

**Fredonia Township Board-Regular Meeting
December 16, 2019 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 Dianna Baker, Deputy Clerk/Cemetery Sexton Roger Smith, Assessor Pamela Jo Eastman, IT Jacob Washburn, Deputy Supervisor/FD Training Officer Dan Livingston Sr., Calhoun County Planning Commission George Crandall, Twp. Planning Committee Robert Hawley, Code Enforcement & Zoning

PLEDGE OF ALLIGENCE

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS: None

SUPERVISOR STATEMENT: Doug stated we need to move forward in the township. A lot of challenges have been dealt with and there are still a few to come but we need to continue to move forward. He shared a point of interest that had been discovered in the past year – in the past staff members personally received \$50 from each permit issued. For the past two months the current staff has not done this nor will they going forward. The dollar amount, depending on how many permits are issued in a year, has been as high as approximately \$5000. This \$50/permit will now go into the General Fund as useable revenue for budget purposes. Doug also informed us that Board of Review members are appointed in odd numbered years so they will be up for consideration in 2021. In January 2020, we will be making Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeal appointments. Doug also stated that a resident had recommended the Board start a Finance Committee to help sort out the township’s accounting and budget challenges. The committee members will be considered volunteers and not compensated, just like the Road Committee. Doug recommended Jacob Washburn, Cindy Thomas, and Pamela Eastman be considered for the board. He actually had five people in mind but until the Trustees are appointed he would wait to mention others. Doug also reminded everyone that the 1% Property Tax Admin Fee that is being collected is intended for use by the Assessing Department. If there is excess, then that money would be used by the Treasurer Department. He will have the new Finance Committee look into ways to ensure proper use of this revenue. Doug ended his statement by informing everyone that five residents had applied for the Trustee positions. Two will be appointed at this time and fill the positions until November 2020. He said anyone interested in running for any of the five board positions in 2020, they have until April 2020 to sign up and get on the ballot.

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA: Cindy Thomas expressed concern with Dianna Baker potentially being appointed as a Trustee. Cindy feels that if Dianna, who Cindy thought had already been offered and accepted the position of Deputy Clerk and who already is the Election Chairman and Cemetery Sexton, that having that employee also appointed into a board position could possibly put the township into a similar scenario where in the recent past we had a Trustee employed to mow lawn at Lyon Lake Cemetery and conflicts of interest arose.

APPOINTMENT OF TWO TRUSTEES: Doug stated that a committee was formed consisting of Jacob Washburn, Mike Darling, Mandi Zimmerman, Cathy Combs and JC Skowron. Cathy explained applicants met with the committee on Wednesday (December 11, 2019). The committee experienced a tough decision to make

considering the applicants who applied. Cathy moved to appoint Ken Huestis and Terry Day based on the recommendation made by the majority on the committee. Doug supported. **MOTION CARRIED**

The new Trustees were sworn in by the clerk, Cathy Combs.

GUEST SPEAKER: Tommy Miller talked about an issue with Wildwood Drive residents placing their mailboxes out on 15 Mile Road because the Post Office no longer goes down the private road – Wildwood Drive - due to the condition of it. Some mailboxes had been removed by 15 Mile Road property owners and disputes have occurred. Tommy also spoke about the Road Commission’s stance on the 50/50 verses 70/30 percentage offers for county road maintenance. He closed by thanking the Fredonia Board and residents for their interest and support and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MONTHS:
Motion made by JC Skowron and supported by Terry Day to approve the minutes of 8/21/19; 9/16/19; 10/21/19 and 11/26/19. **MOTION CARRIED**

FINANCIAL REPORT:
Treasurer JC Skowron reported that she is currently busy collecting winter taxes, learning the system, and inputting Chart of Account numbers that were not in the Tax program. She is basically starting from scratch and will provide a detailed financial report in January. Doug added that the Calhoun County Treasury Department has gone “above & beyond” in helping the Treasurer and the Township. After the Winter Tax bills were mailed on December 1st, they identified an issue with the millage charges having not been properly updated with the current year “Reduction Fraction” rates. The Calhoun County Treasury Department helped correct the errors and then helped fold/stuff/stamp the second mailing. They have extended a sincere offer to help in any way they can and Fredonia Township truly appreciates all that they have done for us. **PLACED ON FILE FOR AUDIT**

READING OF THE BILLS by Cathy Combs
NO CORRECTIONS REQUESTED
Motion made by JC Skowron and supported by Terry Day to accept the Bill report. **APPROVED AS READ**

CORRESPONDENCE: Doug received a letter from the Calhoun County Office of Community Develop stating that during the holidays the County Recycling Program invites residents to collect polystyrene (Styrofoam with the #6 embossed on it). On January 11th from 9am to noon, they will hold a free collection event at the City of Battle Creek Department of Public Works parking lot. The complete letter is posted at the Town Hall and on our website.

REPORTS:
Fire Department: Phil Damon reported they had 6 fire runs and 6 medicals for the month. For training, they worked on reconstructing the Fire Department SCBA training areas. Phil also reported they participated in Marshall’s 55th Christmas parade.
Cemetery: Dianna Baker informed the Board that JR Brunner, who performs grave openings for us, is raising rates by \$50 per burial. He has worked for us for over 20 years without changing his rates. This increase will not hurt the Township as we charge \$500 per burial as it is. Dianna also stated that leaves are still on the ground at Lyon Lake Cemetery and suggested that we have a community clean-up of the cemetery in the spring.
Zoning/Ordinance Enforcement: No report.
Road Committee: George Crandall stated that the next meeting is in January.
Planning Commission: George Crandall reported that the next meeting will be January 9, 2020.
County Planning: Dan Livingston Sr advised more to follow in January.
Assessing: No report.

IT: Pamela Jo Eastman reported that the Township website is back up and running. She also stated that websites are soon to be required to be ADA compliant to accommodate people with disabilities/handicaps. Pamela has updated our website to meet these requirements. She also has been involved in helping/training the new clerk and treasurer.

OLD BUSINESS: Keys/locks - Doug mentioned this was on the agenda because it was mentioned last month. He reported he has a back door key that doesn't work so he will take it to Ace's and get it fixed/replaced. And he informed everyone that the Fire Department had changed their access code.

NEW BUSINESS: Deputy Clerk pay - At the previous meeting there was a recommendation to pay the Deputy Clerk the Clerk's salary for November and December. Cathy moved to pay the Deputy the Clerk's salary for November and half for December since the clerk was now appointed and working in December.

MOTION DIED DUE TO LACK OF SUPPORT

JC stated that this had been discussed and decided at a previous meeting. She moved to pay the Deputy the Clerk's salary for November and December. Supported by Terry Day. **MOTION CARRIED**

Board of Review - Doug stated that there will be a Board of Review training session on January 28th. The cost is \$94 per person if registered by January 12th; otherwise it is \$114 per person. Tambria Leonard and Dan Livingston Sr agreed to attend. Our budget has allowances for this training. Doug moved to approve Tambria and Dan for this training. JC supported. **MOTION CARRIED**

Clerk/Treasurer training - Discussion held on training provided by Michigan Township Association for treasurer and clerk. Cindy Thomas asked why they have a choice whether or not to attend training. Doug explained that sometimes people's schedules don't fit with certain training dates so each individual is encouraged to schedule training dates that fit into their own schedules. JC stated that she is planning to attend training on February 4th & 5th.

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ANY NEW ISSUES: George Crandall asked when the Board is going to start the Finance Committee. Doug stated he needed to talk with the individuals first so it would most likely be next month. He added that even though there will be an assigned committee, residents will be welcome to attend as well. Cindy Thomas asked if the committee would serve as a liaison to the Board. Doug confirmed it would. Herb Fox questioned how much it cost and why was the winter tax bills sent out twice. He was informed that JC only had a couple days to get them in the mail and it wasn't until after they were mailed that it was noticed that the new "Reduction Fraction" rates the previous treasurer had received in May were not entered into the tax program back then. Corrections had to be made and the cost of both mailings was still less than spent in the past because we printed and mailed them out ourselves instead of using a mailing service company.

BOARD COMMENT: Cathy wanted clarification that treasurer would also be part of the financial committee, Doug said that his thoughts were to have maybe five members on the committee and that final decisions would be made in January.

Supervisor Doug Damon adjourned the meeting at 7:22 PM

Minutes respectfully prepared by Cathy Combs

Cathy Combs, Township Clerk

Date

Doug Damon, Township Supervisor

Date