

Johnstown Township Minutes

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

Special Board Meeting – April 16, 2024 – 3:00 p.m.

RE: Local Solar Energy

Meeting called to order at 3:00 p.m.

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

Absent: none.

Visitors: 12 visitors

Agenda: Agenda item amended to read “Personnel Matter—possible closed session.” Motion by Powell to approve the Agenda as amended. Seconded by Warren. All ayes. Motion carried.

Public Comments:

- A resident inquired about the purpose of today’s meeting, stating his view that the new laws pertaining to renewable energy were unconstitutional.
- A resident encouraged the Board to examine closely the new laws pertaining to renewable energy projects to see if they were in fact Constitutional.

Solar Energy: Attorney Kaufman presented an overview of PA233, clarifying our options in light of current understanding and interpretation of the new laws given the fact that Johnstown Township Planning and Zoning is handled at the County level.

A local citizen’s group previously brought a draft ordinance to the Township and Consumers Energy for review. After revisions were made, the draft ordinance was shared with the County and is believed to have served as the basis for the County’s Renewable Energy Ordinance draft, reportedly now under legal review. The County’s draft Renewable Energy Ordinance has yet to be provided to anyone for review at this point.

Kaufman further explained the process, approximate costs, and timeline to move Planning and Zoning back to the Township.

Kaufman expressed more clarification of the new laws is needed from the MPSC in order to correctly interpret and apply them.

The petition drive is ongoing to repeal the new laws on this issue and get back local control.

A resident informed those in attendance of pending legislation that would amend the Public Health Act of 1978 regarding rural septic systems; and bills that address the issue of affordable housing that would supersede County Planning and Zoning.

Closed Session: Motion by Powell for the Board to enter Closed Session with Attorney for legal counsel on a personnel matter. Seconded by Warren. Roll call vote: “Ayes:” Warren, Powell, Nickerson, Babcock, Earl. All ayes. Motion carried. Board entered closed session at 4:09 p.m. At the Board’s request, former Assessor Joyce Foondle joined closed session at 4:24 p.m. Board exited closed session at 4:50 p.m.

Motion by Warren to exit Closed Session and reopen Special Board Meeting. Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried.

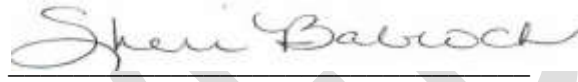
Motion by Powell to allow Attorney Catherine Kaufman to move forward with further action regarding Assessor. Seconded by Warren. All ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by Warren to allow Treasurer Nickerson to move forward with hiring new Assessor with salary capped at \$28,000. Seconded by Powell. All ayes. Motion carried.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Powell to adjourn. Seconded by Warren. All ayes. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Next Regular Board Meeting: May 8, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

Attested to by:
Barbara Earl
Supervisor



Sheri Babcock, Clerk

APPROVED