

Approved May 20, 2020

WATERSMEET TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING/PUBLIC HEARING

April 6, 2020

11:00 AM

www.watersmeet.us

A special meeting of the Watersmeet Township Board of Trustees was called to order by Supervisor Rogers at 10:00 AM.

Members Present: Mike Rogers, Paul Kempainen, Alan Piel, and Julie Mathiesen

Members Absent: Bill Neumann, excused.

Others in attendance: Leuzzo, Township Police Chief

The purpose of the meeting was to conduct a public hearing for and approve the FY 2020- 2021 budget. Supervisor Rogers explained how the timing of Michigan Executive Orders related to the Covid-19 situation led to the cancellation of the hearing originally scheduled for March 30th. In follow-up discussions with the Township attorney, it was noted the Township could not expend any funds until the FY2020-2021 was formally approved by the Board, which resulted in the meeting being re-scheduled for today.

Supervisor Rogers also noted the agenda would need to be modified as the minutes from the March 16th, 23rd and 26th Special Meetings were not ready for approval. Julie Mathiesen moved to approve the agenda, as modified. Alan Piel seconded. Motion carried.

Appearances/Public Comments: None.

Supervisor Rogers asked that Chief Leuzzo provide his report ahead of budget discussion, so that he could leave for patrol. Chief Leuzzo indicated the temporary cross-deputization agreed with LVD Tribal Police was working very well. He also summarized equipment purchases he would be making, including items necessary to make the newly acquired rifles patrol ready, a gun safe, and flashlights. Cost for these items would be approximately \$2000. Paul Kempainen inquired about the status of hiring part-time officers. Chief Leuzzo replied that activity had greatly decreased with the advance of the Covid-19 pandemic, so there was no need to pursue additional officers at this time. There were no other items to discuss.

Supervisor Rogers distributed the final, proposed FY2020-2021 Budget. Paul Kempainen moved to enter into the Public Hearing on the budget, Alan Piel seconded. No members of the public were present. Alan Piel moved to exit the Public Hearing, Paul Kempainen seconded. Motion carried.

New Business:

1. Ratify Budget - Paul Kempainen moved to approve the FY2020-2021 Budget, as presented by Supervisor Rogers. Roll call vote: Paul Kempainen – yes, Alan Piel – yes, Mike Rogers – yes, Julie Mathiesen – yes. Motion carried.

2. The General Appropriations Act Resolution – The Resolution for FY 2020-2021 was read aloud. Paul Kemppainen moved to adopt, Alan Piel seconded. Roll call vote: Paul Kemppainen – yes, Alan Piel – yes, Mike Rogers – yes, Julie Mathiesen – yes. Motion carried.

3. Bid for House Demolition - Supervisor Rogers indicated the Township had received a bid in the amount of \$5000 from Brownell Excavating to demolish the residential structure recently returned to the Township for back taxes. This had been discussed at an earlier meeting, but was not recorded in the minutes, so Mike reintroduced it to ensure it was properly recorded. Alan Piel moved to accept the bid, Paul Kemppainen seconded. Motion carried.

Supervisor’s Report: Mike Rogers indicated he received a letter from Vertical Bridge offering the Township \$150,000 to terminate the lease for the land on which their communications tower is located. That amount is far less than what the Township would receive over the lifetime of the lease, if it were to stand as is. There was no interest on the part of the Board to discuss or further consider the offer.

Treasurer’s Report: Paul Kemppainen reported the income from Police Department fines issued during FY2019-2020 was slightly less than \$20,000. He also noted a contingency fund for the Department has been established.

Clerk’s Report: Julie Mathiesen again mentioned the letter from the Upper Peninsula Substance Enforcement Team (U.P.S.E.T.) requesting support from the Township. She noted the Township had given \$500 in previous years, but thought that should be increased, possibly to \$1000. Paul Kemppainen agreed there should be an increase, suggesting \$750. No consensus was reached. Julie Mathiesen then commented on the recent donations to the Fire Department, wondering who was responsible for sending “thank you” notes or letters of acknowledgment. The Board indicated that is typically handled by Fire Department personnel.

The regular Board Meeting scheduled for April 15th is cancelled, given the Covid-19 situation and the Township’s decision to close the office. Bills due prior to the regularly scheduled May meeting should be paid to avoid late fees and/or finance charges.

Motion by Paul Kemppainen to adjourn, seconded by Alan Piel. Motion carried. Meeting ended at 11:28 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Mathiesen, Clerk
Watersmeet Township