

**Bertrand Township Board
Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 12, 2017**

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, Payton, Vite, Zelmer

Special Guests: None

Consent Agenda *(see attachments)*

Motion made by Zelmer supported by Vite to approve the Consent Agenda as amended:

- Added item #6 – Budget Amendment.
- Township Board Meeting Minutes from December 08, 2016.
- Accounts Payable for the period 12/09/16 - 01/12/17 as presented:

Total General Fund Expenses	\$48,738.51
Total Fire Dept. Fund Expenses	\$11,612.37
Total WRT Fund Expenses	\$86.62
Total Expenses	<u>\$60,437.50</u>

- Treasurer's Report reflecting bank account balances through December 31:

General Fund	\$1,371,554.63
Fire Dept. Fund	\$157,020.54
WRT Fund	\$2,954.11
Total Fund Balances	<u>\$1,531,529.28</u>

- Resolution #170112A – Resolution Updating State Required Poverty Level Income Standards for Property Tax Poverty Exemption Guidelines for Tax Year 2017
- Resolution #170112B – Resolution Accepting Letters of Protest from Township Residents for March 2017 Board of Review
- Resolution #170112C – Resolution to Provide for Alternate Starting Dates for March 2017 Board of Review

Roll call vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

Reports

Sheriff's Department *(see attachment)*

Deputy Sullivan delivered the report. There has been a rash of car burglaries in the townships just north of Bertrand, as well as recent incidents in Redbud Meadows.

Fire Department *(see attachments)*

Chief Knisely presented the January, 2017, monthly report. YTD fire calls for 2016 was 102.

SMCAS

No December meeting because of a lack of quorum due to illnesses.

Southeast Berrien County Landfill Authority (see attachment)

Trustee Zelmer enumerated the following accomplishments: a new Komatsu dozer was added; they are stockpiling materials for the newest cell which is 9 acres; installing vertical gas wells for odor control. Treasurer Kuhn added they switched a million dollar savings account from 0.4% to 1.2% interest-bearing.

Sexton and other various reports

None submitted.

Public Comments

None.

Unfinished Business

1. Underground Storage Tanks (UST's)

Motion made by Vite, supported by Hicks to accept the November 21, 2016 Wightman & Associates bid to abandon the two UST's in place for the total estimated cost of \$9,400.

Discussion: Kuhn, Zelmer, and Payton expressed an interest in getting an actual bid to remove the storage tanks completely, which Hicks said he was told would be in the general price (excepting the cost to replace pavement at the community building and expenses for the tree repair/removal). Kuhn shared anecdotal similar personal experience where removal proved to be the better and more cost-effective option in the long run.

Vite withdrew his motion. Hicks will contact Mr. Hermann at Wightman & Associates to get a thorough report of the tank layouts and locations and the cost to remove them. This will be in the spring after the winter thaw.

New Business

1. Inspector's Fees

Motion made by Kuhn, supported by Payton to adopt the Independent Contracting Inspector's Agreement revised on 01/09/2017 which changes the current 90/10 fee structure to 80/20, whereby the contractor shall receive 80% of all permit fees paid to them.

Discussion ensued as to who's responsible for office expenses like stamps and stationery. While the agreement clearly states the inspector is, Supervisor Hicks will delicately point this out as this stipulation is currently often violated.

Roll call vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

2. Mechanical Inspector

Motion made by Vite, supported by Zelmer to hire Ray Cole as the Bertrand Township Electrical Inspector effective immediately, replacing Dave Swanstrom at Dave's request.

Discussion: There is a crisis in the State of Michigan regarding the availability of inspectors. They are increasingly harder to find. The two options are to contract one locally, or to go through the State Building Inspector pool. The board agreed we need to have a long-term strategy as our inspectors age and have increasing health issues that are sometimes making them unavailable for extended periods of time.

Voice vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

3. Community Hall Rental Issues

Discussion: Supervisor Hicks enumerated a number of issues facing the community building after a recent inspection of its condition was conducted by Christopher Brayak from Wightman and Associates. While the building's structure is sound, it has numerous cosmetic issues that must be addressed. These items will be a topic at the budget hearings, where Brayak would like to also come to address the board.

Hicks also said the board must consider how to handle back-to-back rentals in a weekend. The first renter gets a clean, tidy building to rent. The second renter gets a building that's "worn" since we currently have no policy for intermittent cleaning. He indicated that Milton Twp. rents their hall in a four hour block, with an additional hourly charge for each additional hour rented.

The board liked this structure, and Kuhn suggested learning more about who they contract to clean the building between rentals. Perhaps we can utilize their services as well while they are in the area.

4. Adjustment for February and April Board Meeting Dates

Motion made by Hicks, supported by Zelmer to correct the February board meeting date to Thursday, February 9, 2017, and change the April meeting date to April 20, 2017.

Discussion: The annual MTA Conference is the week of April 10, and all board members are urged to attend.

Voice vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

5. Budget Workshop

Township Board Budget workshops subject to the Open Meetings Act for the 2017/2018 budget will be:

- Saturday, January 21 at 9 a.m.
- Saturday, February 4 at 9 a.m. as necessary to continue discussion

Public Comments

A resident commented.

Board Member Comments

Supervisor Hicks spoke with the resident owning the recently condemned property on Bertrand. She asked to have until May to deal with the issue as she's very elderly and caring for her elderly husband in assisted living.

He also pointed out the Bertrand Crossing water tower needs painting. Kuhn thought it was owned by the City of Niles. We will determine who owns it.

Hicks also said Chief Knisely has turned in the Fire Department preliminary budget for 2017/2018.

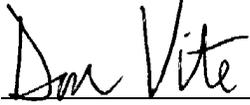
Miscellaneous / Announcements / Schedule

- On January 14, Berrien County Animal Control will be at Station #1 from 10:00 am – 12 pm for a small animal booster shot clinic.

- Township Board Budget workshops subject to the Open Meetings Act for the 2017/2018 budget will be Saturday, January 21 at 9 a.m. and Saturday, February 4 at 9 a.m.
- The next township board meeting will be Thursday, February 9, 2017, at 7:00 p.m.

Motion by Hicks to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



January 12, 2017

Don Vite

Date

Bertrand Township Clerk