

VOLINIA TOWNSHIP
CASS COUNTY, MICHIGIAN
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Monday October 14, 2024
6:30 PM

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Larry Davis at 6:30pm. Members present: Supervisor Larry Davis, Trustee Denny Grice, Treasurer Alex Williams, Trustee Nick Seelye and Clerk Annette Peters. Members absent: None.

Others present: Bob Rasmussen, Chris Brooks, Jamie Chambers, Kimber Abair, Tony Ranoles, Wes Pegler, Victoria Locke, Sue Conklin, Zach Morehouse, Brenda Kent, and Steve Kent.

Prayer was given by Denny Grice.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Larry Davis.

Minutes

The minutes from the last regular meeting, September 9, 2024, were presented. Denny Grice pointed out on the last page, first line under public comment, should be farmer not farm. Denny also wanted to point out that what he was trying to say under the last paragraph under the public comment was if we're going to change zoning laws, it needs to go to a vote. Alex Williams made a motion to approve the minutes with the above-mentioned changes; Denny Grice seconded the motion; all in favor; motion passed.

The minutes from the Truth-In-Taxation Hearing, September 9, 2024 were presented. Denny Grice made a motion to approve the Truth-In-Taxation minutes; Alex Williams seconded the motion; all in favor; motion passed.

The minutes from the Special Meeting, October 9, 2024 were presented. Denny asked on page 3, what the 4-5 winters meant. Annette said that she wasn't really sure, she was trying to figure that out when Roger was explaining. Denny Grice made a motion to approve the Special meeting minutes; Nick Seelye seconded the motion; all in favor; motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

The September Treasurer's Report was presented with a balance of \$242,113.89 in the general fund. Balances in the other funds are as shown. Receipts are as listed. Nick Seelye made a motion to approve the September Treasurer's Report; 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 September Treasurer's Report.

Bills

The Revised bills for September were presented with a new total of \$54,943.22. Nick Seelye made a motion to approve the revised September 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 Revised September Bills.

The bills for October were presented with a total of \$28,338.30. Nick Seelye asked why the electric bill was \$71.00 this month and \$12 last month, Annette Peters said it has to do with the budget plan we are on. Nick Seelye made a motion to approve the October 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 September Bills.

Alex Williams said that High Grade is questioning the Williams & Works invoice from July, due to the May 29, 2024, meeting that did not happen. Alex reviewed the information with the Planning Commission Chair, Randy Cuthbert, who both feel that the \$840.70 charged for mileage was overcharged, due to the township's miscommunication. Larry asked who set up the meeting, Alex said that no one knows, Denny said it was between the Attorney and Beth, but no planning commission member were notified and were not present. Denny said it should be on the Attorney or Beth, not the Township. Alex said High Grade, the attorney and Beth were the ones who knew about the meeting. Annette said 5 hours for a meeting that didn't happen seems ridiculous. Denny Grice made a motion to support Alex Williams decision to reimburse (credit) High Grade's escrow account for the \$840.70 attendance charge; 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
- No Vote

The Board approved to reimburse (credit) the High-Grade escrow account \$840.70.

Clerk

Annette contacted the attorney's office questioning the bill discussed last month for the Truth-In-Taxation hearing. They negotiated it slightly, by taking about \$100 off, but that was it since they communicated with Larry and Alex. Got another bill from the attorney, that Annette had to question and have corrected. This time they were charging us for another township's stuff.

Ron Bellaire, electrical inspector has submitted a sample updated application for us to approve. Changes include rearrangements, mostly on page 2, there are no raised inspection fees, but have dramatically clarified the chart to prevent overpayments and underpayments. The other big change is the mailing address will now be a PO box. Annette Peters made a motion to approve the updated electrical permit application; Alex Williams seconded the motion; all in favor; motion passed.

Kevin Harris asked that we consider adjusting the December BOR dates. He would like to adjust the meeting date to December 11, 2024. Alex Williams made a motion to adjust the December BOR meeting date to December 11, 2024; Nick Seelye seconded the motion; all in favor; motion passed.

Cemeteries

We had \$5,000.00 worth of tree work done at Crane Cemetery, they took down a couple of big trees that were growing over headstones and trimmed other trees.

There were 3 burials.

November is coming, it almost time for leaf clean up time.

Roads

CCRC graded, and cold patched a few spots. Bob assumes they will come grade again in another month or so for the winter. Bob will be calling Bob Thompson in the morning about Goodenough Road being so bumpy.

Larry said that they need to patch potholes again.

CCRC

Not Present.

Fire and Ambulance Reports

There were 4 fire runs in September.

There was an Ambulance Authority meeting October 7th, 2024. The agenda and minutes from the previous meeting were distributed.

Supervisor

There were interviews held October 9, 2024 for a Zoning Administrator and Blight Enforcer. Larry Davis made a motion to hire Steve Allen as Zoning Administrator and Blight enforcer; Annette Peters seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Grice – No

Peters – Yes

Davis – Yes

Williams – No

Seelye - No

The board did not approve hiring Steve Allen as zoning administrator and blight enforcer.

Alex Williams made a motion to hire Roger Leach as zoning administrator and blight enforcer; Denny Grice seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Grice – Yes

Peters – No

Davis – No

Williams – Yes

Seelye – Yes

The board approved to hire Roger Leach as zoning administrator and blight enforcer.

Larry said that the township hall now has its own address, 53238 Goodenough Rd, and there is a green sign posted out front. The old address that was listed everywhere is actually the

address for the cell phone tower.

Board

Denny Grice said that him and Larry meet at the hall last night and did lead testing. The upstairs is full of lead, but there was none detected downstairs. Denny made a phone call this morning to see what needs to be done now. If the board wants him to continue investigating he will. They used home tests.

Alex Williams said that he said at the special meeting he liked Steve Allen for the zoning administrator position, he he's had some discussions with people since then, and now feels that Roger will do a better job for us.

Nick Seelye said that he thinks we should look for a new building inspector. There are multiple building issues with nothing being done for month and months. Larry said for the zoning/blight interview he went through the county directory and found who everyone was using and contacted them to set up interviews.

Nick said that he's tried putting solar on his barn and contacted 3-4 different companies. When they find out who our electric inspector is they say absolutely not, Ron always denies solar. Last month, a resident put solar on, then Ron red tagged it due to a monitor on the fuse box, that is required. Denny asked if we are having any other issues besides solar. Larry said that he doesn't know of any other issues, he did run into Ron at a car show and asked him if Ron doesn't like solar. Ron denied it, but has still been red tagging it all since. Denny asked why red tag. Nick said lag bolts not in the right spot, knit picking the monitoring devices. Larry said that he can set up interview. Annette said that she is not available for interviews into after the election.

Church Camp - Last notification was that the attorneys are working together. To do what, rack up the bills? Annette said that was 3 months ago, we haven't heard anything since then. Alex said they walked the property, couldn't find anything, he doesn't know what the attorneys are trying to negotiate. Denny asked what our options are. Alex said to put them back on the tax roll. Denny asked what the net effect that would be. Alex said that they would have to pay property tax, he doesn't think the attorneys want to take it to court, he thinks we're to the point it's going to have to go to court, have the courts compel them to comply. Nick asked what if we revoke the tax exemption, then change zoning to allow wedding venues. Denny asked how to change zoning. Alex said someone would have to ask zoning admin to look into amending zoning for wedding venue and short-term rentals. Denny said we need to move forward, don't change zoning, but make them be complaint. Alex said that we should revisit zoning in the future, once there's a better structure on the masterplan, for now talk to our attorney; we can't continue the way it's going now. Larry said he will see if he can set up a meeting with the attorney.

Nick said we should look to change zoning to allow wedding venues and Air BNBs, there's others besides the camp that are doing it. We need to look into allowing them, we can't turn our eye to one but not the others. Denny saying he for or against the wedding venue, but there's zoning for a reason, we shouldn't just open up changes, they need to be done through proper procedures. Steve Kent said that he like our quiet community.

Denny said that he's heard nothing but bad things about spot zoning, and loosening teeth due to possible bad zoning. Recommendations need to be taken to the planning commission, community and a vote. Larry asked how many are doing Air BNBs in the township. Nick said he doesn't know an exact number, but there are some. Denny said that he looked at one in Marcellus the other night. We have a unique rural setting, once you lose that you can never get that back but let the majority rule.

Public Comment

Steve Kent asked if the camp/attorney had a statute of limitations, to be grandfathered in.

Chris Brooks said that according to our AIR camp zoning uses conference centers, a special use permit is required.

Wes Pegler asked if a Special Use would change the zoning status. Alex said not zoning but allows status per circumstances. Wes asked if its renewed annually. Denny said every 5 years. Wes asked why they don't do that then. Bob said if we give a special use permit, you violate other parts of ordinances. Wes said there's other people on the lake doing this. Bob said people have been doing this on the lakes since the 60's.

Jamie Chambers said that we need a different communication plan. All businesses have one; who knows what, when. That wouldn't have cost the township \$800. A Dot gov is a great establishment plan, if you establish a plan and stick to it.

Wes Pegler said that Chris Brooks mentioned a website. Annette is currently working on the website and is currently on the final steps and hopes to have the website live by the end of this month. Wes asked if the website will have the minutes on it. Annette said yes, the minutes will be on the website.

Adjournment

Larry Davis made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Denny Grice seconded the motion; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm

Respectfully
submitted, Annette
Peters
Volinia Township Clerk