

BENGAL TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING
MINUTES – August 12, 2015
7:00 P.M. at the Bengal Township Hall

The regularly- scheduled Bengal Township Board meeting was called to order by Supervisor Schafer at 7:00 p.m. Board members present: Deborah Schafer, Supervisor; Elizabeth D. Ayoub, Clerk; Denice Schultheiss, Treasurer; William Kushmaul, Trustee; Nick McDonald, Trustee

Members of the public present: Greg Armbrustmacher, Township Assessor; Terry Thurston, Steve Pung, Marcia Pung, Judy Huhn, George Ayoub, Dave Pohl (Clinton County Commissioner), and Deputy A. Wisswasser (Clinton County Sheriff's Department).

After the Pledge of Allegiance and a review of the agenda by the board, Schultheiss moved, and Kushmaul seconded to approve the agenda as printed. Motion carried.

After a change was made to the July 8th minutes regarding the contract with Cutting Edge, Schultheiss moved and Kushmaul seconded that the amended minutes of July 8, 2015 be accepted.

Cory Wilson from Cutting Edge Lawn Care attended the meeting and stated that he applied the fertilizer to our property based upon a verbal contract. He stated that the hall property as well as the cemeteries all need to be mown almost every week in May and June; that they need to be mown most typically once a week at the beginning of July and slow down to every other week by the end of July; and that in September and October he mows them based upon his drive-by observation of each property. He understands that fertilizer is only to be applied with board approval, that only the signed contract is what the board approved.

I. Treasurer's Report

Schultheiss presented a Deposit Account Activity Report ending July 31, 2015 which, upon motion made by Supervisor Schafer and seconded by Trustee McDonald, was accepted.

Responding to a question from Ayoub, Schultheiss reported that the tax bills sent show that the township's tax billed revenues have increased (approximately 1.6% this year) SLIGHTLY.

II. Clerk's Report

Ayoub reported that the audit was conducted on July 24, 2015 and the auditors will most likely present their report to the board at the September meeting. Ayoub also reported that she will take the QVF training on August 20th, should finish all other election classes by the end of August, and should be able to process voter registration cards after the August 20th class.

Schafer had reported to Ayoub a couple night's ago that the Book of Oaths has been returned, and Ayoub thanked whoever returned this historical record back to the township. With the Board's approval, Ayoub had attended two workshops sponsored by Michigan Township Association: Money Matters and Better Budgeting. She stated that the classes were very informative, and what was most impressed upon the students was that as a governmental board, transparency in front of the public is paramount. She is hoping to have her notes typed soon and a copy given to each board member, particularly since the Board is looking to amend the budget. Upon motion made by Schafer and seconded by Kushmaul, a motion to accept the report carried.

The clerk submitted orders totaling \$11,558.40 for approval, all of which were approved and were paid on check numbers 2262 through 2269. She submitted revenues in the amount of \$1,270 to the treasurer for deposit. These revenues were from fire run reimbursements and hall rentals. The Board approved the payment of these bills.

III. Report from Clinton County Commission

Commissioner Dave Pohl was present and reported on the following activities, actions, and concerns of our Clinton County Commissioners:

1. The Verizon Tower in the southeast corner of the county, a 911 tower, should be started in the fall.
2. 210 tons of "junk" were collected at the annual Dump-Your-Junk day on April 29th. The weight of materials collected at each subsequent Dump-Your-Junk day decreases, the thought being that perhaps the county is not cleaning out past junk so much as being at a maintenance level. While residents pay to have some of the junk taken (such as tires), this program generally costs the county "a few bucks," Commissioner Pohl stated.
3. Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) which applies to all governmental entities and officials, FOIA policies encompass messages on the personal computers of governmental officials. Board members were encouraged not to delete any messages particularly as it might concern matters currently under scrutiny, such as pending litigation.
4. The Clinton County Conservation District and the Mid-Michigan Health Department are quietly trying to resolve some issues with the water quality of the Maple River watershed. Apparently there are some pollution issues that have not yet been identified, and these agencies are attempting to quietly resolve them.
5. The Child Care Fund in the county is one of the largest drains on the county budget. This fund encompasses CPS involvements, foster care, etc. Commissioner Pohl reported that one specific child alone has cost the county \$4,000 per month.

6. Central dispatch is getting new software which should assist dispatch in setting up the correct questions to ask those who call in. Because our Board sometimes has trouble collecting rescue run fees from people who believe that certain types of assistance vehicles should not have been sent, the Board was advised that Tri-County Medical sets up the protocol for that and the Board, if it chooses, should contact central dispatch or Tri-County Medical to learn more about the protocol.

IV. Report from Clinton County Sheriff's Department

Deputy Wisswasser handed the board a copy of sheriff involvement in the township for the past two months. He also reported that when a call is received by central dispatch, it is coded. There are four levels with one being highest priority. It is the Board's responsibility to set up how each specific code is handled/responded to through the township's rescue agency.

V. Assessor's Report

Greg Armbrustmacher, Assessor, asked for board approval for a land split on the Boettger property on North Lowell Road, a 1.5 acre split on 20 acres. Schafer made a motion to approve this land split; Kushmaul seconded the motion, and the motion carried. The payment for this was given to the treasurer for receipt.

VI. PA 116 Application

Terry Thurston had filed a PA 116 application with the county which needs board approval. After assurance from the board's planning commission representative, Trustee McDonald, that the land in question is not adjacent to an area slated for heavy development, Ayoub made a motion that the application be approved. This was seconded by McDonald and passed.

VII. Dairy Farm Expansion

The township received a letter from the Department of Agriculture regarding expansion to an existing dairy facility on Parks Road, as the facility is looking for additional GAAMP certification. The clerk will pass this letter to the planning commission to apprise them of this.

VIII. Verizon Cell Tower

Schafer reported that Verizon's application to the county has been denied, apparently needing to be built 50 feet further back on the township property before it might be approved. Schafer was asked additional questions by the Verizon representative, and indicated to Verizon that answers to those questions would require board approval.

Ayoub is to check with the township's insurance carrier to see if having this structure on the property increases the township's liability, raises the township's insurance rates, etc.

IX. Rental of Township Property for Farming

Only one bid was received by the township. This bid was submitted by Zachary Wagner, a new farmer. Upon motion by Schultheiss and seconded by Kushmaul to accept the terms of the bid, the motion carried. The board also decided to give Mr. Wagner the option to rent it for three years so that he can structure his business accordingly.

X. Policies

Schultheiss handed to the Board copies of current policies. It was suggested that the board take the next month to review the policies. Any decisions, actions, or changes to the policies are tabled until next month.

XI. Planning Commission Report

McDonald, the board's representative to the planning commission, reported that the commission has been trained and has reviewed zoning ordinances of several townships as the potential model for Bengal Township's ordinance. The planning commission is most impressed, and is considering using as a model, the ordinance of Centerville Township in Leelanau County. The planning commission is working to have a proposed ordinance to present to the board in September.

X. Roads

Schafer reported that the chip seal on the one mile of Parks Road has been completed, but neither the brush spray nor the overband on paved roads has been done. There was some concern amongst board members that the brush spray has not been done (is it getting too late for this?), and discussion of perhaps not having it done this year. However, the board already signed the contract for the work. A suggestion was made that perhaps next year prior to signing the contract for this work, the board look into setting a date by which the work needs to be completed prior to signing a contract.

XI. Budget Review

The board looked at the budget in depth and tabled the issue until next month. There is some confusion between board members. The concern is whether or not the budget can be amended by using funds outside the general fund to add as revenue for this year's budget, or whether the board must stick to the same bottom line figure of keeping total expenses at the amount approved in the 2015 adopted budget. Schultheiss and Ayoub will have a conference call with the Michigan Township Association and its attorney to learn what is legal and appropriate.

There being no further business before the board and upon a motion to adjourn made by Ayoub, the board adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth D. Ayoub, Clerk