

Approved June 17, 2020

WATERSMEET TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR MEETING  
May 20, 2020  
6:30 PM  
[www.watersmeet.us](http://www.watersmeet.us)

The regular meeting of the Watersmeet Township Board of Trustees was called to order by Supervisor Rogers at 6:32 p.m.

Members Present: Mike Rogers, Paul Kemppainen, Alan Piel, Bill Neumann and Julie Mathiesen

Members Absent: None

Others in attendance: Jim Pittsley, Watersmeet Fire Chief, Ryan Leuzzo, Township Police Chief, Rich Burke, LVD Tribal Police Chief, Nick Christ, LVD Tribal police,

Minutes Changes/Approval: Minutes from the March 16<sup>th</sup>, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, March 26<sup>th</sup>, April 6<sup>th</sup> and April 27<sup>th</sup> meetings were reviewed. Alan Piel moved to accept the minutes as written, with a second by Paul Kemppainen. Motion carried.

Appearances/Public Comments: None.

Agenda Changes/Approval: Paul Kemppainen moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Alan Piel. Motion carried with all in favor.

Old Business: None

New Business:

1. Cross-Deputization Agreement Going Forward – Supervisor Rogers indicated he had met with Tribal Chairman, James Williams regarding the temporary cross-deputization agreement, which expires on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Both the Township and the Tribe agree the arrangement is working well. However, if it is to be extended, the Tribe would need to receive funding from the Township. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) funds tribal police salaries and those funds are earmarked for police activities on Trust Lands. Off-reservation activities would need to demonstrate a different funding source, should there be an audit by BIA. Chairman Williams indicated \$10,000/year would be sufficient to make that demonstration to BIA. He further indicated that money could be returned to the Township in future years through 2% funding. However, 2% funds this year were reduced due to revenue losses from the Covid19 situation.

Supervisor Rogers asked the Board to consider the request and approve the payment of \$10,000, if it is agreed to extend the cross-deputization agreement beyond June 30<sup>th</sup>. There was some additional discussion about the agreement itself. Julie Mathiesen requested clarification that today's decision would not automatically extend the agreement and there would be another meeting before June 30<sup>th</sup> to discuss language for the longer-term agreement. Supervisor Rogers indicated the Board was voting only on the \$10,000 payment, should the agreement be extended. Paul Kemppainen made a motion to pay the LVD Tribe \$10,000 if the Board decides to extend the cross-deputization for the remainder of the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Julie Mathiesen seconded. Roll call vote: Paul Kemppainen – yes, Alan Piel – yes, Mike Rogers – yes, Bill Neumann – yes, Julie Mathiesen – yes. Motion carried.

2. Schedule for opening parks and the Community Center - Given the easing of Covid19 restrictions in a number of areas and Governor Whitmer's 6-step plan for reopening the State, Supervisor Rogers questioned whether the Township should open the Community Center, the Pavilion Park and Bass Lake Park for public gatherings.

Discussion ensued during which it was noted municipalities were expected to have a re-opening plan as part of the Governor's larger state plan. Said plans were supposed to contain procedures for employee awareness, self-reporting of symptom, as well as symptom screening and social distancing requirements for public gatherings, and plans for regular disinfection of restrooms and other public facilities. Paul Kemppainen made a motion to table the discussion until the meeting scheduled for May 29<sup>th</sup> to open bids for the new garage, in order to allow for additional research. Alan Piel seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

Approval of Bills: Clerk Mathiesen indicated the majority of bills received were recurring bills, such as those for utilities, and she had paid them as they arrived. Billing cycles should start returning to normal with gradual reopening of the State. Alan Piel made a motion to approve payments that had been made since the last meeting and those still outstanding, seconded by Bill Neumann. Motion carried with all in favor.

Supervisor's Report: Mike Rogers summarized information from webinars sponsored by the Michigan Municipal League, which discussed likely reductions in State revenue sharing, due to the Covid 19 situation. Currently, Watersmeet Township is looking at a reduction of approximately \$15,000 from what was budgeted for this fiscal year. Those numbers could change as the situation evolves. However, the purchase a new truck for the crew foreman may have to be delayed.

Treasurer's Report: Paul Kemppainen indicated all accounts are in order.

Clerk's Report: Julie Mathiesen indicated the Township received a letter from the Upper Peninsula Substance Enforcement Team (U.P.S.E.T.) thanking us for the \$500 donation. She also noted that the Township's membership to the Michigan Townships Association (MTA) was up for renewal in July. As part of that renewal, MTA is offering access to its online training and webinars the entire Township Team for a flat rate. Many of the in-person training sessions have been cancelled due to Covid19 and the online sessions fill the gap. The Board requested she do more research into the matter before making a decision.

Trustee Report: Bill Neumann commented with the forecast loss, the Township could expect to receive future requests for fee waivers from the school district. He also suggested we consider establishing a Community Garden, although recognized that it probably wouldn't be feasible this year.

Police Chief Report: Chief Leuzzo summarized activities for May (report attached). He suggested the Board consider revising contracts for the police and fire departments so they include language for hazard duty pay for responding to calls during situations like the Covid19 pandemic. He also suggested the Board consider hazard duty pay for the Township Secretary, as she has more exposure to the public. Finally, Chief Leuzzo stated the arrangement with the LVD Tribal Police was working very well and he would like to see it continue.

Fire Chief Report: Chief Pittsley commented there were very few calls during May. With the Casino closed and people generally sheltering close to home, it has been a very quiet month. He did note that fire season was just around the corner and asked the about the status of the Township burn ordinance. Clerk Mathiesen stated she was incorporating comments from the Township attorney and would have a draft available for review.

There being no further business, motion by Alan Piel to adjourn, seconded by Bill Neumann. Motion carried with all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Mathiesen, Clerk