

Draft Minutes of the Regular Township Board Meeting of February 12, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Supervisor Cooley called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited.

ROLL CALL: Present: Cooley, Holbrook, Mead & Wilson. Purchase was absent.

Motion by Cooley, support by Holbrook to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes, No nays, motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT: Cathy Brown introduced herself as the new deputy treasurer.

REPORTS:

ASSESSOR: Gunnar Brow, filed a written report at 5:48 pm. Clerk was not able to print it for the Board in time for the meeting, however, it was emailed to each Board member.

ZONING: No report was filed, Marvin Radtke was not present.

PARKS: Mike Mead mentioned that there would need to be an appointment made for the liaison to the Harp Board. Cooley made the motion to appoint Mike Mead as the Township's liaison to Harp, motion seconded by Wilson. All ayes, No nays, motion carried.

PLANNING COMMISSION: Mike Mead reported that the February meeting was cancelled but there is a meeting scheduled for February 17. The master plan is moving forward, there is a very specific order that must be followed in regards to posting and receiving public input.

COMMISSIONER Markey stated that the Benzie County Road Commission may hold a special election in 2025 for millage for a new facility. He discussed the Emergency Operations Plan, that it has been approved and should be sufficient for the next 5 years. The EMS station in Frankfort is still being reviewed and should have some decisions made within the near future as to how to proceed.

FIRE CHIEF: Markey filed an incident report and reviewed the fire on Haze Road and a snowmobile fire. He notified the Board that 3 members of Township Fire Department would be receiving lifesaving awards from the Board of Commissioners on February 25, 2025. The dates for the annual pancake breakfasts were set for April 6, 13, 19 & 27, 2025.

CLERK: Wilson amended to written report to state that a letter had been received from Attorney Tom Grier in regards to the 941 tax issues. All Board members received a copy of the correspondence. She further stated that the IRS has completed their review of that situation and the Township should be notified of the interest and penalties due in the very near future.

TREASURER: Holbrook reported that there had been some minor issues with tax collection but she was working through them. The investments that she has made have yielded \$1640.50 interest in both the general fund and fire accounts. She acknowledged that her new deputy, Cathy Brown, is doing a great job. Holbrook asked Markey (as our IT specialist) to review the Pontem scope of work proposal for the cemetery software. She reported that it may be necessary to take one of our personal property accounts to small claims court to collect back taxes. Lastly, she pointed out that we have not received all of the key

fobs for our new security system nor have we received training in how to operate the system and set the fobs for limited access.

Cooley moved to accept the reports as presented. Mead seconded. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

PAYABLES: Clerk presented payables due for approval in the amount of \$12,704.45. Supervisor added an invoice for TKS Security that increased bills due to \$12,887.45. Cooley moved to pay bills as amended, Holbrook supported. Roll Call: Cooley, yes; Holbrook, yes, Mead, yes; Wilson, yes. No nays, motion carried.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS: Cooley moved to add increase fire equipment fund from \$43,000 to \$49,692.34 and to increase elections by \$2100. Holbrook supported the motion. Roll call: Cooley, yes; Holbrook, yes, Mead, yes; Wilson, yes. No nays, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

BUDGET: Cooley stated that the budget must be finalized and approved prior to April 1, 2025, the start of the new fiscal year. The date of the budget hearing was set as February 25, 2025 at 6:00 pm to allow Chief Markey to be present. The Board authorized an ad to be placed in the local newspaper at least six days prior to the hearing date. It was also suggested that notice be posted on the digital sign & in the box by the front door of the hall.

NEW BUSINESS:

RECORD MANAGEMENT POSITION: There was some discussion in regards to creating a position to organize historic files. A job description was presented for review, a wage range was recommended, discussion ensued as to hiring from within present pool of workers, matter was tabled until the budget hearing.

POST FOR PAPER: It was advised by the supervisor that notices needed to be posted in regards to the 2025-2026 meeting dates of the Homestead Township Board, the meeting dates for the 2025 March Board of Review, the date of the 2025-2026 budget hearing, and the 2025-2026 meeting dates for the Planning Commission. Wilson moved and Mead supported a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-0212-01 establishing the meeting dates for the Planning Commission. All ayes, no nays, motion carried. Clerk will prepare publications for printing.

LAWN SERVICE CONTRACT: Discussed in conjunction with Park maintenance. These positions have been hourly, contract and employee salaried positions in the past. There appears to have been some duplication of services and costs and some job duties that were unclear. Supervisor Cooley would like to see a separation of building maintenance vs grounds maintenance and reverting to contract status. Wilson recommended this matter be tabled until Trustee Purchase could be included in the discussion as he is most familiar with the job requirements. This will be discussed at the budget meeting.

CONTRACTS DUE: Cemetery mowing was discussed, the consensus was to leave as is.

Zoning was discussed, Cooley stated that Marvin Radtke had agreed to continue for another year at the same rate. A new contract will need to be presented.

Benzonia Public Library is asking for a contribution. Last year, Homestead contributed \$ 1000. The library is asking for \$31 per resident for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Concern was expressed that that amount was

a substantial increase, that the library is funded by millage from the Benzonia Township residents and that only 14% of their patrons are residents of Homestead Township. There is also reason to question whether or not the Township can legally contribute as this may be considered a donation and Townships cannot legally make donations. This matter was tabled until the budget hearing and until further research can be conducted.

Healthy Site Analysis: This is a project that would require grants and matching funds. There was not a lot of information to review so this matter was tabled. It sparked some discussion about the issues of budgeting other grant projects and that this might be best reviewed by a park committee in alignment with the parks and recreation plan that goes to public hearing in March, 2025.

PARK & REC PLAN: Notice was posted on the digital sign and in the box next to the door on the Township. Cooley reported that the newspaper ad had been posted previously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Cathy Brown commented that she was impressed by how much this board deals with and that they are doing a great job.

Cooley moved and Holbrook supported to adjourn at 8:05 pm.