

Mecosta Township

19729 11 Mile Rd. Big Rapids, MI.

Regular Meeting

January 14, 2020/ unapproved minutes

Prepared by Lois Brennan, Mecosta Township Clerk

- 1. Call Meeting to Order:** Supervisor Michele Graham, called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.
- 2. Pledge to the Flag**
- 3. Roll Call** –James Cain, Michele Graham, Lois Brennan, Mary Quinlan, present. John Johnson was absent.
- 4. Approval of the Agenda** – Motion made by James Cain to approve the agenda as presented, Mary Quinlan 2nd. All ayes, motion carried.
- 5. Approval of Minutes** – Motion made by James Cain to accept December minutes as presented, Mary Quinlan 2nd. All ayes, motion carried.
- 6. Treasurer’s Report** – Treasurer’s report was accepted as presented and entered into official record.
- 7. Approval to Pay Bills & Payroll** – Motion made by Lois Brennan to pay bills and payroll in the amount of \$54,533.93, James Cain 2nd. Roll Call: Lois Brennan – yes, James Cain - yes, Mary Quinlan – yes, Michele Graham – yes. All aye, motion carried.
- 8. Brief Public Comment** – none heard.
- 9. Reports** –
 - A. County Commissioner Report** – Per Tom O’Neil, the Parks Commission was approved to place a millage question on the August primary ballot for this year. The millage will ask for .5 mills for a 5-year period of time. Mecosta County residents would receive a discount at the gates of the parks if they use them. If the millage passes. No more news from the MCRC on whether they are moving forward with a millage question at this time. Last time MCRC

was asked they said perhaps they would be ready in March to address the topic again.

Assessing reform continues in the State of Michigan, by the end of the year every county in the State of Michigan has to select an overall assessor, commissioners, counties and 9 townships per county will vote to appoint this person, this persons roll as “county assessor” would be to take responsibility for any township assessor that does not pass their AMAR, this is not an appealing position as it does not pay, assessors are only allowed so many units per licenses, and the person appointed would be responsible for someone else’s unit. Everyone in Mecosta County passed their AMAR and they are valid until 2022.

Michele’s statistics class, working toward her level 3 assessing license, was canceled on Saturday due to weather conditions and traveling and has been rescheduled for this Saturday.

The 2020 data base is with the county, missing some personal property from the Village which is a minor fix.

4 persons from the Board of Review are set to attend class in February.

B. Clerk- Per Lois Brennan, everything in the office is smooth, to do lists were just received to gear up for the upcoming primary election in March.

W-2’s were completed and mailed out by Clerk Brennan this week for the 2019 year and she is confident in her ability to handle them each year going forward. Two 1099’s for the township need to be sent to the accountant for this year only as there is a program discrepancy that is not allowing Clerk Brennan to print them herself. Steps with board approval will be taken to correct this for the 2020 year, and she will be able to print the 1099’s herself along with the w-2’s. General

consensus of the Board members was to make the changes, moving the two inspectors from payroll to accounts payable and congratulated Clerk Brennan for tackling and finishing w-2s/1099's. Permission was granted to send the two 1099's Clerk Brennan is unable to process to the accountant to be printed and sent out.

Clerk Brennan had a change of Deputies in March of 2019, for banking purposes the Board recognizes and accepts the resignation of LeAnne Young and to remove her as a signatory from the banking accounts. The Board acknowledges Michelle Lewis as the new deputy, permission is still granted through the October meeting to have Michelle Lewis added as a signatory to the bank accounts for purposes of signing checks and doing all necessary banking related items in the absence of the clerk. All Board members were in agreement.

D. Cemetery – Joint meeting with Austin Twp. Scheduled for March 2020.

E. Budget – we are going to wait until March to move some funds around, that makes it a lot easier with preparations of the 2020-2021 budget and we are still waiting for some tax money to come in so we know exactly where we are at with financials.

F. Planning Commission – Per Michele Graham, a copy of the annual report was given to each Board member from the planning commission, question was posed to the board of whether we would like a copy of the planning commissions meeting minutes emailed to each board member as well as placed on the Mecosta Township web site. All Board members were in agreement with this. Per James Cain, he was absent from the last planning commission meeting but did look over some changes to ordinances that were proposed and did agree with the planning commission on the proposed changes to be sent to the Township Board.

10. Unfinished Business –

A. Fire Department –

Reports- Per Chief Ron Palmer – smell of gas at TransCanada again, frequent issue and normal. Also, a call for legal burn at Scott's body shop, was called in as an illegal burn, the call was exaggerated and was not an illegal burn. Possible structure fire on freeway, it was a woodstove and not an actual structure fire. False alarm/smoke detector at Frontier Communications Building at 118 Front St. This is a nuisance call, and happens frequently, Chief has tried to contact Frontier each time and they refuse to answer their phones or come to the scene. There is no way into the building for the fire department to insure there is indeed no fire. Faulty alarm system is suspected. It was the consensus of the Board that after a 3rd false alarm call in one calendar year a bill for service will be issued on behalf of the fire department to Frontier Communications for the nuisance call and refusal to cooperate with fire department professionals responding to their fire alarm. This is in compliance with a fire department ordinance already in place. Each call the department has responded to due to the alarm has always been a false alarm with zero contact made on behalf of Frontier Communication. Chief Palmer will issue ample warning before billing occurs.

SCBA Replacement – Chief Palmer is steadily in contact with SCBA suppliers to evaluate packs and searching for best pricing for replacement in 2021. Chief Palmer will contact the Board when they have eval. packs for the Board to check out as well. All training for rope rescue as well as SCBA is going well, there is more training coming in the next week. New reporting program is working great, a few more modules need to be created but over all the programming is exactly what was needed.

Truck – a sealed bid for a new 2020 F350 was presented to the Board as well as a copy of the bids for each Board member. The last

time a truck was purchased was in 2006 when a used pickup was purchased. Discussion among the board was to wait until February when John Johnson can be a part of the discussion and decision. We are aware of the need for a new grass rig (pick up). The Board would also like to make sure the money from the millage will be able to cover the expense of the truck. The bid presented is good for 60-90 days. Discussion also included perhaps searching for grants to aid in the purchase of the truck. Topic to be revisited in February.

- B. Policy Workshop-** January 28th at 6:00pm was scheduled for a policy procedure work shop for the Township Board members. The purpose of this work shop is to start the process of reviewing/rewriting policies in the current policy procedure book that is outdated. Also discussed was possible development of a subcommittee with a representative from the community included. This is a large undertaking that will take a large amount of time. Mecosta Township Board members do take this undertaking seriously and want to make sure to do what is in the best interest of current officers, any successors to office, as well as the community as a whole.
- C. Fireworks Ordinance –** there was an error with the first ordinance that was agreed upon in December, Mr. Scales discovered there was a section missing so he revised the ordinance and sent it to the Board to re approve and repeal the ordinance voted on in December. Motion made by Mary Quinlan to approve Ordinance 2020-1, James Cain 2nd. Roll Call: Mary Quinlan – yes, James Cain – yes, Lois Brennan – yes, Michele Graham – yes. Motion carried. Ordinance is adopted.
- D. Amended Meeting Dates-** there were some meeting dates that conflicted on the proposed and approved schedule presented in December. Board members were presented with a revised schedule to approve. Changes were due to a conflict between elections and Board of Review. Motion in the form of Resolution 2020-001 to approve the meeting changes and adopt the schedule

was made by James Cain, Mary Quinlan 2nd. Roll Call: James Cain – yes, Mary Quinlan – yes, Lois Brennan – yes, Michele Graham – yes. Motion carried. Resolution 2020-001 passed.

E. Letterhead Logo- Our new Zoning Administrators Assistant Laura Bosworth has been working on a new logo, seal and letter head for all Township correspondences. Presented to the Board was a copy of the latest version. Discussion on whether to add or remove any items as they were presented. General consensus was that it looked great the way it was and to not add or subtract anything.

11.New Business

A. 2020 -2021 Budget- Supervisor Graham provided the Board members a rough draft working copy of the 2020-2021 budget for their review.

B. Roads- A Paser rating report was given to the Board members. The Paser rating is a study of all roads within Mecosta Township it shows the condition the roads are in and suggested maintenance for each road from the MCRC. The Board is looking to do what they can with roads this year, however no decisions were made at this time without Board Member Johnson being a part of the discussion. Supervisor Graham did take time to explain how important the census is for state shared revenue which will help with the financials in the township and creating a road budget.

C. Election Envelopes – Motion made by James Cain, 2nd by Mary Quinlan for Clerk Brennan to spend up to \$350.00, for new State mandated envelopes for election. Roll Call: James Cain – yes, Mary Quinlan – yes, Lois Brennan – yes, Michele Graham – yes. Motion carried.

D. Assessing Class- Motion made by James Cain to spend up to \$250.00 on Assessors Advanced Assessing Officer class. Mary Quinlan 2nd. Roll Call: James Cain – yes, Mary Quinlan – yes, Lois Brennan – yes, Michele Graham – yes. Motion carried.

E. Construction Board of Appeals Members - Motion made by Mary Quinlan to renew appointment of the Construction Board of Appeal members for another two-year term, James Cain 2nd. All aye, motion carried.

F. Planning Commission & Zoning Board of Appeals Members-

Motion made by Mary Quinlan, to renew appointment of Planning Commission members as well as Zoning Board of Appeal member for 3-year term, James Cain 2nd. All aye, motion carried.

G. Zoning Ordinance Changes - The Planning Commission has done a wonderful job, reviewing and revising several ordinances. They would like permission to take their changes to Mr. James Scales to amend these ordinances. Once revised by Mr. Scales the Planning Commission will again present the ordinances and changes to The Township Board for approval. Motion made by James Cain, to send Zoning Ordinance changes to the Township's Attorney Mr. James Scales, Mary Quinlan 2nd. All aye, motion carried.

12. Brief Public Comment – none heard.

13. Announcements/Correspondence – Supervisor Michele Graham relayed to Board members that Trisha Olds, from Lerner and Associates had written to inform us all that we are through the black out period for our retirement funds, and we should make appointments to speak with a representative if we would like to change anything regarding our funds. Board Member Mary Quinlan brought up discussion relating to the ball field located next to the township hall building, discussion included possible updating ideas including leveling the infield as well as applying new gravel, painting the dugouts, tending to the bleachers and more, also including township residence, boy scout groups and our firefighters/first responders for help. Tom O'neil offered to bring his tractor down at no charge to level the field, he has done this once before.

14. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn made by James Cain, Lois Brennan 2nd. Meeting adjourned at 7:08 pm by Supervisor Michele Graham.