

Lee Township
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2021

The Regular Meeting of the Lee Township Board was called to order at 7:30 pm at the Lee Township Hall located at 877 56th Street, Pullman, Michigan.

Members Present: Trustee Hatfield, Trustee Galdikas, Clerk Friel, Supervisor Owen. Absent: Treasurer Lowery

Amendments: none

Board Comments: Trustee Galdikas extended prayers and thoughts to those affected by the recent tornadoes.

Supervisor Owen stated that he stopped by the Borrego Solar site and noted that they do have an American Flag flying. He stated that the project is coming along.

Clerk Friel requested that everyone keep Pam Booth in their thoughts and prayers, as she recently lost her husband Sheldon.

Citizens Comment: Trevor Schewe, of Pullman, spoke on the completion of the dam. He said they did a fantastic job and thanked the board and Supervisor Owen, stating the dam will last for years to come. He suggested that a commemorative plaque honoring the board be displayed at the dam.

Debbie Laraway submitted a comment, read by Clerk Friel, which read "Thank you to all of the folks who worked so hard on the Lee Township Holiday social. It looked as if it was deeply meaningful for all the participants, and it's wonderful for the kids to visit Santa and receive a gift. We appreciate Lisa's leadership and the work of all the volunteers."

Guest Speaker: none

Approval of Regular Board Minutes:

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Friel to approve the regular board meeting minutes dated November 8, 2021. All voted: "Aye." Motion carried.

Treasurer's report: The treasurer's report was read by Trustee Galdikas, in Treasurer Lowery's absence.

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Hatfield to receive the treasurer's report. All voted "Aye." Motion carried.

Commissioners Report: none

Deputy Report: Deputy Jackson reported that for the month of November, there were 141 calls. He took 25 calls himself but was off for half of the month. There were 8 B&E and larcenies and several traffic violations. He has also been working on the missing Teddy Bear that Beautify Pullman had sitting out in town as part of the holiday decorations. Suspects have been questioned found, but without clear evidence cannot be charged for that. Jackson also reminded folks that there is a resident with significant disabilities who wanders into unlocked doors. He asked that anyone who encounters him, please proceed with patience, remain calm with him, and call 911. He has been known to travel all over the township, but generally stays north of 109th Ave.

Code Official Report: Supervisor Owen introduced the new Code Official, Ben Hustafa. Hustafa stated that he looks forward to serving the community. Trustee Galdikas reminded everyone that Hustafa will be responding to complaints that are filed with the Supervisor.

Fire Department Report: Chief Chamberlain reported that in the month of November there were 15 fire runs, including structure fires, vehicle fire, medical assists, wires down, public assistance and a legal burn. He mentioned that truck 25 came back this week and is hoping to get it back in service soon. They had trouble getting parts, and it now has an upgraded motor. Due to unexpected repairs, the cost may be above the initially agreed upon price. Chief Chamberlain stated that they may need to request more funds, but have not gotten a final bill, so will take care of that when the time comes.

Chief mentioned that there is an opportunity to replace Ladder Truck 55, which was totaled in a fire. They had quickly checked out an available replacement truck in Pennsylvania. The truck was in great shape, and the insurance money would cover the cost and any upgrades needed. He requested to move forward with the purchase of the truck.

First Responders Report: Pam Rawson reported that for the month of November, there were 40 medical calls, 1 fire assist and 2 PIs. To date, as of December 13 it was day 347, and they had completed 437 calls. They have already exceeded last year's totals.

Assessor's Report: Kyle Harris reported that he is keeping up with PTA needs, and getting ready for the December 14 BOR meeting, that will be held at 1:30 pm at the Township Hall. The meeting will be to correct clerical errors.

Ambulance Reports: Trustee Galdikas reported that the Fennville Area Ambulance Committee met on December 9th. For the quarter, Life EMS responded to 338 calls in the 6 municipalities they service. Of that amount, 112 calls came from Lee Township. The average response time was 7 minutes 49 seconds. Mutual Aid from other companies continues to be monitored, as AMR has not responded to requests in our service area since they lost the contract. She stated that there has been a lack of personnel and an overburdened system, especially in this time of COVID. This has created challenges. Life EMS has taken the initiative to secure funding for training programs. They are looking for anyone interested in becoming a paramedic, they will pay for training. The committee will be changing the quarterly meeting dates, to have a more accurate 3-month report. 2022 dates will be January 13, April 14, July 14, and October 13.

Building Inspector's Report: Supervisor Owen reported in the month of November, there were 8 electrical permits, 7 mechanical permits, 0 plumbing permits and 3 building permits, bringing a total of \$411,000.00 of improvements into Lee Township.

Community Center Report: Trustee Hatfield reported that for the month of November, the only reservation was to Pastor Medina. She stated that for the next couple weeks, they will be holding Toys for Tots at the Community Center. She also mentioned that if anyone is in need of toys this holiday season, to please contact Melinda at the Linking Center.

Cemetery Report: Fall clean-up has been complete.

Library Report: Clerk Friel reported by submission from Debbie Laraway, "The library wishes everyone a Happy Holiday Season and a healthy, prosperous 2022. Patrons continue to increase and plans are being made to add 2 new computers to our library. Robert and Nicole DuShane, volunteers, are planning a spring books sale to help with expenses." She sent out their deepest sympathies to Pam Booth, a long-time library volunteer, whose husband Sheldon, recently passed away.

Transfer Station Report: none

Lake Board: Rustin Scherer reported that they are close to closing a deal for a consulting firm. He mentioned an issue with getting a bill from July paid, to which Supervisor Owen stated there may be an issue with emails and asked that they look into this after the meeting.

Newsletter Report: Trustee Galdikas reported that the newsletters have been sent out. She mentioned that the kiosk at the Post Office has been removed by the Postmaster at the Pullman Post Office, she filed

a formal request to get it back. Copies of the newsletter can be found at the Township Hall, Intercare and the Linking Center and it is available on the township website in English and Spanish..

Holiday Committee Report: Trustee Galdikas thanked everyone who donated, baked and volunteered for the annual Township Holiday Social on December 4th. Special thank you to John Anderson for volunteering to drive Santa and Mrs. Claus to the event on a fire truck. She also thanked the Abbott and Kay families for volunteering, and the Linking Center for allowing everyone to use their space for the event. Those in attendance enjoyed caroling and live manger, refreshments and photo with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Children received a gift and a book to take home. An estimated 75 families attended and about 160 gifts were distributed. Any photos that have not been picked up at Pizza Plus this week will be brought to Pullman Elementary for distribution. The VFW gift distribution was to be held December 11 but was rescheduled to December 12 due to power outage.

Pullman Pride Report: Scholarship applications are available at Bloomingdale and Fennville High Schools and on the township website. The deadline for applicants is April 15th. The Pullman Pride celebration has been moved to June 3-5, 2022.

Road Committee Report: Chuck has headed south for the winter.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Road Millage: Supervisor Owen stated that many roads in the township are failing or close to failing according to the county's PASER map. He drove down all of the roads marked failing and reviewed the list of priority for repairs submitted by the Road Committee. He stated that the funds available will cover about a mile and a half for repairs. He suggests getting quotes for repairs for the continuation of 105th, from the cemetery to 54th. Next, Sophia Way and Cameron Ct, and also 50th from 103rd to 102nd, based on funding availability.

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Galdikas to approve getting quotes for repairs on the section of 105th, Sophia Way, Cameron Ct and 50th St. All voted "Aye." Motion carried.

LSL Dam: Supervisor Owen reported that the LSL Dam is complete. It had been a long time coming, and he was excited to see the completion.

NEW BUSINESS:

MHT Mystic View Tax Abatement Request: Van Fox, of MHT Housing, Inc. spoke regarding his recent purchase of the Mystic View Apartments. He requested zoning and site plan approval for the rehabilitation of the apartments. He also requested payment in lieu of taxes. He spoke about his plans for rehabilitation of the apartments, and looking to maintain what is in place. They plan to service low income families, where half of the apartments will be Section 8, and half will be low income housing. He stated that they are looking to move quickly on construction, and plan to have strict guidelines for tenants. They plan to clean up crime by implementing enforcements to remove residents who do not abide by the rules. Supervisor Owen asked if the tax projections for the next 20 years and bill payments matched the total on the forms that were provided. Van stated that the numbers are considering inflation factor and is the most conservative amount. Supervisor asked for clarification on the duration time of the tax-exempt status. Van explained that so long as requirements are met, the pilot would run for the duration of the mortgage. Trustee Galdikas asked regarding the 20 year commitment with an entity with a PILOT, would that negatively impact the amount of money schools get and other services funded through millages. Harris stated that it could affect millages, and concerns for the projection. Harris asked if the mortgage could go past the 20 years? Van explained that it could. Discussion was had regarding rent costs and availability of units to residents. Based on state regulations, there are restrictions, and some people may not qualify based on those. Van plans to pay the utilities for tenants, which they do not currently receive.

Harris asked if there was any chance to pay the mortgage before the 20 years is up, to which Van replied that if it was, the PILOT would go away. Supervisor Owen asked the board to review the letter MHT Housing, Inc. has requested to move forward with securing their funding for the project. The letter stated that the board would consider the payment in lieu of taxes request but would not be making any decisions presently.

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Hatfield to approve signing the letter to consider MHT's request. All voted "Aye." Motion carried.

Full Time Fire Chief Position Proposal: Supervisor Owen explained that the Emergency Services Personnel Coverage Proposal. This is part of the larger proposal the board previously approved to combine Fire and EMS. The proposal calls for posting the position in January with the intent to fill it by the new fiscal year April 1, 2022. As part of the recommended staffing needs, a part time position to assist with daytime coverage will also need to be filled.

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Friel to approve posting the position for a Full Time Fire Chief/employee and the employment package. . Roll call vote was taken: Yes –Galdikas, Friel, Hatfield, Owen. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Hatfield to post the position by January 15, 2022.. Roll call vote was taken: Yes –Galdikas, Friel, Hatfield, Owen. Motion carried.

Stuphen Ladder Truck Replacement: Chief Chamberlain explained that the new truck would cost \$124,000.00. The truck is in better shape than truck 55 was and has low miles. He noted they were lucky to find a replacement (used) truck as there are not many available. The insurance reimbursement will exceed the cost of the truck and will cover any upgrades needed. Chief Chamberlain stated that he will complete necessary paperwork and submit it for signatures.

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Friel to approve the expenditure to replace Truck 55. Roll call vote was taken: Yes –Galdikas, Owen, Friel, Hatfield. Motion carried.

Payment of the Bills: Presented by Clerk Friel with one addition from the fire department.

A motion was made by Galdikas and seconded by Hatfield to approve the payment of the bills with additions noted in the amount of \$95,806.89, as presented by Clerk Friel. Roll call vote was taken: Yes – Hatfield, Galdikas, Owen Friel. Motion carried.

Correspondence: A thank you note was received from Melissa Corona, from Pullman Elementary. She thanked the board for allowing the school to use the Township Hall for the recent Santa Shop. Pam Rawson stated that the shop does not bring in much, if any funds for the school. They purchase gifts and sell them to children as an opportunity for kids to buy gifts themselves, not as a money-making opportunity.

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Galdikas to adjourn the meeting. All voted: "Aye." Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Heather Friel, Clerk