

# Johnstown Township Minutes

13641 South M-37 Highway. Battle Creek Michigan 49017

## Special Budget Meeting & Public Hearing & ARPA Funds Meeting March 22, 2023

Special Budget Meeting called to order at 2:00 p.m.

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

**Absent:** none.

**Visitors:** Fire Chief Chris Jozwik, plus six (6) visitors.

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

### Special Budget Meeting

A motion was made by Warren to close the Special Budget Meeting. Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried. Special Budget Meeting closed at 2:01 p.m.

### Public Hearing

A motion was made by Warren to open the Public Hearing at 2:01 p.m. Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried.

### Review Proposed 2023-2024 Budget.

The Board reviewed the budget categories. Discussion transpired about the following:

- **Capital Outlay:** Banfield Cemetery expansion and improvements
- **Elections:** May 2023 Special Election consolidated with Barry Township. August 2023 Hastings Schools ballot initiative. Due to election law changes, postage expenses will increase substantially until Postage Paid permits are in place.
- **Security Grant:** payment from the State of Michigan is still pending.
- **Roads:** While our Pavement Surface Evaluation & Rating (PASER) rating in Johnstown Township is "good," we have some catch up work to do in order to maintain our roads, given we have the greatest miles of paved roads in the county. In addition to the dollars collected from the existing millage, the township earmarks money in the annual budget for road projects. Implementing a four-year plan will net more money overall vs. an annual plan. The proposed Four-Year Plan does **not** include overlay. Future consideration should be given for an additional Road Millage, perhaps at .5 mills for a 5-year-term, then not renew again. This could help us to catch up to a reasonable annual contribution.

### **Public Comments:**

- **Roads:** Resident Rob Garrett confirmed that our PASER rating is actually higher than that of a contiguous township.

Resident Roy Thunder inquired if a **Road Millage** would be put before the residents for a vote prior to being assessed? Yes, any proposed road millage would be voted on by residents.

### **Public Hearing**

A motion was made by Powell to close the Public Hearing at 2:17 p.m. Seconded by Warren. All ayes. Motion carried. Public Hearing closed at 2:17 p.m.

### **Special Budget Meeting**

A motion was made by Warren to reopen the Special Budget Meeting. Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried. Special Budget Meeting reopened at 2:18 p.m.

### **Resolutions:**

A motion was made by Warren to offer **Resolution #2023-03-03 Notice of Regular Board and Fire Meetings for 2023-2024 Fiscal Year** as amended. Seconded by Powell. Roll call vote: Yeas: Warren, Powell, Babcock, Nickerson, Earl. Nays: None. The Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

A motion was made by Warren to offer **Resolution #2023-03-04 Salary Schedule for April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024**. Seconded by Powell. Roll call vote: Yeas: Warren, Powell, Babcock, Nickerson, Earl. Nays: none. The Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

A motion was made by Powell to offer **Resolution #2023-03-05 General Appropriations Act Fiscal Year April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024**. Seconded by Warren. Roll call vote: Yeas: Nickerson, Babcock, Powell, Warren, Earl. Nays: none. The Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

A motion was made by Powell to offer **Resolution #2023-03-06 Barry County Road Commission Four (4) Year Plan 2023 to 2026**. Seconded by Warren. Roll call vote: Yeas: Nickerson, Babcock, Warren, Powell, Earl. Nays: none. The Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

### **2023-2024 Annual Budget:**

A motion was made by Powell to adopt the Annual Budget for Fiscal Year April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024, as presented. Seconded by Warren. Roll call vote: Yeas: Nickerson, Powell, Warren, Babcock, Earl. Nays: none. Motion carried.

**Cemetery Sexton Contract:** Board signed Sexton contract as updated for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

**Audit:** The Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Audit date has been set for June 19-21, 2023.

**2022-2023 Budget Modifications:** The following budget modifications were presented.

Supervisor	101.171.715.000	Payroll tax	+ .65
	101.171.726.000	Office supplies	-.65
Elections	101.191.702.000	Salaries	+8.50
	101.191.715.000	Payroll Tax	+ .65
	101.191.801.000	Contractual Serv	-9.15
Assessor	101.209.802.000	Reappraisal Serv	+215.00
	101.209.801.000	Contractual Serv	-215.00
Clerk	101.215.715.000	Payroll Tax	+81.93
	101.215.703.000	Other Salaries	-81.93
	101.215.861.000	Mileage	+12.08
	101.215.850.000	Telephone	-12.08
BOR	101.247.702.000	Salaries	-81.86
	101.247.861.000	Mileage	+81.86
Treasurer	101.253.703.000	Deputy Tres salaries	+106.00
	101.253.715.000	Payroll Tax	+ 2.80
	101.253.900.000	Printing & Pub	-108.80
Township	101.299.970.000	Capital Outlay	+1876.00
Fire - ARPA	206.336.970.000	GEAR	+358.09
Approve Budget from \$14,000 to \$14,358.09			
Fire	206.336.732.000	Dues & Subscript	+573.00
	206.336.740.000	Operating Supplies	-573.00

A motion was made by Warren to adopt the budget modifications as presented. Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Pay Bills:** A motion was made by Warren to pay bills in the amount of \$55,112.03 Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried.

**ARPA Funds Meeting:** A meeting was set for 2:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 26, 2023, to discuss ARPA funds.

**Adjournment:** A motion by Warren to adjourn the Special Budget Meeting and Public Hearing at 2:31 p.m. Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried.

**ARPA Funds Meeting:** Meeting called to order at 2:31 p.m.

**Other pertinent business:**

**Blight Ordinance:**

The Rutland Township Zoning Compliance Officer, Rick Argo, was present to share with us what Rutland Township, a Charter Township, has adopted to deal with their blight issues. Enforcement is complaint-driven under Rutland's "junk, trash, rubbish, refuse" section of the Ordinance. Argo reiterated the need for patience and perseverance through the process, noting that proper documentation is key. The process can take a long time as the potential violator is given ample opportunity to rectify the situation.

Additionally, Rutland Township enacted a three-tier civil infraction citation process including verbal and written communication, where fines are elevated with each successive citation. For example, a second-tier violation is also forwarded to the court magistrate requesting a hearing in order to resolve the issue and get the offender to comply. He also described how different areas of residential density had different guidelines.

He advised that we make our ordinance specific to our areas of concern (e.g., junk, trash, or refuse in a yard that is drawing vermin; inoperable, unlicensed vehicles or equipment; overall condition of a property, and what is visible from the road or by neighbors). The more specific language that is used, the better (e.g., "wood pile" instead of "pile").

Other points he touched on included the occupant being held accountable, rather than the owner in a rental situation. He also advised that often times the fines go uncollected. Using a common-sense approach is advised.

Those in attendance voiced concerns about being told what they can/cannot do on their own private property.

Next steps: The Board agrees that direction from our attorney is needed before moving forward with a Blight Ordinance in our township.

**ARPA Funds:**

- **Overall Budget:** Expenses paid to date were reviewed. Some additional dollars have been earmarked but awaiting invoices.
- **Fire Department LED Lighting:** A motion was made by Powell to update Fire Department lights to LED (including all areas, except the loft). Seconded by Warren. All ayes. Motion carried.
- **Pavilion Paving:** A motion was made by Nickerson to accept the paving plan as amended. Seconded by Warren. All ayes. Motion carried.
- **Walking Path Paving:** A motion was made by Warren to approve the paving of a walking path as presented. Seconded by Powell All ayes. Motion carried.
- **Pavilion Fence:** A motion was made by Powell to approve the fence as proposed. Seconded by Warren. All ayes. Motion carried.
- **Picnic Tables:** Handicapped accessible picnic tables will be researched and discussed at the next meeting.


- **Electrical Service/Security Cameras:** Quotes need to be secured to add electrical service, lighting, and a security camera at the Pavilion.
- **Playground:** Matching grant funding may be accessible to assist in covering the costs of a playground area and equipment and benches, as well as the already approved walking path.

A motion was made by Warren to adjourn the ARPA Funds Meeting. Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 3:38 p.m.

**Attested to by:**

**Barbara Earl, Supervisor**

  
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**Sheri Babcock, Clerk**

**Next Regular Board Meeting: April 12, 2023**

APPROVED