

**Bertrand Township Board
Regular Meeting
Thursday, August 9, 2018**

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

Supervisor Hicks called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Members Absent: None

Special Guests: Dale Stover, Independent Grant Writer; Christopher Quattrin, Berrien County Drain Commissioner

Consent Agenda *(see attachments)*

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

- Added item #8 to New Business – Fallen Tree in Bakertown Cemetery
- Township Board Meeting Minutes from July 12, 2018
- Accounts Payable for the period 07/13-08/09 as presented:

Total General Fund Expenses:	\$22,622.40
Total Fire Dept. Fund Expenses:	\$11,529.21
Total WRT Fund Expenses:	\$89.20
Total Expenses:	<u>\$34,240.81</u>

- Treasurer's Report as of July 31, 2018:

General Fund:	\$1,463,336.28
Total Fire Dept. Fund:	\$282,736.24
Total WRT Fund:	\$2,465.30
Total Fund Current Assets:	<u>\$1,748,537.82</u>

Roll call vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

Reports

Sheriff's Department *(see attachment)*

Deputy Alisch presented the June 2018 report. When asked about recent break-ins in the township, he said there have been others recently in adjacent townships including Buchanan Township. No arrests have been made at this time. The break-ins are during the day, and guns and technology items are what have been taken.

Fire Department *(see attached)*

Chief Knisely submitted the August 2018 monthly Fire Department report. He is very pleased with Target Solutions online training. 72 calls year-to-date.

Chief Knisely introduced Dale Stover, a long-time friend and firefighting colleague who has a high success rate in grant writing for volunteer fire departments. Dale proceeded to tell about himself: he worked for the federal government in the \$325 million funded Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, and after leaving the federal government has very successfully

written grants for volunteer fire departments to access these funds. He is highly versed in the nuances of the program as well as in writing these grants. Chief said the BTFD has 13 SCBA air packs from 2003. They are needing upgrades of the bottles, masks, and air refilling stations, and chief wishes to seek about \$100,000 in funding from the grant. Dale offers his grant writing services for \$1,000.

Motion made by Vite, seconded by Zelmer, to permit chief Knisely to hire Dale Stover for \$1,000 to write the grant seeking the appropriate funding of approximately \$100,000 from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program.

Discussion: The money will come out of account 702.3-Fire Officer Salary-Lieutenant.

Voice vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

SMCAS

Chief Knisely gave a verbal report:

- A new ambulance was placed in service and staged at Milton Township
- Ongoing issue that SMCAS is insufficiently reimbursed from Medicaid and they are pursuing a remedy to this problem.

SE Berrien County Landfill

Trustee Zelmer gave a verbal report:

- No fines have been issued to date from the state for the breach last month. The state was immediately involved and seemed satisfied with the landfill's quick and appropriate response.
- Treasurer Kuhn wired the \$1 million from a matured CD to the water treatment fund.
- Work continues on the water treatment plant

Sexton

Discussed below in item #8.

NATS

None.

Public Comments

None

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

1. Topinabee Drain – Christopher Quattrin

Background: Christopher Quattrin, Berrien County Drain Commissioner, presented the Topinabee Drain problem to the board. Because of two 100-year floods in the last two years, a 3-mile portion of it has severe erosion issues that are compromising homes and other structures. Bertrand Township, Niles Charter Township, and Niles City are the three municipalities that are in the drain's boundaries. The cost to fix the drain as well as pay off the remaining note from prior repairs is \$400,000.

Since this is well above his lawful spending limit, he has the authority to get the funds from the municipalities affected in one of two ways: 1) A special assessment – the least expensive

and most streamlined solution; or 2) A petition process where only five entities are required to file a petition to begin the process, but which will at least double the cost of the project for various reasons. He is asking the board to consider the special assessment.

Discussion: Mr. Quattrin presented the Assessment Roll, which affects 63 township taxpayers. He urged the board to give careful consideration and deliberation and offered to provide any presentations as necessary to get the public on board.

Action Item: The board agreed it is appropriate to have a Public Hearing at which time Mr. Quattrin will be invited back to present this information. Supervisor Hicks will prepare a letter for Clerk Vite to send out to those on the special assessment roll, inviting them to the hearing.

2. Resignation of Building Inspector

Motion made by Zelmer, seconded by Vite, to accept the resignation of Dave Swanstrom from the position of Bertrand Township Building Inspector.

Voice vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

3. Building Inspector Candidate

Motion made by Hicks, seconded by Vite, to hire Todd Herter effective immediately as an independent contractor to be the Bertrand Township Building Inspector.

Discussion: Supervisor Hicks will ensure the transition of work-in-progress which Swanstrom started and Herter finishes will be coordinated between the two of them so the township doesn't make excess payments.

Roll call vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

4. Property at 1880 S. Redbud Trail

Motion made by Vite, seconded by Payton, to accept Deau Excavating's bid of \$7,375 to demo the house at 1880 S. Redbud Trail.

Discussion: Vite will call AEP and have power cut for the property.

Roll call vote: **Ayes: Payton, Kuhn, Vite, Hicks**

Nays: Zelmer

Passed 4-1

5. Ordinance 66

(Refer to item #1 under New Business in the June 14, 2018 minutes for a background to this Ordinance proposal.)

Overview: In this month's packet, Treasurer Kuhn provided the board with a labor cost study for fire runs based on 2017/2018 actual payroll figures. This cost study would be the basis for a schedule of fees in a resolution addendum to the ordinance that may be reviewed and updated from time to time. He also provided schedules of fees of other municipalities as well as the MTA's suggested schedule of fees for comparison and consideration. Finally, he provided ordinances from other municipalities in Michigan who have already implemented a similar ordinance.

Clerk Vite encouraged the board members to access the MTA Member Portal and review comments by board members of these other municipalities who have already implemented such an ordinance. Almost unanimously their responses are similar, summed up by one comment, “recovering even a portion of charges is better than nothing.”

Trustee Zelmer would like more information tracked from Chief Knisely to help gauge how practical implementing and enforcing such an ordinance would be. Other members asked for more real data, too.

Action item: The board asked Chief Knisely to track the portion of fire runs attributable to non-residents and the total costs involved (Residents are excluded from charges from most situations) for the next month as well as evaluate the last few months of runs.

6. Community Hall Handrail Proposal

Motion made by Vite, seconded by Payton, to accept ProRail Aluminum Railings proposal A1801-02, item #1 ONLY for \$1,800 to install a 1½” SATIN BLACK aluminum handrails on each side of the existing handicap ramp to comply with ADA requirements.

Roll call vote: **Ayes: Hicks, Kuhn, Payton, Vite**

Nays: none

Abstains: Zelmer

Passed 4-0

7. Township Hall A/C Removal Proposal

Motion made by Payton, seconded by Vite, to accept ProRail Aluminum Railings proposal A1801-03, for both portions of the proposal totaling \$4,450 to remove both existing A/C units and refinishing the interior and exterior walls of the opening per the proposal.

Roll call vote: **Ayes: Hicks, Kuhn, Payton, Vite**

Nays: none

Abstains: Zelmer

Passed 4-0

8. Fallen Tree in Bakertown Cemetery

Motion made by Vite, seconded by Payton, to accept Cisco’s Tree Service bid #3 of \$2,800 to cut down and cut up the half-fallen tree at Bakertown Cemetery without hauling wood away.

Discussion: Sexton Redman is confident he will find an interested party to haul the wood away.

Roll call vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

Public Comments

None

Board Member Comments

- Vite said 533 people voted in the Primary election last Tuesday.
- Hicks gave an update on the Ayers Basement Systems moisture barrier install at the Community Building. The project has been delayed for a couple of reasons including sickness, but has been rescheduled again for the coming week. He also gave an update on

the Community Building WiFi project. The installer can only do it on Sundays, and thus far hasn't been able to coordinate with Supervisor Hicks a time to do it. Hicks will follow up and get it done this month.

Communications


- None

Miscellaneous / Announcements / Schedule

- The next township board meeting will be Thursday, September 13, 2018, at 7:00 p.m.

Motion by Hicks to adjourn at 9:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



August 12, 2018

Don Vite

Dated

Bertrand Township Clerk