

VOLINIA TOWNSHIP
CASS COUNTY, MICHIGIAN
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Monday, May 13, 2024
6:30 PM

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Larry Davis at 6:36pm. Members present: Supervisor Larry Davis, Trustee Nick Seelye, Treasurer Alex Williams and Clerk Annette Peters. Members absent: Trustee Denny Grice.

Others present: Bob Rasmussen, Glenn Blough, Brenda Blough, Charles Wilson, Jeff Hupp, Sue Conklin, Chris Brooks and Zach Morehouse.

Prayer was given by Bob Rasmussen.

Pledge of Allegiance was given by Larry Davis.

Minutes

The minutes from the last Regular meeting April 8, 2024, were presented. Alex Williams made a motion to approve the minutes; Nick Seelye seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried.

The minutes from the Special meeting April 24, 2024, we presented. Nick Seelye made a motion to approve the minutes; Alex Williams seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

The April Treasurer's report was presented with a balance of \$295,589.95 in the general fund. Balances in the other funds are as shown. Receipts are as listed. Annette Peters made a motion to approve the April Treasurer's report; Nick Seelye seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Peters – Yes

Davis – Yes

Williams – Yes

Seelye – Yes

The Board approved the April Treasurer's Report.

Bills

The April Revised bills were presented with the new total amount of \$21,128.64. Alex Williams made a motion to approve the April revised bills; Nick Seelye seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Peters – Yes

Davis – Yes

Williams – Yes

Seelye – Yes

The Board approved the April Revised bills.

The May bills were presented with the total amount of \$70,374.90. Annette Peters pointed out that the QuickBooks is higher now due to a rate increase. Nick Seelye made a motion to approve the May Bills; Alex Williams seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Peters – Yes

Davis – Yes

Williams – Yes

Seelye – Yes

The Board approved the May Bills.

Cemeteries

There were 2 burials this month.

We will be having some work done, there are some graves that need top dirt and grass seed. The storm left some trees that had to be picked up; there is still one branch that needs trimmed.

Roads

The county is doing the county. They have been out doing some grading. Larry asked if we knew when the gravel would be done. Bob said that he was told that CCRC would dust control the gravel if they do not get it down before our dust control application is done. Nick said that Joe told him that the May schedule was full but they would try. Annette pointed out that we just approved the initial payment tonight, so it most likely wouldn't be right away.

Fire and Ambulance Reports

There were 4 fire calls in the month of April.

Supervisor

Cass County Leaders Meeting was April 17, 2024, the agenda was distributed.

The CVBESA meeting was May 5, 2024, the agenda, previous minutes and runs were distributed. The Next meeting will be May 21, 2024 at 5pm.

The Zoning Administrators invoice was distributed.

Board

We received an updated contract for the county's master plan. The fee is now \$2,000 instead of \$1,500. Annette Peters made a motion to sign the Cass County Planning Commission Master Plan Contract and to pay the \$2,000 fee; Larry Davis seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Peters – Yes

Davis – Yes

Williams – Yes

Seelye – Yes

The board approved to sign the Cass County Planning Commission Master Plan Contract and pay the fee of \$2,000.

The contract for Williams & Works was sent out this morning.

Nick asked if we found out what the Drain Commission will was for. Alex said that it's not a regular thing until they bill. He will look again after the meeting.

Alex said that he would still like to discuss salary increases but is willing to wait until Denny is back.

Alex said that he talked with Kay Roberson from Text my Gov, which is ability to text residents about what is going on in the township. The cost is \$1,500 per year, and \$750 to set start up (\$2,250) the first year. The one problem is that we have no existing database, if we had a website we could supplement through that. This would allow notices about special meeting, tax billings, etc. It would be better to have a website. Annette asked if Alex looked into websites any, as he said that he would 2 years ago.

Alex Williams said that he is now employed at Robinson Farms and will be reclude himself from all further gravel pit related items.

Annette Peters said that we won the website set up that she said that the last meeting she was going to enter the drawing for. She just found out this afternoon, but will have more information next month.

Annette Peters said that the Cass County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution to recognize Professional Municipal Clerks week in Cass County from May 5 – May 11th.

Cass County Sherriff Behnke said that his is also Police Officers Week. This Wednesday at noon there will be a memorial service for fallen officers. Last week there was a weather event that hit Wayne Township pretty good, Larry said that he was at the Wayne Township hall 10 minutes before they cancelled the meeting. There was lots of damage in the Twin Lakes area. FEMA will be in Cass, St Joseph, Kalamazoo and Branch counties Wednesday to evaluate. There were 104 houses damaged: 5 were complete losses, 24 had major damage and 52 had medium damage. Chris Brooks said that Afrin Johnson had a tree snap during the storm and hit his house. Sherriff said that there are 2 more officers graduating from GVCC and 4 more fixing to start at LMC. They Sheriffs office is finally starting to get their core back up to speed, but are still looking for more recruits. They were unable to fill the Marcellus School Resource Officer position this year, but hope to soon.

Public Comment

Glenn Blough said that he knows that other townships allow ORV's and wanted to know if Volinia does. Annette Peters said No, that the township ordinances said that ORV's are not allowed.

Chris Brooks asked if in the Special Meeting minutes the ballot language should say for years 2024-2027 not 2024-2024. Annette said that is correct, that is a typo in just the minutes, thank you for catching it. Chris also asked when the current road millage expires. Annette said that the current millage expires in 2026.

Nick Seelye asked about a Tiny House Ordinance. He has already talked with the Zoning Administrator, Beth Pompey and she said that there are other ordinances out there that we can mimic. Alex Williams said that it's worth exploring. Annette Peters pointed out that ordinance do have to go in front of the planning commission not the board. Nick said that he understands that it takes time and has to be done correctly. Sue Conklin asked what the problem with tiny homes is. Annette said that it's in the ordinances, and her opinion is that it may be more so outdated to time, however it was created for the prevention of trailer and trailer parks.

Nick Seelye said that we should bring short term rentals into the township. Sue Conklin said that people from out of the area don't like the sound and smell of farms, and doesn't want yuppie's coming into the township. Nick said that lake people rent out their homes when they are not there, why are we spending money to stop them, when the zoning administrator says in 2 years it's going to be out of our hands anyway. Nick said that he already found out that we would have to do an amendment, which he feels is worth doing, since everyone is doing anyway, it allows snowbird to have income and security. Zach Morehouse said short term rentals bring people into the area but they spend their money outside the local area. Zach said that he's for and against tiny homes; people who put up the tiny homes can't afford to maintain them and they deteriorate quickly and become fire hazards, other side they benefit blight and unsafe living conditions or people moving back home, he sees the benefits but also the many downsides. Nick said that it would have to go through a special meeting that is open to the public through the planning commission. Zach said that he's just trying to learn more, that's why he's attending the meetings.

Adjournment

Larry Davis made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Alex Williams seconded the motion; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Annette Peters
Volinia Township Clerk