

MECOSTA TOWNSHIP BOARD

19729 11 MILE RD. BIG RAPIDS, MI 49307

October 12, 2021/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, Mary Quinlan, Lois Brennan, Michele Graham, present. James Cain, absent.
4. **Approval of the Agenda:** Motion made to approve the agenda as presented by Mary Quinlan, John Johnson 2nd. All aye, motion carried.
5. **Approval of Minutes:** Motion made to accept the minutes from September 14, 2021, as presented, by John Johnson, Mary Quinlan 2nd. All aye, motion carried.
6. **Treasurers Report:** Per Treasurer Mary Quinlan- reporting for the month of September 2021, fund balances are as follows: General fund checking \$465,242.80, First Responders: \$4,833.60, Fire-Equipment/Building (mileage account) \$98,017.39, Fire Fund -Operations \$-18,639.54, Total funds \$549,454.25. Special note: Fire Fund Operations will show in the negative until after tax collection is complete. 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 \$68,709.03 by John Johnson, Mary Quinlan 2nd. Roll Call: John Johnson – yes, Mary Quinlan – yes, Lois Brennan – yes, Michele Graham – yes. Motion carried.
8. **Public Comment:** Several members of the community were present to speak regarding concerns over their road. Community members included: Trina Poulos 11634 190th Ave., Al Guenther 11654 190th Ave., Kurt Somsel-11964 190th Ave., John & Brooke Iltis 11716 190th Ave. A few others joined the discussion as well, without providing names or addresses. Discussion included concerns over a very large pothole in a precarious position just at the end of 192nd Ave. Another concern is that with drivers avoiding the pothole by driving on the shoulder of the road or entering the lane of oncoming traffic to avoid the hole, the shoulder is deteriorating, the hole is located at the bottom of a hill with a curve immediately following, which is creating a much larger hazard. Concerns voiced over residents that walk the road for exercise as well as children riding school bus. The residents had been calling the Mecosta County Road Commission and they were advised to attend a Township meeting to convince the Board to schedule a project for the road

repairs. Supervisor Michele Graham did say she would call the Road Commission to at least have the pothole filled. Discussion also included information regarding how road projects are paid for, where the funding comes from and how. Research has been done that Counties surrounding Mecosta “match funds” with townships doing road projects. Mecosta County Road Commission does not “match” funds with townships. Discussion also included concerns over a drain that has filled with mud and is not being taken care of, as well as mail services being interrupted because of the condition of the road. Several Members of the audience did provide their names to form a road committee to research along with Township officials as well as Mecosta County Road Commission members, road conditions within Mecosta Township. The Plat mapping was also a topic discussion. Mecosta Township Board will request an estimate to have the 190th Ave. properly repaired as well as having the drain properly cleaned to aid in water conditions that adds to the deterioration of the road. Discussion amongst the Board considering road projects take place in the Spring which is when a project list is provided to the Mecosta Township Road Commission.

9. Reports:

- A. **County Commissioner Report:** Per County Commissioner Tom O’Neil- Mr. O’Neil, nothing to report.
- B. **Assessor/Supervisor Report:** Per Supervisor Michele Graham – **Assessors Report:** amar is in 2022, assessors’ association meeting took place in which it was decided to meet again in January where everyone is going to help each other to make sure everyone has everything to make sure the whole county can pass at once. **Supervisors Report:** Mike Fish has contacted Supervisor Graham regarding stepping down from the Board of Review as well as the Zoning Board of Appeals due to a new job. He will now be working out of town and will not be able to fulfill his duties. All Board of Review members must now be certified, which means attending class every two years. This is a Michigan State mandate.
- C. **Clerk:** Per Clerk Lois Brennan- Brief overview of the packets provided regarding the gas tank for the fire department. To be discussed under the Fire Department section of this meeting.
- D. **Cemetery:** Per Supervisor Michele Graham- Supervisor Ken Vredenburg has spoken with Supervisor Michele Graham, agreed that there is no need to have a joint meeting. Supervisor Vredenburg did express a need to have some trees taken down in the Stanwood Cemetery, he will gather quotes. Information was provided to Board Members via email.
- E. **Budget:** all is in line.
- F. **Planning Commission:** Per Mark Kidd-Vice Chair & Supervisor Michele Graham, James Cain was absent, Howard Bowersox was unable to attend. David Bee has been contacted in regard facilitating a meeting with the community as work

progresses on the Master Plan. A joint meeting is needed between the Township Board and the Planning Commission. The main thing needing to happen is the Planning Commission needs to move forward and perhaps tackle 10-15 pages at a time of the existing Master Plan. Discussion during Planning Commission meetings does include expanding commercial zoning on 8 Mile Rd. Commercial district expansions has also been discussed on Northland Dr. A joint meeting was scheduled between the Township Board Members and the Planning Commission on November 2nd at 5:00pm.

10.Unfinished Business:

A. Fire Department: Motion made to approve purchase of a 300gal r89 fuel tank for the fire department in the amount of \$2,000.00, by Lois Brennan, Mary Quinlan 2nd. Roll Call: Lois Brennan – yes, Mary Quinlan – yes, John Johnson – yes, Michele Graham – yes. Motion carried.

- **Reports:** Per Chief Ron Palmer- There have been 26 calls in the past month.
- **Mask Rules:** mask requirements have been reinstated, and masks are mandatory when in a fire apparatus and station offices/meeting room. Masks are also required when personnel are unable to maintain proper social distancing guidelines outside. These rule changes will remain in effect until further notice.
- **Injury/Medical Emergency:** There was one incident with one of our firemen on sight of an active call. The firefighter was taken to Mecosta County Spectrum Health where he was monitored and released. Follow up appointments are required. The firefighter is currently out of service pending doctor follow up appointments. A worker's comp case has been filed our rep is working on a claim number. Concerns over recurrence patterns as this is the 2nd event within 5 years.
- **AFG Grant:** It appears a denial letter will be issued to Mecosta Township Fire for the applied for AFG grant. Chief Palmer will research micro grants in the new year to aid in the commission of new equipment. Micro Grants would help with communications equipment.
- **New Tires:** The ordered tires for Rescue 1 are scheduled to be installed later this week.
- **Dual Role Wildland/Extrication Gear Sizing 10/27/2021:** Chief Palmer has been advised that sizing will happen on 10/27. We will need 4 new sets of turnout gear next year, Chief Palmer has ordered the 4 suits on his name only, this was done because the costs of the suits is increasing by 18%. The order puts us in que for orders but does not get billed until after turnout gear is received. The order just holds the pricing to avoid the increase. New

turnout gear is 33 weeks behind. New gear would not arrive until May of 2022. We have graduates that will need turn out gear this next year.

- **Station Generator:** The current diesel generator is inefficient in use for the entire department. It is used to run the well. It does not run all equipment used at the department. Motion to accept quote and purchase a new natural gas-powered generator quoted by DAJ Electric in the amount of \$11,200.00 by John Johnson, Lois Brennan 2nd. Roll Call: John Johnson – yes, Lois Brennan – yes, Mary Quinlan – yes, Michele Graham – yes. Motion carried.
 - **Robert Galer Funeral:** Mr. Galer was a firefighter for Mecosta Township, the Fire Department will be taking part in his services. Chief Palmer has emailed the details of services to the Board members. Grass Rig 1 will be out of service during the services.
 - **Training Report:** training with Musar has been cancelled for this Saturday due to the funeral and is rescheduled for Saturday, November 13. Four firefighters are scheduled in training to move them up among the ranks of officers.
 - **Rescue:** Everything is running smoothly; Alan Brennan continues to help until December.
- B. Constable/Enforcement Officer:** Clerk Brennan to research insurance requirements, job description and wages. Clerk Brennan will contact other townships that currently employ Constables. Information to be brought back at the next meeting.
- C. Boat Ramp:** Decision needs to be made whether to fix the boat ramp or not. Suggested to contact Consumers Energy to see if there is a grant possible to aid in repair. Supervisor Graham is to get into contact with Consumers. Engineered plans will be a requirement.
- D. Township Policy:** Safety issues need to be addressed and the belief that a Constable/Enforcement officer will aid in that situation. It was discussed to have at least two people at the offices at a time. A general sharable calendar was also discussed. This way it would be easy for each of us to fill in spaces of absences. Being prepared in advance of issues if any is the goal. Suggested to call in a contractor/builder to install a pass-through window for the Supervisors office. That is currently the only office without a window. Township Policy 1.) Packets regarding building/zoning permits must be provided to the resident for each permit application filed 2.) Protocol must be followed that is already in place. 3.) emailing the board to pertinent information is permissible, however texting unless emergency is not permitted. Discussion nor decision is allowed in either email or text. 4.) all outside doors are to be locked at the end of business hours each day.

During business hours our office doors are to be closed. 5.) It is recommended to not use personal phones for business after hours. Official business should be conducted through email for record purposes.

11. New Business:

- A. Dust Control:** Research outsourcing entities other than Mecosta County Road Commission for application of dust control for next season.
- B. White Pine Trail:** Motion in the form of Resolution 2021-008 to urge Governor Whitmer to appropriate funds out of the \$250 million dollars set aside for infrastructure modernizing State Parks and Trails, to pave 26 miles of the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail from the City of Big Rapids south to the Village of Sand Lake, by Mary Quinlan, Lois Brennan 2nd. Roll Call: Mary Quinlan – yes, Lois Brennan – yes, John Johnson – yes, Michele Graham -yes. Resolution passed.
- C. Rental Deposits:** We have an issue with damage from a recent rental. The lessee is aware of the damage and was apologetic. The Board has decided to hold the \$100.00 deposit from the lessee. Also discussed was adding a check list regarding the condition of the hall prior to the renter’s event. The checklist is to be handed out at the time the keys are picked up.
- D. Future Building Inspector:** Information on a candidate for the upcoming opening position of Building Official was reviewed. Cory Zandstra is the current building official of Morton Township and is interested in becoming the new Building Inspector for Mecosta Township. Big Rapids Township is also interested in Mr. Zandstra’s services; however, Mr. Zandstra has declined Big Rapids Township. This topic will be brought back in November when James Cain can discuss with the board as well.
- E. Mecosta County Economic Development:** annual renewal for service is due. MCEC has reupped their contract with The Right Place in their search for a new director. They are also seeking to replace their chairperson. Motion to renew contract with Mecosta County Economic Development in the amount of \$2,000.00 by Mary Quinlan, John Johnson 2nd. Roll Call: Mary Quinlan – yes, John Johnson – yes, Lois Brennan – yes, Michele Graham -abstained. Motion passed.
- F. Office Security:** discussed during Township Policy. It is believed that having a Township Constable/Enforcement Officer will take care of most of the concern.

12. **Brief Public Comment:** none heard.

13. **Announcements/correspondence:**

14. **Adjournment:** Supervisor Graham adjourned the meeting at 7:58pm.

Lois Brennan, Clerk
Mecosta Township