

HOMESTEAD TOWNSHIP

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 9, 2024

A regular meeting of Homestead Township was called to order at 6:03 pm by Supervisor Tia Cooley.

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Present by Roll Call: Michael Mead, Tia Cooley, Beverly Holbrook, Shannon Purchase and Kit Wilson.

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Cooley to approve agenda as presented, support by Wilson. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda: Motion by Cooley to approve consent agenda with the move of the Clerk's Report to Reports. Support by Wilson, All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Public Comment: Lindy Evans of the Benzie County Chamber of Commerce spoke in regards to social events being conducted to acquaint the local candidates with each other and their constituents.

James Rayner spoke in regards to proposed repairs to dugouts and concrete steps at the ballfield.

Reports:

Zoning: Marvin reported via email that he would be out of town for a professional conference.

He met with Gourdie Fraser on behalf of the planning commission in regards to the first draft of the master plan map. He is in the process of investigating 7 junk complaints. He received 78 calls, 37 emails and 12 texts the past month.

Assessor: Gunnar Brow was not in attendance but the Clerk was notified that inspections for the prior year's permits were complete and inspections for the 2024 permits was underway.

Parks: Paul Schulte reported that lots of good things are happening at the Platte River Park. There are plans to build a pavilion over the picnic tables. There will be availability to sponsor Memorial benches and recognition plaques to be placed throughout the park. Saturday, October 19 from 9:00 am to noon will be volunteer clean-up and grooming of the blueberry patch. Signage is considered complete for now. A closing date has not been scheduled but will occur as soon as the snow starts.

Shannon Purchase discussed repairs needed for the bleachers. Beverly Holbrook made a motion to allocate \$500 for the repairs, support from Purchase. Roll call vote: Holbrook, yes; Purchase, yes; Cooley, yes; Mead, yes; Wilson, yes. All ayes, no nays, motion carried. Purchase stated that he would contact Kevin in regards to dues for the co-ed baseball league.

It was requested that the bids from Rayner received earlier this year be researched in regards to repairs to the concrete steps and dug-outs at the ballfield.

No **Planning report** was given.

County Commission: Commissioner Markey reported that the new communications tower in Frankfort has been erected. The estimated completion date has been moved to February 2025. There was a presentation on the Dual Deputy/Social Worker program that was driven by CWN. With only 6 months of data, the program seems to be working well. There have been 23 diversions from incarcerations so far. Commissioner Markey reminded the Board of the Jail and ALS millages occurring on the November ballot.

Fire Report: Chief Markey submitted an incident report by category. There were 7 fire runs and 15 medical runs in September. Year to date incidents total 285. Chief Markey asked that the Board accept the resignation of Roger Chorley. Cooley made the motion to accept the resignation of Roger Chorley, support by Purchase, all ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Clerk's Report: Clerk Wilson reported that over 464 absentee ballots had been mailed and 110 ballots completed and returned as of October 8. Wilson reported that the electors Board had voted to provide a meal for the election workers on November 5.

It was also reported that several irregularities regarding payroll and payroll taxes were discovered while preparing for the audit in August. One individual was not paid for attendance of meetings, two individuals were paid an incorrect per meeting rate, another employee was over-compensated at a much higher rate per hour than his co-worker for attending the same meeting and one employee was paid hourly in addition to their salary to duties that fall under their statutory responsibility. Lastly, The Township has incurred thousands of dollars in interest and penalties for untimely filings of State and Federal tax forms. Much discussion ensued resulting in Clerk Wilson making a motion to submit the information and documentation of these payroll issues to legal council for review to determine what course of action should be taken. Support by Holbrook. It was advised that the auditors be contacted and the parties involved to try to reach a resolution. Due to the seriousness of these issues and the potential legal costs, a roll call vote was taken. Wilson, yes; Holbrook, yes; Purchase, yes; Mead, yes; Cooley, no. 4 ayes, 1 nay, motion carried.

Clerk Wilson made another motion in regards to this matter that: the Township employ the firm of UHY to assist in resolving the payroll tax issues and to process the 4th quarter 941 report for the Township with expenditures not to exceed \$3025. Support by Holbrook. Roll call vote: Wilson, yes; Holbrook, yes; Cooley, No; Purchase, yes; Mead, yes. 4 ayes, 1 nay, motion carried.

Payables were presented: 55 checks were issued in the amount of \$79,547.91. Cooley Moved with support from Holbrook to pay the bills as presented. All Ayes, no nays, motion carried Late filed invoices were presented to the Board totaling \$16,983.54. Motion by Holbrook with support by Mead to pay the late filed bills. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Budget Amendments: Final invoices are coming in for Platte River Park but not all of the grant money has not been received. Cooley made a motion to transfer \$40,000 from the general fund

to the park fund to cover some of the invoices for AJ Excavating totaling \$40,264.16. The fund has a current balance of \$7000. Roll Call vote yielded all ayes, no nays, motion carried.

New Business:

Audit Report: The audit report revealed the need to file a Deficit Elimination Plan in regards to the park fund specifically due to the Platte River Park project. Supervisor Cooley explained that the issue was a matter of timing and that the fund would be balanced by March 31, 2025 once all of the grant funds had been deposited. Cooley moved to adopt Resolution 2024-1009-01 Resolution Deficit Elimination Plan for the Parks and Recreation Fund. Support by Holbrook, all ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Snow Removal: Bids for snow removal need to include that the sidewalk will be maintained. It was asked that the prior job description be located and used to place an ad in the Record Patriot as soon as possible.

Old Items in Copy Room: It was discussed that most of the items in the copy room have no value, there are plastic letters for an exterior sign, a few old computers that are outdated and miscellaneous items that could not be sold. It was recommended that we contact a shredding company in the late winter, early spring after the offices been restructured and that items of no value be placed in the trash.

Meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm.