are 2 budgets to consider so if this could begin at the beginning of fiscal year it would be better. Cathy amended motion to begin yearly payment on

7/1/2020. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Terry-Yes; Ken-Yes; Motion carried unanimously.

9. **Signature Rights:** Cathy stated that as of 5/11/20, Dianna Baker is no longer the deputy clerk of Fredonia Township. Therefore, Cathy made a motion to remove the former Deputy Clerk Dianna Clerk from the Clerk's signature rights and responsibilities as outlined when the Clerk is not available with Chemical Bank effective 5/11/2020. Terry supported motion made by Cathy. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Abstained; Terry-Yes; Ken-Yes; Doug-Yes. Motion carried.

Cathy also advised that Laura Miller has accepted the appointment of Deputy Clerk for Fredonia Township and will stop by the office to be sworn in. Cathy made a motion to give Laura Miller, in the absence of the Clerk, the same signature rights and responsibilities as the township clerk, Cathy Combs, effective at the time she is sworn into office. A copy of the sworn statement and completed Account/Signer Information form outlining full legal name, phone, email and title will be provided to Chemical Bank. Terry supported motion made by Cathy. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Ken-Yes; Terry-Yes; Doug-Yes; Motion carried unanimously.

Road Project:

Doug advised that Marshall Township has a signed contract from US27 on Division Drive to 16 Mile Road. Doug will verify if township is responsible for any of Division Drive project. Also, chip and seal project road project A. Drive So., 12 Mile Road to 13 ½ Mile Road. Then A. Drive South from 14 to 15 Mile Road.. Also H Drive South from Old27 to township line which is approximately \$29,038 and would need board approval to begin project. Question asked about why doing chip and seal on good roads vs. repairing roads that desperately need repairs. Doug explained that chip and seal will extend the life of the roads that were previously repaired. Road committee will review next year to repair 18 Mile road along with Lyon Lake Road. Cathy made motion and Doug support motion made to fund repair of chip and seal to previously repaired roads to extend the life of the roads in the amount of approximately \$29,938. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Ken-Yes; Terry-Yes; Doug-Yes. Motion carried unanimously.

10. **Tax cashed last summer:** Doug explained there was a check received by township resident winter taxes. The resident dropped 2 checks in one envelope in drop box, he received a receipt back for one property but didn't open envelope until he filed his taxes. Only 1 check cashed after receiving the delinquent notice and Doug has spoken to Treasurer's office a couple of times. The amount of \$211.47 is the interest on the delinquent tax. It appears it may be an error on township's part if check(s) were dropped in box. The one check never cleared the bank and taxes are paid now but not \$211.47 on interest. Township will not be able to prove how error occurred. Did the resident have a copy of the check written to township? Doug advised yes, as check was written on 9/14/19. Also did resident change banks? Doug advised no. JC moved to contact county to see if they would waive the interest/late fees and Terry supported motion. Discussion held to contact resident in splitting fee and report back to discuss further if township to cover interest fee if county doesn't waive fees. Roll call vote: Cathy-Yes; JC-Yes; Terry-Yes; Ken-Yes; Doug-Yes; Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT (for any new issues):

*Disappointed there was no financial report tonight

*Report bad roads to county and suggest township supervisor call drain commissioner about 12 Mile Road and that the drains need fixing on that road

- *2 virtual meetings with elimination of IT/Sexton, Fire department uses 1/3 of budget and why not discussing reductions in this area and services provided on I69
- *Approval of tax rate whether up/down or staying the same as last year was not discussed
- *Website: 2018 Financials as well as, 2019-2020 budget information; 2020-2021 budget missing from website
- Winter taxes: 14 line items for Fredonia Township and adding more needs to stop especially with the economy it is the way it is today
- *Suggestion to have documents presented to board to be on website for public to view for virtual meetings
- *Residents are responsible for pay their own taxes and not appropriate for township to pay a residents fees
- *Regarding to question on tax rate, upcoming rate is going down
- *Concerns that with eliminating IT position that a call to IT right or someone else may be made and that would cost our township more and this cannot happen
- *Residents thanked board for presenting meeting virtually
- *Financial advisory is working diligently on budget revisions and I69 runs through our township and have a due diligence as a township to provide a service to anyone who comes in our area
- *Discussion on future bond to pave roads

BOARD COMMENT (TIME LIMIT-3 MINUTES PER ISSUE PER PERSON)

Ken: States he calls county at least 3 times a week to make repairs in the county

Cathy: Meeting with Post Office to get ideas on moving current mailbox
 Conference calls and moving ahead with upcoming elections
 Reimbursement submitted to Michigan Elections Bureau in the amount of \$2768.80
 Cathy will also submit a letter for the 1st quarter fiscal year for a \$50 reduction in salary

JC – Township need to watch on legislation to assist township with receiving any funding due to COVID-19

Supervisor Doug Damon adjourned the meeting at 8:52 PM

Minutes prepared by Cathy Combs

_____ 5/22/20 _____
Cathy Combs, Township Clerk **Date**

_____ _____
Doug Damon, Township Supervisor **Date**