

Approved August 19, 2020

WATERSMEET TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

July 15, 2020

6:30PM

COMMUNITY CENTER

www.watersmeet.us

The July meeting of the Watersmeet Township Board of Trustees was called to order by Supervisor Rogers at 6:30 pm.

Members present: Mike Rogers, Julie Mathiesen, Alan Piel, Paul Kempainen, and Bill Neumann

Members absent: None

Others present: Rich Burke, Steve Roth, Nick Christ, Dave Lamoreaux, Justin Kasieta, Pat Walsh, Ryan Leuzzo, Jim Pittsley and Peggy Tuttle.

Clerk Mathiesen stated that the check numbers for the approved bills would need to be added to the June 17, 2020 minutes and Paul motioned, with a second from Bill, to accept these minutes with this addition. Motion carried.

Clerk Mathiesen asked for two additions to be added to the agenda under New Business: 1) Revisit rental of the Community Center, given the latest executive order from the Governor; and 2) Review the recommendations from the Par Plan Risk Assessor, based on the June 24th audit. Bill motioned, with a second by Alan to accept the agenda with the additions requested. Motion carried.

Appearances: None

Public Comment:

Pat Walsh inquired as to the fire protection availability during the road construction on the Thousand Island Lake Road. Supervisor Rogers assured him it would be available for the duration of this construction.

Captain Burke asked if the cross deputation of the Tribal Police department is good to go. Supervisor Rogers assured him it is.

Justin Kasieta appeared before the board to represent the office of State Representative, Greg Markkanen. He informed the board that if anyone had concerns to be conveyed to Representative Markkanen, he would be able to relay them to him. Supervisor Rogers mentioned two concerns he had related to PILT monies and a current land exchange between the Township and Gogebic County Road Commission. Mr. Kasieta agreed to relay these concerns to Mr. Markkanen.

Dave Lamoreaux relayed to the board that he has been hearing comments from non-homestead neighbors indicating they would not pay their property taxes funding the school district, if the schools aren't opened this fall. There was some discussion of non-payment of property taxes and likely outcomes for the property owners.

Bill Neumann outlined some issues with the meeting schedule of the ZBA. Supervisor Rogers agreed to discuss this further in a later part of this meeting.

Old Business:

1. Clerk Mathiesen presented a draft Post Audit Policy, listing the routine bill payments that could be made prior to approval by the Board. The policy also including a spending cap indicating expenses greater than \$3000 could not be incurred until approved by the Board. After some discussion, there was a motion by Paul, with a second by Bill to adopt the Post Audit Policy, as written. Motion carried

New Business:

1. Supervisor Rogers nominated the following to be appointed to the ZBA:

John Oliver, with a term ending 12/31/22

Greg Clark, move from Alternate to Regular member, with a term ending 12/31/21

Dave Neumann, Alternate, with a term ending 12/31/22

A motion by Bill, with a second by Alan to approve these nominations for the ZBA. Motion carried with all in favor.

2. Use of the Community Center in light of the latest EO 2020-147 from Gov. Whitmer and the possible liability to the township was discussed. Paul motioned to not approve any rental of the community center until after the August 11th date when the order is set to expire. Issue will be revisited if the order is extended by the Governor. Seconded by Bill. Motion carried with all in favor.

3. Par Plan Risk Audit Recommendations – Clerk Mathiesen distributed the recommendations from the June 24th Risk Audit, noting that while the audit focused on the police department, many of the policy recommendations could easily be expanded to apply to the entire Township. It appears the Township does not have policies to address standard operations and having documented, enforceable policies are added liability protection. Julie indicated she would research sample policies from other townships.

Discussion turned to the Reserve Officer Program, which was also mentioned in the Risk Audit.

Supervisor Rogers summarized results from his research into programs enacted in other communities, which indicated the training and uniform recommendations made by the Par Plan Risk Assessor weren't widely used. Chief Leuzzo explained that MCOLES currently does not specify training requirements for reserve officers. He distributed an email from David Lee of MCOLES, which indicated minimum selection and training standards were under development. Whether reserve officers would be required to meet those standards, once developed, was still under discussion. Chief Leuzzo indicated it was the Board's decision whether to maintain the program. If it were to remain, he would want to develop training requirements specific to Watersmeet reserve officers. Training could be provided in-house by Chief Leuzzo, once he renews his certifications to provide training. However, training to renew certifications is currently suspended due to Covid-19. The Board then asked whether the Reserve Officer Program was even necessary, given the cross-deputization agreement with LVD Tribal Police. Chief Leuzzo indicated it was not, particularly since things were somewhat quiet now. After some additional discussion, Clerk Mathiesen made a motion to suspend the Reserve Officer Program until such a time that the training requirements be verified, and the need for such a program be clarified. With a second by Bill, the motion carried with all in favor.

Approval of Bills: Paul made a motion, with second by Bill to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried with all in favor. General Fund check nos. 39886 to 39898, Water Fund check nos. 3430 to 3432, and Wastewater Fund check nos. 4246 to 4249.

Reports:

Supervisor Rogers reported that he has received inquiries as to a millage increase for doing road repairs. He suggested to the Board that this could be something to be considered.

Treasures Report:

Paul reported the township is beginning to see some tax payment come in. The township is in balance.

Clerks Report:

Clerk Mathiesen reported she has received 247 applications for absentee ballots thus far, with requests still coming in. She will be ordering new MTA red books for the Board members. Julie also asked for Board members to let her know whether there were additional MTA publications they would like to order. She then informed the board of a report she received from Dean Hand regarding the lagoon system and some possible additional testing in the future. Dean was also concerned that the backup generator has not yet been re-wired to conform to the wiring in the new lift station. If there is a significant power outage, we could have overflows that would result in permit violations. Supervisor Rogers indicated Wenzel has been discussing the matter with him. There were also some problems with Wenzel's computer and printer. Bill offered to work with Wenzel to correct the computer issues.

Other reports: Bill again expressed concerns about meeting scheduling with the ZBA. Suggestions were given, but the consensus was that this would have to be solved by the ZBA, as the Board does not have authority to direct ZBA by-laws and function.

Jim Pittsley reported 16 runs, with 13 EMS, 2 fires, and 2 helicopter pick-ups for the month. He has been looking for price quotes on truck tests, but hasn't found one thus far.

Captain Luezzo presented his police report and also informed the Board that he has ample PPE supplies available if needed.

Motion by Alan with a second to adjourn. Motion carried. Adjourned at 7:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa Mansfield, Deputy Clerk