

VOLINIA TOWNSHIP
CASS COUNTY, MICHIGIAN
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Monday, April 8, 2024
6:30 PM

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Larry Davis at 6:32pm. Members present: Supervisor Larry Davis, Trustee Denny Grice, Trustee Nick Seelye, Treasurer Alex Williams and Clerk Annette Peters. Members absent: None.

Others present: Bob Rasmussen, Deb Chambers, Beth Brooks, Chris Brooks, Glenn Blough, Brenda Blough, Kimber Abair, Anthony Randles, Sue Conklin, Tyler Augst, Jely Levell, Nate Robinson, Jeff Conklin,.

Prayer was given by Denny Grice.

Pledge of Allegiance was given by Larry Davis.

Minutes

The minutes from the last Regular meeting March 11, 2024, were presented. Denny Grice said on page 2, under cemeteries the software company should be Cemify not Sim. Alex Williams made a motion to approve the minutes with corrections; Denny Grice seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

The March Treasurer's report was presented with a balance of \$314,622.53 in the general fund. Balances in the other funds are as shown. Receipts are as listed. Annette Peters made a motion to approve the March Treasurer's report; Nick Seelye seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Grice – Yes

Peters – Yes

Davis – Yes

Williams – Yes

Seelye –Yes

The Board approved the March Treasurer's Report.

Budget

The 2024/2025 budget was presented. Discussion to update the following:

LASA Reimbursement should be \$1,000.00 not \$500.00

Planning Commission Wages should be \$1,600.00 not \$500.00

ZBA Wages should be \$1,600.00 not \$500.00

Constitutional Sales Tax should be \$125,000.00 not \$115,000.00

State Shared Revenue Sales Tax should be 0 not \$10,000.00

Assessor Wages should be \$17,000.00 not \$14,000.00

Nick Seelye asked if we need to up the deputy treasurer wages, Alex Williams thinks we can cleave it as he doesn't plan to use the deputy as much this year. Nick Seelye asked if

we about legal using \$8,922.32 last year budgeting for \$8,000.00 this year, Annette Peters said that legal is hard to budget for since it's charged as needed but thinks we should leave for now, we can always adjust it later in the year if needed. Nick Seelye asked what the Taxes on Drains are; Alex Williams said that is the drain commissioner and the billing depend on what projects are going on. Nick asked if \$300 is enough, Alex said to leave it for now, and we can adjust if needed later. Denny and Larry agree to leave it. Nick wants to know what the bill was for.

The adjustment brings page #1 2024/2025 Estimated Income total \$225,950.25. Page #3 Assessor expense total \$19,450.00, Planning Commission total to \$3,100.00, ZBA total to \$2,100.00, page total to \$60,540.00. Page #4 Total Expenses \$190,558.00, Net total \$35,392.25.

Bills

The March Revised bills were presented with the new total amount of \$33,981.71. Nick Seelye made a motion to approve the March revised bills; Denny Grice seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Grice – Yes

Peters – Yes

Davis – Yes

Williams – Yes

Seelye – Yes

The Board approved the March Revised bills.

The April bills were presented with the total amount of \$21,290.11. The State and Federal withholding totals are estimated. Nick Seelye made a motion to approve the April Bills; Alex Williams seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Grice - Yes

Peters – Yes

Davis – Yes

Williams – Yes

Seelye – Yes

The Board approved the April Bills.

Cemeteries

There were 2 cremation burials this month; otherwise it's been pretty quiet.

Larry has contracted the Historical Library, is waiting on a call back.

Roads

Winter has left, hopefully.

Nick Seelye said that roads are sinking in, and some grading has been done.

Annette asked Bob to see if CCRC could grade in front of the Township Hall from some yahoo doing donuts Saturday.

Bob said he also has a list of holes that needs filled.

Annette asked if there was any update on the requested road contracts.

Nick said that he received a call after the last meeting asking if we still wanted CCRC to attend quarterly, as they came to the last meeting and weren't recognized. We do still want them attending.

Dust control – Township will provide two full application of dust control this year and offer a third spot application to those who want to pay for it. SWMDC knows they can get us on schedule starting the beginning of June, Annette will see about the end of May.

Township Building

Johnny's Custom Construction submitted an updated estimate to replace the handicap door of \$1,322.00. This estimate is lower than that last one, because it does not include power washing. Annette Peters made a motion to approve Johnny's Custom Construction estimate of \$1,322.00 to replace the handicap door; Alex Williams seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Grice – Yes

Peters – Yes

Davis – Yes

Williams – Yes

Seelye – Yes

The board approved Johnny's Custom Construction estimate to replace the handicap door.

Fire and Ambulance Reports

There were 2 fire calls in the month of March.

Craig Yeager, Wayne Township Fire Chief, has been chief for one year. Wayne Township Fire Department is always taking applications. Craig asked the board to please put an announcement in the township newsletter. Alex Williams said that he did put one with the winter taxes. Denny Grice asked where the fire applicants take classes. Craig said that the classes are currently hi-bred classes, all online courses with testing in Gobles area. Fire Department currently has 14 members with 2 tentative.

The Agenda from the April 2, 2024 CVBESA meeting as distributed. The next meeting will be May 7th, 2024 at 5:30pm.

Supervisor

BOR meet for two days and had eight residents come in.

Par Plan performed their initial site visit, and provided recommendations to the township. The recommendations include fire extinguishers, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, exit lights, handbook, cemetery ordinance, cemetery water signage and cemetery rule/hours signs. Denny will work contact fire extinguisher people. Annette will work on the handbook. Bob Rasmussen will work on the cemetery signs.

Camp Matziv – Beth Pompey meet with the camp owner, Larry Davis, and attorneys to inspect the camp. On paper the camp is being used per the camp operations regulations and with no outside use. They did have listings for venue and short term rentals but have not held any events in the past 2 years. Per the township ordinances they can get a special use permit for a resort. The camp wants to work with the township. Denny asked why it has been so difficult to get them to respond, if they are so willing to work us. Beth said she doesn't know, but they did respond pretty fast once she got in touch with them. Everything seemed very respectful from all parties involved. Larry said that he's going to ask the assessor to take a tour and maybe the building inspector. Beth did request an updated site plan of the camp. The camp's attorney, Mowitt Drew, is allowing open communications between the camp owners and Beth. Kimber Abair asked that the only wedding was 2 years ago; Beth said that is what the paperwork shows. Beth said that the AirBNB listing is coming down from the rental site; they are not doing these rentals. Denny asked about the 501c3 status. Beth said conference center and/or resort would just be for the camp, still not profit so status could be lost. Larry said they were given a tour of the "Love Shack." Beth said that it is used for older, married councilors. Larry said that there are 20 kid's cabins and 17 for councilors. Beth said they even have one nurse, triage and even quarantine. The camp meets all ordinance requirements.

Beth said that she received an email today on the gravel pit, has not addressed it yet.

Blight – Larry turned in a letter sent, a couple others are coming up. Larry asked Beth her office hours. Beth said that she lost her receptionist, but she does try to have someone accessible 9am to 2pm. Board members are welcome to call her cell phone if they need to reach her, the public should all call the office. Beth is working on getting a new receptionist. Crane and Decatur blights have been red tagged, haven't heard anything yet. Mike Pompey has had a letter sent, and we are coming up on his timeline. Next action will be before next meeting. Alex said that he received a call from someone complaining about chickens coming on their property. Beth said that she can talk to them, but there's really no further involvement. Nick asked about the burnt barn and adding to pile in Volinia Proper. Beth said that property is on the radar along with some neighbors since we cannot do selective enforcement.

Hazardous Waste - There will be a Hazardous Waste and Tire Collection April 24th, 2024 from 3pm to 6pm at the Cass County Road Commission.

Gravel Pit – The gravel pit people have hired an attorney and will be moving forward again. They would like to have a zoom meeting Friday, Monday or Tuesday. Larry would prefer that the meeting be in person. Our Attorney needs to know who the

replacement board member will be for the planning commission and will have to contact the planning commission members.

Board

Annette got a flyer on entering to win a Township Website Setup and will be entering the drawing.

Annette announced that the deadline to file for Candidate for Township office will be April 23, 2024 at 4pm. Reminded everyone that she does not get into town until 6:30pm so if anyone wants to file, it would be best to have the paperwork filed with her by April 22, 2024.

Denny asked if he needs a purchase order number for the handicap door. Annette said no we do not.

Alex Williams requested to start the movement on a resolution to increase wages for the board members. Annette Peters stated from what she has read and understands that there has to be publications at least 30 days in advance before a resolution to increase wages. Alex Williams made a motion to ask for a resolution at the June 10th 2024 regular board meeting increase the board wages; Annette Peters seconded the motion; all in favor; motion passed.

Denny Grice said that he will not be attending the May meeting.

Nick Seelye said that he agrees with paying for 2 full applications of dust control, but wanted to know what the benefits of doing it 2 consecutive months as opposed to skipping a month in between. Brenda Blough said that she would prefer to skip a month in the middle.

Road Millage – Larry Davis asked the Board their opinions of asking for a road millage in August. Denny Grice said that he doesn't see that we have a choice. Larry Davis made a motion to ask for a 2 mill Road Improvement Millage on the August 6, 2024 ballot for the improvement of township roads for 4 years; Annette Peters seconded the motions; all in favor; motion passed. Annette Peters said that she would have the ballot language ready for a special meeting with the dust control.

Nick Seelye asked why we went for 2 mills for ambulance when the ambulance still sends a bill after they pick you up. Alex Williams said that the bill would be higher without the millage. If there is no ambulance contracted, the whole billing would be sent. Jeff Conklin said that a millage will not run an ambulance.

Public Comment

Jeff Conklin asked about the Decatur Road/Marcellus Highway intersection. Larry said that they are supposed to be running power to it. Annette said that those decisions are CCRC and not the townships. Larry said they need the lights to continue working. Jeff Conklin suggested bigger speed bumps.

Tyler Augst from the MSU Extension, distributed a flyer for the Building a Foundation for Attainable Housing. There are 3 – one day workshops. Larry asked if they ever do workshop between the hours of 1pm-5pm times. Tyler said that he would take that recommendation back to his office.

Sue Conklin asked if we contacted who does Wayne Township's cemeteries. Larry said yes, they are seeing if it's feasible, and going to meet over the next month of so. Sue said that it's Craig Yeager's wife who does the cemeteries for Wayne Township. Denny said that he also talked to Decatur, and Larry turned him to Dowagiac's website. Everything is web based, which he was initially against. He's getting a slow go at it. May have to go back and look at storing in cloud base, it's a lot of leg work and phone calls.

Chris Brooks asked if the Camp is currently on the tax roll. Alex said no they are not. Chris asked if there is a publication for resolution for wages will it include current and proposed wages? Annette said that she should be able to do that. Chris asked if the Wayne Fire Contract is Annual. Annette said that she believes it's a five year contract. Chris asked when it's up. Annette will have to look into. Chris asked if there's a potential of an increase. Craig Yeager said that he doesn't believe so.

Adjournment

Alex Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Nick Seelye seconded the motion; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 8:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Annette Peters
Volinia Township Clerk