

# Johnstown Township Minutes

13641 South M-37 Highway. Battle Creek, Michigan 49017

Regular Board Meeting – Jan. 11, 2023 – 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 Deana Powell, Trustee Jeff Warren

**Absent:** None

**Visitors:** Twenty-four (24)

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

**Public Comments (3 minutes per person):** None

**Minutes:** A motion was made by Powell to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of December 14, 2022, and the Quarterly Board/Fire Meeting of January 9, 2023, as presented. Seconded by Warren. All ayes. Motion carried.

## **Treasurer's Report – Karmen Nickerson**

- Tax Collection is currently going well.
- CD interest rates are going up with some as high as 4.75%. We are re-investing some of our CD's as they mature.
- Seeing a big increase in the use of the on-line payment option this year for Property tax payments.
- A reminder to the board, we have our annual Road Commission meeting tomorrow at 7:30 a.m.

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**

- W-2's for 2022 are completed and will be distributed tonight with payroll. All others will be mailed.
- Working on budget for next year.

## **Assessor's Report – Joyce Foondle**

- Building Permits: No copies of permits available for the past month.
- General: Inspections related to building permits continue.
- Working on Lake Land Values. The 2023 Michigan Rate Multiplier is 1.05 (5%) which is the maximum allowed under the Michigan Constitution. The state has determined that the Michigan Consumer Price Index for 2022 is 1.079 or 7.9%. This is the highest inflation since before Proposal A in 1994.
- Attorney Jason S.H. TerAvest (lawyer used for assessor tax matters) has left the previous firm and is now with Kreis Enderle. The Assessor would like to continue to use Attorney TerAvest unless there are objections from the Board members. The Board is in agreement, no objections.
- Land Divisions: None
- Michigan Tax Tribunal: Nothing to report.

## **Fire Report – Fire Chief Chris Jozwik**

- 34 calls for the month of December for a total of 424 calls year to date.
- 24 MFR calls in December. MFR calls year to date 273.
- By Laws Changes as reviewed in the January 9, 2023, Quarterly Board/Fire Meeting now completed.

A motion was made by Warren to approve the changes now presented and as discussed at the January 9, 2023, Quarterly Board/Fire Meeting. Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried.

- Trainings: Group Building;
- Personnel changes: None;
- Current Membership: 17 Active members, one on leave, 1 cadet;
- Department Activity: Dan McLeod was voted in as the Fire Dept. Volunteer of the Year; Congratulations Dan!
- The next Pancake Breakfast is scheduled for April 29, 2023.

Next Quarterly Meeting of the Township Board and JFD Officers is April 4, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

## **Commissioner Report - Bruce Campbell**

- Recognition of three board members leaving the Board of Commissioners (BOC), new members to the BOC, Staff member leaving the County and staff service awards.
- MSU Extension Project
- 2023 Farmland Preservation
- A resident was asking if there was any additional talk about the Jail. Bruce advised that not currently at this time but both the Jail and COA will be part of future discussions.

## **Old Business:**

- 1. Lacey Road Truck Traffic:** Follow-up. Tom Allen expressed that he has questions on the numbers produced on the reports of truck traffic on Lacey Road. He also wanted to know what type of equipment they use. He thought that they may have been running another monitoring period. The Board will be meeting with the Road Commission tomorrow and will be having a discussion with them on the consideration of designating a “No Thru Trucks” route.
- 2. Clear Lake Weed Control:** Revised paperwork has been submitted to our Attorney and the next public hearing is scheduled for Feb. 8, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. here at Johnstown Township Hall. Publications are scheduled to appear on January 28 and Feb 4, 2023. Notices will also be mailed out the week of Jan. 23, 2023.
- 3. Mill Lake Sewer:** Working on getting petitions ready.
- 4. Township Blight:** Barb Earl has provided three sample Blight Ordinances for Board Review. In her discussions with two other townships, they both employ an enforcement officer and feel that this has been working well for them. The board would like to have time to review these documents. More phone calls with residents upset over worsening conditions on Winans Drive and the trailer park area.
- 5. Water Testing:** No further samples have been provided to the lab. The Fire Dept. indicated that they will provide the second sample. The payment as presented in last month’s bill will be taken to them by Fire Chief Jozwik and will be submitted after he has discussed the test results form that was provided.

**New Business:**

1. Board of Review: We have had one Board of Review member move out of the township and one retired. We are in need of two residents to replace them and one additional individual as an alternate. We have Linda Barnett present tonight would has agree to fill one of these position on the Board of Review.

A motion was made by Powell to approve Linda Barnett as a new Board of Review member. All ayes. Motion carried.

The Clerk will administer the Oath of office, provide employee paperwork and schedule training session when date and time is determined.

2. Training: The Township Clerk, Treasurer, Supervisor and Trustee Powell have expressed a desire to attend the Annual MTA conference this year on April 17 – April 20 for training. Some of the points of interest are: elections updates and solar power in your township. Trustee Warren declined attendance.

A motion was made by Warren to approve the registration for conference attendance for the four members of the board. All ayes. Motion carried.

Budget amendments will be presented at our next budget planning meeting schedule on January 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Pay Invoices and Payroll:**


A motion was made by Powell to pay the bills in the amount of \$33,700.75 as presented and with the addition of releasing the payment of \$58.00 prepared last month for B.E.S.T. Lab for water testing. This amends the total to \$33,758.75. Seconded by Warren. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Additional Citizen's Comments:**

- Comments on Solar power in our township, high tension wires, residential solar power production limitations;
- County Master Plan committee for survey participation, not well executed;

**Adjournment:** A motion was made by Warren to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Attested to by:  
Barbara Earl  
Supervisor**

  
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**Sheri Babcock, Clerk**