

GARDEN TOWNSHIP BOARD MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
August 10, 2021

The regular meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 p.m. by Gary Sporer.

Prayer was given by Gary Sporer

Present: Brenda Lester, Janet Feenstra-Daasch, Sue Rochefort, Craig Potvin, and Gary Sporer

CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS: None.

MINUTES: Sue made a motion, seconded by Janet, to approve the minutes for the regular meeting held on July 13, 2021. Ayes: 5, Nays: 0. Motion carried.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS: None.

APPROVAL OF THE BILLS: A motion was made by Janet, seconded by Craig, to approve the bills as submitted by the Clerk. Roll Call Vote: Janet – yes, Sue – yes, Craig – yes, Brenda – yes, and Gary – yes. Motion carried.

REPORTS:

ASSESSOR'S REPORT: Colleen Maki presented the assessor report. State of Michigan AMAR audit was discussed. Joe will send a corrective action plan to Lansing to resolve the issue with the poverty exemptions.

CLOSED SESSION: Gary made a motion to go into closed session to discuss a personnel issue, seconded by Janet. Roll call vote: Craig – yes, Brenda – yes, Sue – yes, Janet – yes, and Gary - yes. Meeting adjourned to continue in Closed Session at 7:24 p.m.

Closed session ended at 7:35 p.m.

Regular meeting was called to order by Gary at 7:36 p.m.

Present: Craig Potvin, Brenda Lester, Sue Rochefort, Janet Feenstra-Daasch, and Gary Sporer.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: Chief, Keith Farley, was not present so there was no Chief report. Brenda stated that the township received another recall notice on the brush truck. Ford will be contacted to see if 1st Attack would be allowed to complete repairs for the recall.

CLERK/CEMETERY REPORT: Archie said the new chain saw has been received and it works well. He has been cutting down some trees but there are some additional trees that need to come down. Brenda wants to have Betty start doing some work at the cemetery. Gary will talk to Archie to ask him to order the protection equipment needed from Lunds. Brenda called the township attorney about the FOIA request received from Mark F. (Thor) Hearne, II, regarding the election records. Township attorney was going to work on a letter for the township to respond to the request but it hasn't been received yet.

Brenda also said that she sent a letter to Mark Hearne requesting a deposit and hasn't heard from him. If we don't hear back, we'll have to hold onto to the request for one year to see if they respond.

TREASURER: The Treasurer and Clerk accounts balance for the month of July, 2021. The Village of Garden Clerk's computer was hacked into and they couldn't locate some of the documents and their QuickBooks program. We have Windows Defender on our computers and the Village was told that wasn't good enough. Brenda made a motion, seconded by Janet, to have the board approve additional security and antivirus protection and a back-up system for the township computers. Roll Call Vote: Janet – yes, Sue – yes, Gary – yes, Craig – yes, and Brenda – yes. Motion carried. Janet stated she heard from Tom Lang again regarding the deadline to pay taxes and he feels the postmark date should be accepted as the paid date. He also stated that he contacted Delta County about this and he wasn't happy with his answer. Janet stated she told him the board didn't feel that way and that the actual receipt date should be the date paid. Mr. Lang indicated he's going to contact the Attorney General about this matter.

TOWNSHIP HALL: Gary and Sue met with Mike of Sine Tech regarding security cameras for the township hall. For six cameras and the recording device, the approximate cost would be \$5,200.00. If the board would like to proceed with a security system, Sine Tech would provide a detailed estimate. The hall doesn't have reliable Wi-fi so that would be an issue. The purchase of security cameras was tabled.

TRANSFER STATION: Bill talked to Bryan Goudreau about removing freon from the items at the transfer station that were dropped off. Bryan can't get to it now. There was an incident with a resident, Ron Oberg, that resides in the northern portion of the township. Mr. Oberg brought a mattress and a box spring to dispose of and wasn't aware there is a charge for it now and he refused to pay. Gary will Call Mr. Oberg about this. Gary said we need to make sure we get the word out to people regarding the new fees for township residents by publishing it in the papers and he will place ads in The Advisor and will find out what newspaper to publish it in for the northern township residents. New signage should also be considered to post the fees for everyone. A discussion was held whether the chipper should be sold because it isn't used. Bill said he will call U.P. Tractor to find out what it's worth.

PARKS AND RECREATION: There is a new person at C.U.P.P.A.D. who helps with the recreation plans. Janet stated they are charging us now for their service and the price would be \$5,500.00 for the three entities of Garden Township, Fairbanks Township, and the Village of Garden to complete the recreation plan. Janet is waiting to hear if Fairbanks and the Village are willing to join Garden Township. The recreation plan must be updated by the end of 2021 in order to apply for any grants. Fairbanks is discussing it tonight and the Village will be the first Wednesday of September. The drive at the township park needs some gravel so Janet will call D. & L. Gembel and DesJarden Excavating to get estimates.

SUPERVISOR COMMENTS: Brenda made a motion, seconded by Janet, to accept the MTA Principles of Governance that was received. Ayes: 5, Nays: 0. Motion carried. Gary attended two FEMA briefings in July regarding flood zones. By Garden Township complying, property owners are covered with a favorable rate for flood insurance. The township needs to define who is posting what on our webpage and Facebook so that it is done in a timelier manner.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER: John Malnar stated Heritage was sending the road commission \$3,000.00 a year to go toward road maintenance but he's not sure where to, whether Fairbanks and/or Garden Township. The Sherrif may have an animal control position available again.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Fire Signs:** Gary has received a lot of phone calls and emails regarding the 911 signs.
- **Purchase of State Land at Transfer Station:** Still pending.

- **American Rescue Plan:** Gary completed the necessary steps in order to receive the ARP funds. There will be a direct payment to Garden Township for approximately \$52,218.00, 50-60% during fiscal year 2021/2022 with the remainder 12 months later. A set of guidelines was received from the Michigan Township's Association but they are still working on it. The money must be spent by December 31, 2024. The township needs to figure out where to spend the money and then set priorities. The township should also consider a way to receive input from the public.
- **Road Repairs:** A motion was made by Janet, seconded by Brenda, to go forward with removing the seal coat and putting down gravel on 18th Road for an approximate cost of \$12,000.00 provided this project and chloride treatment does not exceed \$18,000.00. Ayes: 5, Nays: 0. Motion carried. If the township can afford it, they may consider putting down a seal coat the following year(s).
- **Van's Harbor Street Lights:** Tabled.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Substitute Pay:** Brenda feels Betty Smithson and Tom Trisch should receive an increase in their hourly wage. Craig made a motion, seconded by Sue, to raise the hourly wage for Betty Smithson and Tom Trisch to \$12.00 per hour effective immediately. Roll Call Vote: Craig – yes, Brenda – yes, Gary – yes, Sue – yes, and Janet – yes. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

Gary made a motion, seconded by Sue, to adjourn at 9:21 p.m. Ayes: 5, Nays: 0. Motion carried and meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

Brenda Lester
Garden Township Clerk