

BENGAL TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING  
September 9, 2015 Minutes  
7:00 p.m. at the Bengal Township Hall

The regularly-scheduled Bengal Township Board meeting was called to order by Schafer at 7:02 p.m. Board members present: Deborah Schafer, Supervisor; Elizabeth Ayoub, Clerk; Denice Schultheiss, Treasurer; Nick McDonald, Trustee; Bill Kushmaul, Trustee.

Members of the public present were Greg Armbrustmacher, Steven Spitzley, Judy Huhn, Terry Thurston, Marcia Pung, Eugenia Pung, Steve Pung, Rene Rosenbaum, Mary Beth Rosenbaum, Sharon Bassette, D. Yu, Rex Ferguson, and Deputy Wisswasser of the Clinton County Sheriff's Department.

After members and the public pledged allegiance to the flag, a motion was made by Ayoub and seconded by Kushmaul to accept the revised agenda. Motion carried.

After review of the minutes of the August Board meeting minutes, Kushmaul moved and McDonald seconded to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Schultheiss handed the board three financial activity reports, one of the deposit account, one of the tax account, and one of the taxes collected to-date. Ayoub moved, and Kushmaul seconded, to accept the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Ayoub reported that her election training is finished and she is now qualified by the state to run the township's elections. Ayoub reported that there were 3 fire runs this past month, and the township is currently owed about \$5,000 now for outstanding fire and rescue runs. McDonald moved and Schultheiss seconded to accept the clerk's report. Motion carried.

Ayoub presented bills for approval in the amount of \$58,935.73. Schultheiss handed the board two bills, one dated July 13, 2015 and one dated September 3, 2015, for reimbursement. One was for \$169.00 for training; one was for \$98.66 for office supplies. Schafer moved and Kushmaul seconded to accept these two additional bills for payment. Motion carried. Kushmaul moved and McDonald seconded, to approve all bills for payment, the total now being \$59,203.39. Motion carried.

Commissioner Pohl was not present for a report.

Deputy Wisswasser was summoned, had to leave, and so was unable to give a verbal report, but did leave a copy of the August incident report for the Board.

Being alerted by someone from the public that the public comments portion of the agenda had been skipped, Schafer immediately opened the floor to public comments. Rene Rosenbaum, Rex Ferguson, and Steve Pung addressed the Board.

Greg Armbrustmacher, assessor for Bengal Township, reported that AMAR audited Bengal Township, and that two items needed correction: two old farm buildings with “flat values” were taken off the roll. Armbrustmacher presented a check to the Board for \$150 from the Ken and Bev Mohnke previous land split; \$100 is still owed on this. Armbrustmacher presented a new land split to the Board for approval: Esteria Cerna Mayers at the northwest corner of Essex Center and Walker would like to split off the back parcel. Schultheiss moved, Kushmaul seconded, to approve the split. Motion carried. Armbrustmacher presented the landowner’s \$200.00 check to the treasurer.

Jordan E. Smith of Abraham and Gaffney presented to the Board a bound copy of financial statements as of March 31, 2015, the end of the township’s fiscal year. He also presented the results of the township’s audit for the fiscal year April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015. He stated that the township’s revenues were a “drop from 1% from the year before.”

The Board was given an addendum to its current rescue run contract with Dallas Township. After recommendation that the Board have the township attorney review this prior to signing, it was decided that Schafer should contact the township’s attorney regarding this. The matter was tabled until next month.

Ayoub moved, Schafer seconded, that the Board continue the terms of the now-expired contract between Bengal Township and Greg Armbrustmacher, assessor, through March 31, 2016. Motion carried.

Ayoub moved, Kushmaul seconded, that the Board contract with Smith Oil and Propane to pre-purchase 740 gallons of propane at a cost of \$1.33 per gallon. Motion carried.

On behalf of the township, Ayoub applied for a grant with the State of Michigan to receive a new voting booth which is handicapped accessible. The State of Michigan will reimburse the township \$190.00 of the Election Source bill; the township is responsible for shipping charges only. Ayoub moved, Kushmaul seconded, that Schafer sign the contract on behalf of the Board, indicating the township’s agreement to order and pay for the booth by September 30, 2015. Motion carried.

The individual who has previously cut the lawn at Frink Cemetery is unable to perform this duty. Ayoub moved, Kushmaul seconded that Schafer give Cutting Edge permission to cut the grass there one time only, at a cost not to exceed \$150.00. Motion carried.

The L-4029 was received from the equalization department and reviewed extensively by the Board. Kushmaul moved, Schafer seconded, that the township levy a 0.9984 millage for operating funds, a 3.2448 (voted) millage for roads and bridges, and a 1.2480 (voted) millage

for chloride for 2016. Motion carried. The L-4029 was signed by Schafer and Ayoub on behalf of the township.

Ayoub indicated to the Board that Barbara Moss, Clinton County Equalization Director, would attend Board meetings and present to the Board members and to the residents the entire Notice-of-Assessment---Board of Review---tax process at three meetings next year: February, May and August. Informal discussion of the Board concurred that this would be a good idea, and Ayoub will contact Moss to verify the dates for this in 2016. Informal discussion ensued as to how to best disseminate this information to township residents.

The issue of the township's use of Frontier for internet and telephone in the township hall was tabled until next month. After informal discussion, it was decided that Ayoub should check with Frontier, Sky Web, and Casair for more information.

McDonald presented the report of the Planning Commission. No action is required by the Board at this time.

Representatives from Verizon requested that the Board approve two variance setbacks: a three-and-one-half foot setback to the right; and a fifty-two foot setback from the road. This is to be a 150 foot tower with no light on it. Ayoub moved, Kushmaul seconded, that the township approve this variance request. Motion carried.

There is nothing new to report on the Forest Hill Energy situation.

The Board worked to amend the budget to reflect current and unanticipated expenditures. After a work session, Schultheiss moved and Kushmaul seconded that the following amendments to the 2015-2016 budget be made:

- Assessor's salary be increased from \$8,756 to \$9,356;
- Board of Review be changed from \$700 to \$760;
- Planning Commission be changed from \$1,000 to \$2,300;
- Planning Commission expenses be changed from \$500 to \$1,100 (and, within this new budget, that the \$600 paid for general legal expenses for training for the planning commission be transferred from the legal expense account to the planning commission expense account);
- mortgage payment be increased from \$25,121 to \$113,400; building repairs be increased from \$1,000 to \$3,000;
- building improvements of \$6,000 be eliminated for this fiscal year;
- propane be decreased from \$2,000 to \$1,300;
- cemetery care be increased from \$4,000 to \$4,200;
- dues be increased from \$870 to \$875;
- LDA application fees be eliminated;
- historic upkeep be increased from 0 to \$150;
- township website be increased from \$900 to \$950;
- drain-at-large assessment be reduced from \$11,000 to \$6,800.

Schultheiss moved, Kushmaul seconded, that the 2015-2016 budget be amended as presented. Motion carried.

The internal control policy is tabled until next month.

Schafer reported that she had driven the county roads and learned of a culvert that needs to be replaced on Lowell Road north of Walker. This will be an expensive project. Schafer will also call the road commission to request that they proceed with the third chloride application to the roads as per the signed contract.

There being no further business before the Board, upon motion of McDonald to adjourn, the meeting adjourned at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Elizabeth Dallam Ayoub, Clerk