

**Bertrand Township Board  
Regular Meeting  
And  
General Fund Budget Hearing (7:15 p.m.)  
And  
Fire Assessment District Budget Hearing (7:45 p.m.)  
Thursday, February 9, 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 Kuhn to approve Consent Agenda as presented:

- Township Board Meeting Minutes from January 12, 2017
- Township Budget Planning Session Minutes from January 21, 2017
- Accounts Payable for the period 01/13-02/09 presented:

Total General Fund Expenses	\$33,994.40
Total Fire Dept. Fund Expenses	\$28,966.95
Total WRT Fund Expenses	\$103.59
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$63,064.94</b>

- Treasurer's Report as of January 31:

General Fund	\$1,462,424.55
Total Fire Dept. Fund	\$220,320.62
Total WRT Fund	\$3,215.18
<b>Total Fund Current Assets</b>	<b>\$1,685,960.35</b>

**Discussion:** Treasurer Kuhn also attached his Tax Collection Bond provided by Burnham&Flower for \$908,032.

Roll call vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

**Reports** *(see attachments)*

**Sheriff's Department**

Deputy Abby Pifer submitted the monthly report. There wasn't any extraordinary activity in the township last month.

**Fire Department**

Chief Knisely submitted the February, 2017, monthly Fire Department report. He said Spencer Mfg. requested the use of the new Tanker truck for a show in Novi, MI, from February 28 – March 1. They are fully bonded. He also said LMC is hosting a free Drug Awareness program on Feb. 11 and anyone is invited to attend. The Fire Department celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year – cause for celebration!

**Motion** made by Hicks, supported by Vite to permit Spencer Manufacturing to borrow the new tanker at their expense for the fire show in Novi, MI, from February 28 – March 1 and to permit Chief Knisely to work out the transport details with Spencer, including whether we provide our own driver or allow them to take it.

**Discussion:** Consensus from the board that it would be good P.R. for the township to have this recognition. Chief doesn't have a preference whether they drive the truck up or one of our firefighters does. Spencer will cover the costs either way.

Voice vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

### **Bertrand Township General Fund Budget Hearing**

Supervisor Hicks called the budget hearing to order at 7:24 p.m.

Supervisor Hicks presented the tentative 2017/2018 General Fund budget. The revenues and expenditures are as follows:

- General Fund:           \$636,540.00
- West River Terrace:    \$1,059.00
- SMCAS                    \$27,460.00

Millage for township operations will be .88880 mil, and authorized special assessment of \$12.50 per parcel for street lighting in the West River Terrace subdivision Special Lighting District.

The three major projects for the next fiscal year will be: roads at ~\$150,000, Community Hall at ~\$56,140, and Cemeteries at ~\$33,250. Roads will be down slightly from 2016, but we'll accomplish the projects we've targeted.

Former Sexton Wolf did a fantastic job in 2016 beginning the process of cleaning up the cemeteries and getting them surveyed. Items being addressed this year are: leaning and fallen headstones that need to be righted, fencing and boundary issues, and additional brush and tree cleanup.

The Community Hall was inspected Wightman & Associates. It is structurally sound, but has some needs to prevent further deterioration and to spruce it up to become a greater source of revenue for the township.

Supervisor Hicks really wants significant community input as to the direction the board takes in investing in the Community Building repairs. He would like to use the most effective means to reach every township resident to get their input. It would be futile to make the investment required to spruce it up if there was no interest or support from the community.

Salaries remain unchanged from the previous year.

The hearing was closed at 7:43 p.m.

### **Fire Assessment District Budget Hearing**

Supervisor Hicks called the budget hearing to order at 7:43 p.m.

Chief Knisely presented the tentative 2017/2018 budget at \$201,487.00. Millage for general operations will be 1.526 mills.

Pay increases 5% for the Chief, Asst. Chief, and Officers. The Fire Call hourly rate also increases slightly for certified and non-certified fire fighters.

The only other noticeable increase to the budget to Building Repairs and Maintenance. The heater units in Station 1 need to be replaced. Chief Knisely provided bids showing it will cost nearly \$10,000.

There was discussion as to whether the township technically has a Fire “District”. Fire Districts allow special assessments without a public vote. Apparently, Pam Baker sent Chief Knisely an email raising the issue. No one on the board nor the Chief knows the history in the township as to when we started referring to it as a Fire District. Supervisor Hicks will inquire with MTA.

Chief said Steve Harrington from E1 has agreed to help sell the retired tanker and is asking for a 7% commission. There was some discussion re: looking at other means to sell it but the conclusion of the board is that no one on the FD has the time and resources to focus on selling it and permission was given for Chief to work with E1 to sell the truck and use the proceeds to help pay down the new Spencer tanker.

The hearing was closed at 7:58 p.m.

### **Reports (cont'd)** *(see attachments)*

#### **SMCAS**

Chief Knisely reported. Highlights included:

- SMCAS is working on a safety manual
- A computer system with camera is being installed on the rigs to help monitor erratic driving which has been reported for some personnel.
- They have money in the bank and it appears the \$20 assessment is adequate.
- They are focusing on fleet maintenance and have added a new unit with another in production.

#### **SE Berrien County Landfill**

Trustees Zelmer and Kuhn reported. Highlights included:

- Continuing to bring in sand and prepare for the new cell
- Drilling new vertical wells for natural gas to eliminate odor
- Audit recently completed which was best result in Zelmer’s memory
- The new cell is being fully self-financed

### **Public Comments**

A resident suggested a plaque commemorating 75 years for the Fire Department which might include former fire fighters’ names.

### **Unfinished Business**

NONE

### **New Business**

#### 1. LMC Summer Tax Collection

**Motion** made by Kuhn, supported by Vite to permit Treasurer Kuhn to collect Lake Michigan College’s summer tax and to negotiate with LMC a fee of up \$2.50/parcel but no less than \$1.50/parcel.

**Discussion:** This is the second year in a row LMC has asked for the township to collect summer tax. Treasurer Kuhn has researched other municipalities’ fees and discovered some

are charging up to \$3.00/parcel, so he would like to negotiate a higher fee than the \$1.50 LMC has offered.

Voice vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

## 2. Credit Card Policy Revision

In coordination with Resolution 170209A being proposed (see next item), Supervisor Hicks wanted to modify section 4.58 Credit Card Use Policy of the Policy Manual adopted last summer. Wherever this section refers to “Supervisor”, it will be changed to “Clerk”. The wording of this section will then nearly match the policy defined in Resolution 170209A.

## 3. Credit Card Use Policy

**Motion** made by Vite, supported by Hicks to adopt Resolution 170209A – A Resolution Establishing Credit Card Use Policy.

**Discussion:** Treasurer Kuhn has researched the issue and found that the best option in terms of recordkeeping would be a debit card from our current financial institution, Honor Credit Union. They require a resolution adopted by the board to be on file before they issue one. Clerk Vite requested the use of one as he is increasingly making online purchases for various incidental department and office needs.

Roll call vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

## Public Comments

NONE

## Board Member Comments

Clerk Vite received an email from attorney Bell requesting a slight modification to the wording of resolution passed on December 8, 2016, to permit liquor sales in the township. The modification simply stated that to the board’s knowledge, there was never a referendum vote by the residents of the township on this issue. She said the clerk’s signature did not need board approval.

## Communications

- The Board of Review meets the following dates and times:
  - March 7<sup>th</sup> – Organizational Meeting at 4:00 p.m.
  - March 13<sup>th</sup> – Appeal Hearings from 9 a.m.–Noon and 1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.
  - March 15<sup>th</sup> – Appeal Hearings from 2:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. –9:00 p.m.

## Miscellaneous / Announcements / Schedule

- The next township board meeting will be Thursday, March 9, 2017, at 7:00 p.m.

**Motion** made by Hicks to adjourn at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Don Vite

Bertrand Township Clerk

February 10, 2017

Dated