

**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 13, 2020**

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, Zelmer

Members Absent: Vite

Special Guests: Minutes recorded by Deputy Clerk Ronni Redman

**Consent Agenda** (see attachments)

**Motion** made by Zelmer seconded by Payton to approve as presented:

- Township Board Meeting Minutes from January 9, 2020 – changed thousands notation from Greek ‘M’ to zeroes to avoid confusion
- Township Budget Workshop Minutes from February 1, 2020
- Accounts Payable for the period 01/10/20-02/13/20 as presented:

Total General Fund Expenses:	\$36,320.90
Total Fire Dept. Fund Expenses:	\$14,033.12
Total WRT Fund Expenses:	\$80.29
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b><u>\$66,767.82</u></b>

- Treasurer’s Report as of January 31, 2020:

General Fund:	\$1,458,444.70
Total Fire Dept. Fund:	\$365,592.22
Total WRT Fund:	\$2,326.20
<b>Total Fund Current Assets:</b>	<b><u>\$1,826,363.12</u></b>

- Budget Amendment

**Discussion:** Payton pointed out use of ‘M’ in notating budget amounts. Vite used the Greek thousand ‘M’ notation – will change zeroes to avoid confusion.

Roll call vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

**Reports**

Sheriff’s Department (on file)

Deputy Baggett presented the monthly report.

Fire Department (on file)

Chief Knisely submitted the February 2020 monthly Fire Department report.

SMCAS (on file)

Chief Knisely submitted a written report.

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

Supervisor Hicks called the budget hearing to order at 7:15 p.m.

Supervisor Hicks presented the tentative 2020/2021 General Fund budget. There's about a 6% increase from last year. The revenues and expenditures are as follows:

- General Fund: \$757,609.00
- West River Terrace: \$869.00
- SMCAS \$32,020.00

State Revenue Sharing is projected to be \$237,487. Road construction expenses are budgeted at \$181,358.

Blight has become an issue the board is taking seriously. To prepare for the short-term costs of remediating blight situations, a new blight category has been created into the budget to cover attorney fees as well as excavation costs.

The board is also proactively preparing for the next new fire truck purchase in a few years as well future building projects and have added categories to the budget to start saving for those.

A proposed 2% pay increase for hourly and regular employees, which are:

- Administrative Assistant
- Supervisor, Treasurer, Clerk
- Deputies
- Assessor

Zoning Administrator salary will increase 10% because of the workload she has maintained that has helped the township save thousands from the use of the planner.

Trustee pay will increase \$500 each.

Refer to the February 1, 2020 Budget Planning Workshop Minutes for various other budget items.

**Discussion:** None.

**Public questions:** Various residents made comments concerning roads scheduled for repairs and the method used to determine priorities. Supervisor Hicks clarified the system the county uses to prioritize roads. The township participates in the discussions, but once the determination is made the county fixes them on their timeline with little regard to township input.

With no questions from the public, the hearing was closed at 7:30 p.m.

### **SE Berrien County Landfill**

Treasurer Kuhn and Trustee Zelmer gave a verbal report.

### **Planning Commission**

Treasurer Kuhn gave a verbal report. Remaining ordinances have been approved.

### **Sexton**

None

## NATS

Trustee Payton gave a verbal report.

## Public Comments

Chief commented that Duane Vance suggested the Fire Dept use the condemned house on 1980 Sage Rd for training. Chief will investigate the legal possibilities.

Chief also received the \$8,300 grant for nine new thermal imaging cameras and one rescue randy.

Mr. Richard Kuntz has a concern about a fallen tree on his property coming from the township Fire Station property. Chief will get it cleared away.

## Unfinished Business

None

## New Business

### 1. LMC Summer Tax Collection

**Motion** made by Zelmer, supported by Payton to permit Treasurer Kuhn to collect Lake Michigan College's summer tax for a fee of \$2.75/parcel.

Voice vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

## Fire Assessment District Budget Hearing

Supervisor Hicks called the budget hearing to order at 7:45 p.m.

Chief Knisely presented the tentative 2020/2021 budget at \$216,062.00. Millage for general operations will be 1.526 mills.

The Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, and Officers will receive 2% pay increases.

Fire Call hourly rates will be simplified to \$16 for **certified** firefighters for each of the four categories: Fire Calls, Work Detail, Training, Meetings, and the new category Online Training. Clerk Vite will no longer pay by individual category. Chief Knisely will continue to record by individual category for department records. Candidate pay will be \$11 across the board.

Refer to the February 1, 2020 Budget Planning Workshop Minutes for various projected customary expenses budgeted.

With no questions from the public, the hearing was closed at 7:50 p.m.

## New Business (cont'd)

### 2. Tax Collection Designee

**Motion** made by Zelmer, supported by Payton to approve appointment of Administrative Assistant Nancy Lentsch to have the authority to collect property taxes on behalf of the Treasurer.

**Discussion:** Treasurer Kuhn is making this request under the authority of HB 4200 (PA 129) that took effect on November 21, 2019 permitting township boards to approve designees other than the treasurer and their deputy to collect property taxes.

Roll call vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

3. Farm Land for Rent US 12 (adjacent to Fire Station)

**Motion** made by Zelmer, supported by Kuhn to accept sealed bids through March 9, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. to rent out approximately four tillable acres of township property at 4770 W US Hwy 12 adjacent to the Fire Station.

Roll call vote: **Motion carried unanimously**

**Public Comments**

Mr. Hanover asked what status was with swimming pool demolition on US12 condemned property next to Store12. Supervisor Hicks said it is still being pursued and the township has been told there will be a court date set in February.

**Board Member Comments**

Supervisor Hicks said Zoning Administrator spoke with the owner of the property of the squatter on Sage Rd. The owner assured her he would go to the courts to have him evicted. Attorney Senica has spoken to the person allegedly living in the trailer, and he said he no longer lives there. Sara gave him a deadline to remove the trailer from the property.

**Communications**

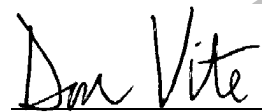
1. Board of Review dates set for March 10 and March 12.

**Miscellaneous / Announcements / Schedule**

- The next regular township board meeting will be Thursday, March 12, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

With no further discussion, **motion** by Hicks to adjourn at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Don Vite  
Bertrand Township Clerk

February 20, 2020

Dated