

MECOSTA TOWNSHIP BOARD
19729 11 MILE RD. BIG RAPIDS, MI 49307
January 11, 2022/UNAPPROVED MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
PREPARED BY CLERK, LOIS BRENNAN

- 1. CALL Meeting to Order:** Supervisor, Michele Graham called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- 2. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**
- 3. Roll Call:** John Johnson, Lois Brennan, Michele Graham, James Cain, present. Mary Quinlan, absent.
- 4. Approval of the Agenda:** Motion made to approve the agenda as presented, by James Cain, John Johnson 2nd. All aye, motion carried.
- 5. Approval of Minutes:** Motion made to accept the minutes from December 14, 2021, as presented and December 23, 2021, with change, by James Cain, John Johnson 2nd. All aye, motion carried.
- 6. Treasurers Report:** Per Supervisor Graham in Treasurer Mary Quinlan's absence (report was provided by Treasurer Quinlan) - reporting for the month of December 2021, fund balances are as follows: General fund checking \$576,838.37, First Responders: \$-3,502.38, Fire-Equipment/Building (mileage account) \$104,510.88 Fire Fund-Operations \$-61,743.08 Total funds \$616,103.79.
*Special note: Fire Fund Operations/First Responders will show in the negative until after tax collection is complete, Accounts are not actually in the negative as there is one General Fund account. Accounts will level out at the end of March. Supervisor Michele

Graham accepted the treasurers report as presented and entered it into the official record.

7. Approval to Pay Bills & Payroll: Motion to pay bills and payroll in the amount of \$68,911.16 by James Cain, John Johnson 2nd. Roll Call: James Cain – yes, John Johnson – yes, Lois Brennan – yes, Michele Graham – yes. Motion carried.

8. Public Comment: none heard.

9. Reports:

A. County Commissioner: Per Commissioner Tom O’Neil – There was a write up in the local newspaper regarding the new officers of the County Commissioners, with Bill Routley being the Chair and Jerilyn Strong being Vice Chair.

County Commissioners were approached by Sheriff Brian Miller if they would ask Township Board Members throughout the county during their meetings if the Townships would be willing to “donate” finances to help the Sheriff’s Department purchase a new boat for the department. The Sheriff’s department currently has 3 boats. Discussion by the Board regarding this topic and they felt it was in poor taste of the Sheriff to ask the Townships for money. Township Officials throughout Mecosta County also received an email from Sheriff Miller.

B. Assessor/Supervisor: Per Supervisor/Assessor Michele Graham, the tax roll was turned over to County Equalization Department on 1/3-4/22. There were only minor corrections related to Ag. and Forestry. The roll should be locked into

place within a week or two for next year. Mecosta Township did have an increase of taxable value.

Everything else is quiet and smooth.

- C. **Clerk:** Per Clerk Lois Brennan, I.T. Right will be in the office to install the new computers.

A letter was received from S.O.S. Joselin Benson stating that we now have the population to become a Charter Township if we so choose.

Monthly State taxes will now be filed quarterly.

Tax reports for the board will begin looking different as of February, as the township is now on a quarterly filing with the State of Michigan for withholdings.

- D. **Cemetery:** Per Supervisor Michele Graham- nothing new to report.
- E. **Budget:** Per Revenue/Expense report, all is in line. There was a mistake from Consumers Energy with a \$1500.00 grant check written to the township that should have been written to Mecosta County Economic Development. After contacting the accountant, we deposited the check to reissue it to the proper entity.
- F. **Planning Commission:** Per Trustee James Cain, working toward simplifying and trying to devise what is being said in certain ordinances, before sending it onto the Township Attorney; worked on several different topics regarding the Master Plan.

10. Unfinished Business:

A. Fire Department: Per Chief Ron Palmer- there were a total of 315 calls for 2021. There was a total of 29 calls in the past month.

The lights in the station have been repaired and are done.

Pump testing for E-1 was completed and passed.

The 2003 needs to have 2 valves replaced. The pump passed its test itself.

The ISO study is coming up. This is what helps determine rating for insurances through out the township.

Chief Palmer briefly gave an overview of a couple of calls the department has been on recently as well as assisting other area departments.

Ice Rescue Training is scheduled.

Suggestion to have a workshop with the Township regarding fire truck. Final pricing should be coming in. The pricing has increased \$60,000 since the last discussion.

Chief Palmer is going on vacation, but once he returns, he will assemble a board to interview and fill the Assistant Chief position. And complete testing. There are two candidates.

The new gas tank is set but is not yet operational. Chief Palmer will keep us updated. Waiting for the generator to be installed and wired.

There are minor illnesses within the department, nothing serious.

B. Township Policy: Have not met. With Mary being absent we were unable to set a meeting date.

C. Roof: We are still waiting on quotes. Some messages/emails are not getting response.

D. New Board of Review Member: Motion made to approve Tyler Huntley as Board of Review Member, term dates would be from January 2021 to January 2023, by Lois Brennan, James Cain 2nd. All ayes. Motion carried.

There is still need of an Alternate Board of Review Member needed.

11. New Business:

A. Wage Review: Michele has worked up a 4.4% cost of living increase for all township wages. Topic will be brought back when all board members can be present. 4.4% was based on an article, actual cost of living percentages will be released within the next few days.

Property taxes as calculated now are going from \$152,000 to \$162,000. State shared revenue is going anywhere from \$31,000-\$36,000 every two months based on what was said last year. We are already \$10,950 over projected amounts due to the State now picking up taxes for online shopping purchases.

B. 2022-2023 Budget: Supervisor Graham provided the first draft of the new budget for everyone to review.

C. Budget Hearing Date: the 2022-2023 Budget Hearing is scheduled for March 30, 2022, at 5:30p.m. at the Township Hall.

D. Roads: The Mecosta County Road Commission provided quotes for two road projects that are being considered by the board. The first quote is for 11 Mile Rd. 187th to Birch Park in the amount of \$68,140. The second quote is for 190th Ave. north of 192nd. In the amount of \$56,528.55. These quotes will be subject to possibly a 30% increase in the Spring which would bring the quotes to #1 \$88,582.00 and #2\$75,487.12. If we do get the 30% increase, we will only be able to do one of the roads.

There was discussion as to the County Commissioners stance with the Road Commission with Mr. O'Neil. Discussion also included how surrounding area counties split costs with townships to accomplish getting more road work done. There was also discussion to perhaps contract services for road maintenance and repair outside of Mecosta County Road Commission.

12. Brief Public Comment: none heard.

13. Employee Review (closed session): entered closed session at 6:44p.m.

14. Announcements/correspondence: none.

15. Adjournment: The Board re entered public meeting at 7:20 p.m., Supervisor Michel Graham adjourned the meeting at that time.

Lois Brennan, Clerk
Mecosta Township