

**Bertrand Township Board
Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 14, 2016**

Bertrand Township Hall
3835 Buffalo Rd., Buchanan, MI 49107

Supervisor Hicks called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Hicks, Kuhn, LeClaire, Vite, Zelmer

Special Guests: None

Agenda Amendments

- Insert “Community Hall refund” as Consent Agenda item #6
- Add “Addendum to Clerk Financial Reports” Memo as Consent Agenda item #7
- Move New Business Item #6 – Landfill Scholarship Applications – to Board Member Comments #2

Consent Calendar *(see attachments)*

Motion made by Zelmer seconded by LeClaire to approve Consent Calendar as amended:

- Township Board Meeting Minutes from December 10, 2015
- Township Board Special Meeting Minutes from December 12, 2015
- Accounts Payable as amended for the period 12/09-01/14 presented:

Total General Fund Expenses	\$32,682.77
Total Fire Dept. Fund Expenses	\$19,222.29
Total WRT Fund Expenses	\$84.22
Total Expenses	<u>\$51,989.28</u>

- Treasurer’s Report

General Fund	\$1,339,483.21
Total Fire Dept. Fund	\$155,873.25
Total WRT Fund	\$3,137.15
Total Fund Current Assets	<u>\$1,498,493.61</u>

Treasurer Kuhn submitted 2016 revenue projections approaching \$452K for the General Fund and \$192.5K for the Fire Department.

- Budget Amendments totaling \$12,500, including injecting \$9,750.00 from the Fund Balance to cover the cost of unforeseen boiler and septic repairs.
- The following Resolutions
 - 160114A – Resolution Updating State Required Poverty Level Income Standards for Property Tax Poverty Exemption Guidelines for Tax Year 2016
 - 160114B – Resolution Accepting Letters of Protest from Township Residents for March 2016 Board of Review
 - 160114C – Resolution to Provide for Alternate Starting Dates for March 2016 Board of Review

- 160114D – Resolution to Adopt the Method of Paying the Monthly AEP Street Light Bill by EFT/ACH

Roll call vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

Reports (*see attachments*)

Sheriff's Department

None presented.

Fire Department

Chief Knisely submitted the January, 2016, monthly business report. 108 fire calls were run in 2015, up from 101 in 2014. Spartan Mfg. has begun work on the new Engine 520 chassis. When it is half-way complete, they will notify us. Expected delivery of the Engine will be end of July, 2016. Spencer Mfg. will provide training on the new Engine.

SMCAS

Chief Knisely submitted the monthly report and briefly spoke on the state of SMCAS. There have been some significant bumps in the road with personnel issues stemming from the new director requiring more accountability, including the resignation of two billing clerks. Temps are in place and there's an overall optimism a better day is coming.

Public Comments

NONE

Unfinished Business

NONE

New Business

1. Resolution 160114E

Motion made by Hicks, seconded by Vite to approve Resolution 160114E – Resolution to Establish the Civil Fine Schedule for Administration of the Zoning Ordinance.

Discussion: Supervisor Hicks said significant consultation and review went into this resolution, which was ultimately approved by the Berrien County Planning Commission. The township Planning Commission concluded a civil fine was preferred over a misdemeanor because it reduces the amount of overhead and judicial involvement.

Treasurer Kuhn clarified how the process will work in the real world, and that the reality of actually collecting money would be slim, but having the resolution on the books is a first step since there are currently no action steps for Zoning Enforcement.

Trustee Zelmer expressed concern with the vagueness in the language and broad range of fines making it too subjective.

Roll call vote:

Aye: Hicks, Kuhn, LeClaire, Vite **No:** Zelmer

Carried 4-1

2. Set Date for IFT Public Hearing for Bauer Better Water

Motion made by Hicks, seconded by Zelmer to hold a public hearing on February 11, 2015 at 7:05 p.m. for the revocation of the IFT for Bauer Better Water.

Discussion: Direct attorney Bell to send a letter with supporting documentation to Bauer as well as offering a final opportunity for him to pay his back taxes. A public notice will be published online as well as in the newspaper.

Voice vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

3. Deputies Pay

Discussion: Deputy Clerk Redmon has occasionally covered as the Administrative Assistant while Nancy is away. The same goes for the Deputy Treasurer. Redmon was never compensated for that work. Coupling that with gearing up for a very busy election season with above average work hours, we want to review the pay structure of the Deputy Clerk as well as the Deputy Treasurer. Their roles and obligations are completely different, with different “busy seasons” and work roles and obligations. We want to make sure each are fairly compensated for the work they are doing.

Supervisor Hicks tabled the discussion until the budget planning meeting on January 30, and called on each board member to research the issue using MTA and other local jurisdiction information.

4. Septic System Update

Discussion: Supervisor Hicks has been in contact with Laird Willard from the Berrien County Health Dept. Two to three holes need to be dug for a perk test, the results of which he will use to design a new septic system. The first bid to dig the perk holes came back at \$1,200, with the excavator offering a 30% discount if we waited until March when the snow thaws.

Supervisor Hicks recommended waiting until spring – late March/early April – to proceed which will put us in the next budget cycle as well as be less expensive for the perk test.

5. Community Hall Rental Deposit

Discussion: From time to time, the Community Hall is left in unreasonably poor condition from a renting party. This happened last weekend from a children’s birthday party where glitter ended up everywhere including inside the refrigerator! Currently, the township has no security deposit that would help offset the expense of cleaning it. This would be a big problem if there was ever physical damage to the premises from a renting party.

Supervisor Hicks presented a number of rental contracts in other jurisdictions that have rental security deposits.

Treasurer Kuhn raised the following issues: a policy would have to be codified regarding the accounting process of receipting in and issuing refunds; some residents are “cash only” and may not have the means for a security deposit; who will be available to inspect the community hall – especially with back-to-back rentals; these issues of post-rent disasters are few and far between.

Trustee LeClaire suggested raising the rental rate for the Community Hall to help offset these kinds of problems.

Supervisor Hicks tabled the discussion for the budget hearing on January 30.

Public Comments

Chief Knisely mentioned that Fire Station 1 will host a Cat/Dog Vaccination Clinic on Saturday, February 6 from 10am-2pm.

Board Member Comments

Treasurer Kuhn highlighted his projected 2016 revenue: \$451K for the General Fund and \$192.5K for the Fire Dept. This does not include permit income nor the county kickback from the landfill.

Supervisor Hicks made the following comments:

- The Township General Fund and Township Fire Assessment District Budget Hearings will be Thursday, February 11, 2016, at 7:15 p.m. and 7:45 p.m. respectively.
- The ZBA hasn't met for over two years. On Thursday, January 28, at 6:00 p.m. they will conduct a mock meeting as a refresher. ZA Glick be also be there.
- The annual Berrien County Road Commission Budget Hearing with the Bertrand Township Board will be February 24, 2016, at 4 p.m. at the Road Commission main facility on Napier Ave. in Benton Harbor.
 - Kuhn wants us to make sure and register a complaint about Enbridge traffic prematurely damaging roadways from heavy use.
- The second Budget Planning Workshop originally scheduled for January 9 was rescheduled for Saturday, January 30, at 9 a.m.

Miscellaneous / Announcements / Schedule

The next township board meeting will be Thursday, February 11, 2016, at 7:00 p.m.

Motion made by Hicks to adjourn at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Don Vite

Bertrand Township Clerk

January 15, 2016

Dated