

EDWARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING

October 9, 2023 7:30pm

PRESENT: Supervisor Rob Kowalski, Clerk Korey Kripli, Treasurer Eileen Fournier, Trustee Dan Zettel, and Trustee Todd Johnson

ATTENDANCE: County Commissioner Brenda Simmons, Zoning Administrator Bob Clayton (absent), and Deputy Clerk Kim Glasser. Several residents of Edwards Township.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - September 11, 2023 Board Meeting

Motion by Robert Kowalski, supported by Eileen Fournier to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA:

Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by Dan Zettel to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE AGENDA: None

COUNTY COMMISSIONER:

The county did pass a budget. DDA has been receiving 100% of the tax money. Dan Zettel stated that the Industrial Park in West Branch doesn't have internet, but the DDA is receiving all this tax money and not solving the internet problem. The County Commissioner stated to go to the DDA to solve the problem. Zettel stated that he had been to numerous meetings with no improvement. The Commissioner stated she would look into it.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR: Absent.

TREASURER REPORT:

Treasurer report presented by Eileen Fournier. Motion by Robert Kowalski, supported by Korey Kripli to accept the Treasurer Report.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion by Robert Kowalski, supported by Dan Zettel to approve bills with checks #6874-#6921 for a total of \$16,323.21.

Roll Call: Kowalski Y Kripli Y Fournier Y Johnson Y Zettel Y

Motion Carried.

HALL DEPOSIT RETURNS:

Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by Dan Zettel to issue hall deposit returns for a total of \$100. Motion carried.

HALL RATES:

There will be a \$35 cleaning fee on every rental. It helps offset the cost of the dumpster and the fee to clean the hall. Fees will be raised \$15 for each rental. The hall rates are still extremely cheap and reasonably priced.

BRIAN STEIN UPDATE: There is no update. County Commissioner stated that she would follow up with him.

ANDREW THOMPSON - ATTORNEY:

Last meeting, the board talked about the problems at Tee Lake. Rob searched for a local attorney that would represent the township if they were to go to court. Andrew Thompson is an ordinance attorney and works for 18 different townships. He charges \$225 per hour which is slightly less than our current attorneys that are out of Okemos, Michigan. The township is not under contract. He has done previous work with our current attorney. The problem at Tee Lake is a septic and well issue.

Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by Todd Johnson to accept the legal services of Andrew Thompson.

Motion carried.

CEMETERY SIGNS:

The planning committee decided to go with the Design Company out of Standish. There will be a 4' x 8' sign and then two single sided ordinance signs that will let everyone know what can and cannot be left on the grave sites. Cost is \$1,360. Motion by Korey Kripli, supported by Eileen Fournier to approve the bid from the Design Company for \$1,360 for the cemetery sign.

Roll Call: Kowalski Y Kripli Y Fournier Y Johnson Y Zettel Y

TEE LAKE UPDATE: Talked about in Andrew Thompson agenda topic.

DRAIN FIELD - WEED SPRAY:

Larry Kartes will be spraying the poison sumac over top of the drain field. Weather has not been the best recently. Larry should spray within the next two weeks.

AUDIT UPDATE/PAST DUE TAXES:

2023 Audit and F-65 are finally complete. The Treasurer and Clerk are balanced. Road fund is factual. The board paid \$16,500 in CPA fees last month. Dan Zettel asked if the board should turn this information into the insurance company. To make a claim on the insurance company, it had to be 100 days from the incident. Rob Kowalski will be reaching out to Paul Olson to attend the next board meeting to go over insurance policies. Since Paul eliminated part of the policy that makes board employees responsible for monetary mistakes, it has cost the township \$35,000+ at this time. Paul dropped that part of the policy on his behalf to save the township money. However, this was without board approval. The board is looking into reaching out to Paul Olson's insurance company to file a claim against him. Currently, the township has federal taxes due. The township does not pay unemployment tax. The former Clerk, paid unemployment tax and now the federal and state want to know why the board is not paying it again. The accountant didn't catch this. Rob will be reaching out to Stacey and Cindy from Stephenson and Co.

Pat Miller asked if the former clerk was bonded. The former Clerk's bond was through Paul Olson who is our underwriter. He dropped the coverage that would have made an individual personally liable with their bond to pay this fee. When asked why he dropped it, Paul stated that he did it to save the township money. The board did not have the figures at the time of the incident to file a claim within 100 days.

Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by Korey Kripli to pay \$4,305.69 in back taxes of October 2022 to July 2023.

Roll Call: Kowalski Y Kripli Y Fournier Y Johnson Y Zettel Y

Motion passed.

Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by Dan Zettel to pay \$1,684.71 in taxes that will be due on October 16, 2023.

Roll Call: Kowalski Y Kripli Y Fournier Y Johnson Y Zettel Y

Motion passed.

Since both audits were not great, Rob and Eileen completed two CAP plans which are Corrective Action Plans for each audit. The state may make the township have audits annually instead of bi-annually.

DAVE ROSS, KIM GLASSER, AND MICHELLE VOGT:

Fournier nominated Dave Ross to be the 2nd Alternate on BOR. Dave Ross was sworn in by Clerk, Korey Kripli.

Rob Kowalski nominated Kimberly Glasser for Planning Board and the 1st Alternate for BOR. Kimberly Glasser was sworn in by Clerk, Korey Kripli.

Rob Kowalski nominated Michelle Vogt for ZBA. Michelle Vogt was sworn in by Clerk, Korey Kripli

STARLINK:

Motion by Rob Kowalski, supported by Eileen Fournier to purchase Starlink internet for \$600 for hardware and \$120 per month.

Roll Call: Kowalski Y Kripli Y Fournier Y Johnson Y Zettel Y

Motion passed.

PENSION PAYMENTS:

Pension checks were made payable to Mannor Group. Mannor Group sent the checks back to the township to be voided. New checks were printed and made payable to Municipal Retirement Systems. These checks were already approved in a previous board meeting. Six checks were sent for the 2nd Quarter. Pension issue is now resolved.

HALL MANAGER:

Rob stated that he would be out of town and requested the board to nominate Ginger (Rob's wife) to be the Hall & Maintenance Manager.

Motion by Dan Zettel, supported by Eileen Fournier to have Ginger become the Hall & Maintenance Manager.

Motion passed.

CAMERA UPDATE:

Once the hall has reliable internet, the camera security system will be working accordingly.

GRAVE BUY BACK:

Grace Sakash and Kathy Stirrett bought back grave plots for a total of \$1,400.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Pat Miller brought up elections coming up within the next year.

Korey Kripli stated that he would be running for re-election for Clerk and stated that he was putting together an election team to run successful elections. The Clerk has completed the election training. Deputy Kim Glasser will be receiving training to help run the election.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- Township Board Meeting: Monday, November 13, 2023 at 7:30pm

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Rob Kowalski, supported by Eileen Fournier to adjourn at 8:37pm. Motion carried.

Rob Kowalski, Supervisor

Korey Kripli, Clerk