

Johnstown Township Minutes

13641 South M-37 Highway. Battle Creek Michigan 49017

Regular Board Meeting . Nov. 10, 2021 . 7:30 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Supervisor Barb Earl, Clerk Sheri Babcock, Treasurer Karmen Nickerson
Trustee Jeff Warren, Trustee Deana Powell

Absent: None

Visitors: Fifteen (15)

Agenda: A motion was made by Warren to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Powell.
All ayes. Motion carried.

Public Comments (3 minutes per person): None

Minutes: A motion was made by Warren to approved the minutes of the Regular Board meeting of
Oct. 13, 2021 as presented. Seconded by Nickerson. All ayes. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Powell to approved the minutes of the Special Board meeting of
Oct. 26, 2021 as presented. Seconded by Warren. All ayes. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – Karmen Nickerson

- Property tax bills will be mailed out the 1st week of December.
- A newsletter will be included with the tax bills. Let Karmen know by next week if you would like to add something to the newsletter.

A motion was made by Warren to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried.

Clerk's Report – Sheri Babcock

Elections: The school proposal for Pennfield Schools voted on Nov. 2, 2021 passed.

Premier Lawn: Price increase for mowing and snow removal. See attached email #1. Cost increasing mowing from \$45 to \$52 and snow removal from \$65 to \$75.

I den Cemetery: Joyce and I meet with the surveyor at I den Cemetery. We are now waiting for the survey and legal description. I received a follow-up call from the Surveyor today in response to my email to them. The Surveyor is finishing up today and will record this at the Record of Deeds. They have provided three separate descriptions, one overall area that the cemetery lies on, and one for each separate section 27 and section 28.

The next step is either the Quit Claim deed or quiet title (this requires a lawyer and going to court). After many discussions, it seems that Quit Claim process should be possible and will probably be the least expense and fastest way to complete this process. I contacted Consumers Power by email with updated information.

Consumers Power returned email with a phone call. They offered their legal department to assist with Quit Claim deeds if needed. They are looking at a closing date of December 15th. They contacted have Halbert Farms to discuss the Quit Claim deed.

Clerk's Report – Sheri Babcock (continued)

Iden Cemetery: Halbert farms contacted me by phone and is in agreement with the quit claim deed and is wanting to get this take care of as soon as possible. The other property owner will need to be contacted. Who is best to do this? Joyce?

I received a call back from Wight Company and they are finishing up today and will record this at the Record of Deeds. They have provided three separate descriptions, one overall area that the cemetery lies on, and one for each separate section 27 and section 28. We should have the final paperwork later today or tomorrow.

Long Lake: I contacted the Petition circulator to obtain his signature on the petition. He was unhappy with the progress on this process. I contacted the DNR in Plainwell. I received a return phone call and explained that the DNR rules clearly address the daylight savings time. Because the ordinance was in place before daylight savings time the time does change for no high-speed boating of 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 a.m. We are responsible for the sign. We just need to clearly communicate the time change.

I have photos of the current sign. It sure looks like the DNR would want to make this sign for us to be consistent with other signage there. That site is serviced by Fort Custer so I have a call into them. I received a call back from them, and are now sending more information to them. They think they will be able to do the sign for us.

ARPA Funds: Funds are pending today. Will be transferred to separate account that is already set up.

Drain Assessment: We received an at-large special assessment invoice for Fine Lake Dam from the Drain Commissioner. The invoice shows a **Due Date** of December 1st. I think the date is incorrectly stated as winter taxes are **Payable**, but not due on December 1st. I called the Drain Commissioners office but have not received a call back at this time. We will not be making this payment by Dec. 1st so we can be certain whether or not this might be payable under the ARPA funds. This assessment is for \$500.00.

Commission On Aging: We received information on a new program offered by the Commission on Aging called Senior Meal Choice Program. See copies attached #2

Clear Lake Weed Assessment:

Two residents of Clear Lake came into the Township to inquire into the possibility of getting a special assessment set up for weed control for Clear Lake. PLM works with several lake residents on treatment in front of their homes. They are indicating that the Lake will most likely die in the next 3 to 5 years without weed treatment.

This weed control is quite different due to the fact that this lake is in both Johnstown Township and Baltimore Township.

We contacted MTA to ask questions on how this is done. Here is a summary of what we understand

- The residents have to petition for a Lake Board that consists of a member of the county commissioners, a representative of each local unit and either the drain commissioner (or designee) plus a property owner selected by the lake board.
- Direction by the local township lawyer is essential as this is very complicated process. Even the development of the informal petition would need to be done.

We have printed materials for your review that we received from MTA. I made a phone call to Jim Dull to see if he has been involved in this type of project before. I discussed with several other Clerks at a recent meeting. They indicated that they did these in a conjunction with both township but did not set up a lake board.

Assessor's Report – Joyce Foondle

- Building Permits - 3
- General . The State Tax Commission has not released the 2022 Inflation Rate Multiplier. It is anticipated that it will be available after their November 16, 2021 meeting. Still waiting on Agricultural, Commercial & Industrial appraisal studies from the county. 2022 Land Grid provided to see what vacant resident property has been selling for.
- One approved land division received.
- Michigan Tax Tribunal . Nothing new.

Fire Report – Fire Chief Chris Jozwik

- 38 incidents in October for a total of 403 incidents year to date.
- 29 calls MFR in October.
- Training: Pictures, Group Building, Roads and Addresses
- Personnel changes: Pete Dunn retired Oct 31, 2021 as Fire Chief. Tom Powell promoted to Assistant Fire Chief and Gerry Sams promoted to Captain.
- Current Membership: 19 Active, 1 cadet.
- Department Activity: Clay Vanderkodde passed his national registry. Clay Vanderkodde and Issac Miller will be starting the Fire academy this week. It will run until the end of March.
- There is a job posting to fill a Lieutenants position currently open in the Fire Dept.
- The new RAM Medical truck has been inspected and is now placed in service.

Next Quarterly Meeting of the Township Board and JFD Officers is January 3, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Report - Bruce Campbell

- Bruce was away last month for attendance at a Veterans conference.
- Update on general happenings at the county level.

New Business:

- Consideration for a change in the Township attorney was covered at a previous meeting. Additional information provided to the board. A motion was made by Powell to pursue contacting Catherine Kaufman of Bauckham, Sparks, Thall, Seeber & Kaufman, P.C. to engage Catherine Kaufman as Township attorney. Seconded by Warren. All ayes, motion carried.

Old Business:

- Sleepy Hollow: With previous contact by the Road Commission, we would like to contact them again and review the entire project and concerns again. It was agreed that we will try to make contact next week. It is still a concern that if we move forward that even under a 10-year repayment, the annual cost would still exceed the \$1,000 targeted amount. It would be at least \$1300 without interest.
- Long Lake Ordinance: This was covered under the clerk's report.


Pay Invoices and Payroll:

A motion was made by Warren to pay the bills in the amount of \$26,067.03 as presented. Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried.

Additional Citizen's Comments: None

Adjournment: A motion was made by Powell to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. Seconded by Warren. All ayes. Motion carried.

Attested to by:
Barbara Earl
Supervisor



Sheri Babcock, Clerk