

MINUTES OF THE AU GRES TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING July 9th, 2024 ~ 7:00 P.M.

IN ATTENDANCE: Supervisor Jim Herzog, Clerk Michael Oxley, Treasurer Patricia Tremble, Trustee Penny Kurchak and Trustee Jan Bullock

ABSENT: None

ATTENDEES: In order of signing in: Bill Bullock, Art Gallop (Zoning Administrator), Kirk and Oceanna Olson, Aurette Gates, Jeff Czymbor, Ben Keeley, Becca Daniels, Wes Crumby, Joy and Rick Willis, Marsha Fortner, Officer Tim Robbins.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting began at 6:58pm with the pledge of allegiance.

BOARD COMMENT: Treasurer Pat Tremble read from a prepared letter refuting inflammatory and misleading statements being posted on a Facebook website. Explaining and correcting the postings, including: Purchasing \$25,000 Forever postage stamps before a price increase, Overwhelming number of FOIA requests to Clerk Oxley and herself, Township board members (elected) salaries/pay versus workload/hours it takes to do the job, Pure Green (marijuana facility 2497 E Huron Road) odor and waste disposal issues, Site Line vs. sight Line issues on Green Drive (sound barrier 'fence'), Au Gres Township website, Zoning Administrator and zoning permits, migrant workers living in Au Gres Township, Kola Farms (marijuana facility 2285 Manor Road) rumors, township meeting times (daytime vs. evening hours), and end with the statement 'Get the facts!'. Give us a call we would love to hear from you.

APPROVAL of AGENDA: Motion made by Tremble to approve the agenda as presented. Motion supported by Trustee Penny Kurchak. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Agenda approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT (2 minute limit per person/group): Ocean Olson (daughter of Kirk Olson) read from a list of her concerns: #1 chickens on their Rumsey Road property, #2 Bike path from Green Drive to Au Gres City, #3 Playground at the boardwalk park.

Kirk Olson responded to the removal of the Porta-Potty at the boardwalk park, suggesting the repeated spreading of feces on the inside of the unit, could be behavior from a child who is being abused (and not simply vandalism).

Ben Keeley 70 Noggle Road, has lived in the township 2-1/2 months, spoken to the road commission and Brad Stauffer about the drainage ditch along Noggle which does not keep water from backing up into his house, even with drain tiles a foot deep.

Joy Willis 641 S Hale Road, was disappointed in the maintenance of Linwood Cemetery, it looked awful before Memorial Day, and stated there was damage (or stolen) memorabilia from her father's gravesite.

Derek Porritt asked about the houses on Green Drive which are beyond blight, without windows or electric. And spoke about line of sight, neighboring house(s) being 27 feet in front of his house, zoning administrator did not do his job allowing those houses to be built.

Joy Willis began speaking again about the cars on the property north of hers and blight in the township... others began to speak out of turn when Trustee Kurchak stood up and pointed out to the attendees that the purpose of the board meeting is to do the board business, people have had their time to speak, now it is time for the board to proceed with the agenda.

APPROVAL of the MINUTES: Motion made by Tremble to approve the minutes of the June 11th, 2024 Board of trustees meeting. Motion supported by Kurchak. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Minutes approved.

PAYMENT OF BOOK OF BILLS: Motion made by Tremble to approve the June 2024 book of bills as presented. Motion supported by Oxley. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Motion approved

TREASURER'S REPORT: Read by Treasurer Patricia Tremble. Total of all funds (including CD, money market investments and \$17,498.91 in accrued interest on investments) is now \$1,545,633.56. Motion made by Trustee

Jan Bullock approve the treasurer's report. Supported by Kurchak. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Motion approved

BOARD REPORTS:

AUGRES-SIMS-WHITNEY FIRE AUTHORITY: Meeting held at the Au Gres Fire Hall, called to order by Olen Swartz. Treasurer's report was given by Tom Brandimore, reviewing the monthly bills, reporting that the firefighters payroll was \$2,000 less than estimated. Brandimore then passed documents (Interim (internal) Financial Reporting and Unclaimed Property policies which could satisfy the auditors requests. The board approved both documents. On the auditor's topic of firefighters not cashing their checks, Fire Chief Kurt Hummerickhouse said he would take care of the issue.

It was noted that treasurer Tom Brandimore and secretary Penny Kurchak have been working for over five years with neither of them being offered a raise. The board voted a raise for both of them.

Hummerickhouse reported nine (9) fire runs, a house fire on Bay Ridge Drive, a car accident on US-23 and M-65 causing cars to be backed up, and reports of smoke in the area (not fires). Hummerickhouse talked about needing a new Gator, the present one being undersized, and Hummerickhouse has been using his own equipment in the mean time. Prices from Woodland Trailers and Richardson Sales were discussed, with Richardsons \$4,922.25 bid being accepted. The Au Gres Fire Hall needs a roof replacement, four (4) bids were discussed and Saunders Construction was the lowest bid for shingles and steel.

Next Fire Board meeting is on Thursday July 17th the Au Gres Township Fire Hall.

HERITAGE ROUTE AUTHORITY: Jan Bullock reporting, Vintage Car Show had 29 entries and it didn't rain (last year it rained all day). Kurt Hillman went out of his way to bring residents from Eden Fields and Medilodge nursing homes to see the cars. The Omer courthouse junque and bake sale made \$2400.00 being open the 3,4th and 5th. Future activity dates and times are in the AHRA minutes in the agenda packet.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: Art Gallop Zoning Administrator reporting. an 80-acre parcel on Lentner Road north of the bridge asked about building a 30x40 pole barn. Road is full of pot holes past the bridge. Two additions, one to a house, and another to a garage on Bay Ridge Drive. Work has begun at Atwater's place on Santiago, moving ahead with the addition to his house (Santiago Road). Kelly Wilson's barn (3098 Pt. Au Gres Road) has yet to begin being built.

LINWOOD CEMETERY REPORT: Kurchak spoke that she had visited other locations to view and test benches like those to be installed at Linwood Cemetery (Chippewa Tribe gave \$12,000 for four benches and trash cans). Kurchak called and left messages with Veterans Memorial Park staff to see where they purchased their benches. Joy Willis asked to have Herzog go to the cemetery to inspect the reported damage to her father's grave. Kurchak planned to go along, as member of the Cemetery Board.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

a). Oxley asked Herzog to follow up on the street light projects (Manor/Dreyer and Manor/Davis corners). Herzog to get with Consumers Energy on the status.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Resolution to establish the July Board of Review day/date and time. Motion made by Oxley to hold the July Board of Review on July 18th, 2024 at 4:00pm. Motion supported by Bullock. Roll Call Vote: Kurchak ~ Yes, Herzog ~ Yes, Tremble ~ Yes, Bullock ~ Yes, Oxley ~ Yes. All Ayes. No Nays. Motion approved. The July board of review is a public meeting for corrections to the tax rolls, not for public petitions (except for Veteran's exemption and hardship filings). Oxley to post signs for the Board of Review meeting.
- b. Assessor to replace Barbara Jones, our assessor for the past 16+ years. Tremble stated that an interview was held for Kelly Rifenbark on June 5th, that Kelly came with the credentials of being the head of the equalization department in Bay County. When asked if she would take the position Kelly said she was excited to do so. No board motion required to hire her, as the assessor works for the treasurer's office. With board agreeing, she starts in July. As for pay, Tremble said Kelly charged 12.50 per parcel, which would be \$16262.50 per year. Tremble asked the board to approve he salary at \$16,500/yr. Motion made by Oxley to set the assessor pay at \$16,500.00 per year. Motion supported by Bullock. Voice Vote: All Ayes, No Nays, Motion approved.
- c. Jodway Road north ditch cleanout project. Herzog reported that the only bid received so far was from Killingbeck's Excavating (\$32,000 to clean the ditch, removing spoils and trees). Two other companies had been contacted for bids on the project. No replies as of yet, no hurry on the project. Item tabled awaiting bids.
- d. Troy Gerding, variance to build a garage on his Rumsey Road property (which already has the maximum 3 structures). The Planning Commission heard his appeal at a PC meeting on July 1st, 2024 - the 3rd structure being a 100yr old ice-house near the water, as well as no contest with building the garage by either his neighbor to the north or south, the Planning Commission board recommended approval of the zoning permit for a new garage to the township board. His \$150 variance fee has been paid.

The township board questioned having gotten permission from EGLE on building the structure, so the board tabled the issue for another month. Art Gallop to contact Gerding to have him arrange a visit from EGLE.

- e. First Quarterly Budget Review for fiscal year 2024-2025. Clerk Oxley handed out budget analysis reports for the General Fund, reminding the board members that we are only concerned with over-budget expenditures at the 'Control Group' level. If a control group has a large expenditure in one line item, but the control group was no over-budget, then there was no issue at this time.
Four (4) line items had over expenditures (highlighted in yellow), and Oxley had reports of those what those expenditures entailed. None of which caused any control group issues, though by the 2nd quarter review, some budget amendments may be required.

BOARD COMMENT: Kurchak thanked the attendees for being respectful during the meeting, noting that things can get heated, but this is a business meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Kirk Olson gave suggestions about the vandalism at the boardwalk park such as cameras. And reiterated his thoughts about the port-a-potty issue being someone crying out for help. Oxley said that the cameras installed at the hall due to dumping of trash, never paid off. Officer Robbins said that unless you have high resolution cameras, a license plate is unreadable. Robbins said that public support is the best effort, if you see something, report it, as an officer he has to have positive ID to prosecute - community is the key!

Derek Porritt spoke again about the blighted property, no one is doing anything about them.

Wes Crumby stated that Lola Lane residents were interested in bids to 'Chip & Seal' their road. Herzog responded that there was a new process (for dirt/gravel roads) which was used on Black Road in Mason Township.

Joy Willis asked about what expenditures could the Marijuana Fund monies be used.

ADJOURNMENT: TIME – 8:28pm. Motion made by Tremble to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Kurchak. Voice vote: All yeas. No Nays. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes approved at the regular Board of Trustees Meeting on _____

James Herzog, Supervisor _____

Michael Oxley, Clerk _____