

Lee Township
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 10, 2022

The Regular Meeting of the Lee Township Board was called to order at 7:33 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 relayed an email from Treasurer Lowery, which informed about the loss of Carolyn Black in the past week. She extended condolences from the board to the family. She also mentioned Tammy at the VFW shared there will be a memorial service for Sheldon Booth at the VFW on January 30th, from 2pm-5pm.

Supervisor Owen wished everyone a Happy New Year, as we enter 2022.

Citizens Comment: None

Guest Speaker: None

Approval of Regular Board Minutes:

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Galdikas to approve the regular board meeting minutes dated December 13, 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. Roll call vote was taken: Yes –Galdikas, Hatfield, Owen, Friel. Motion carried.

Commissioners Report: None

Deputy Report: Deputy Jackson reported that for the month of December there were 149 calls, 40 which were handled by him. There were 8 breaking and entering calls reported. Including calls regarding a couple guys claiming to be acting on the township's behalf, citing blight. Warrants are being processed for the men involved. These men had previously contacted the township to join a "clean team," but proceeded to take matters into their own hands, without township permission, or request, leading to breaking and entering charges. Deputy Jackson warned citizens that if anyone, besides our appointed code official, Ben Hustafa, comes to their homes stating the board sent them to know they were not, and please report them. He reported there were 40 traffic stops, calls for suspicious behavior around Lower Scott Lake, and warns to be on alert, and report anything that seems strange. He requested that everyone drive safely on the roads. He reported that the cemetery had 2 headstones damaged accidentally by a visitor to the cemetery. The police are aware as is the board, and resolution is being worked on. He stated that the cruiser needs new tires, according to the mechanic.

Code Official Report: Ben Hustafa reported that prior to December there were 9 ongoing complaints, and 6 more came in in December. He delivered 2 letters and 2 verbal warnings were given. He expressed concern around the number of Single Family Ordinance violations within the township with regard to camper living. Health and safety concerns of residents is primary importance.

Trustee Hatfield voiced concern with landlords that are unwilling to fix issues within the rental homes, who rather kick tenants out, than fix the issues if renters complain. Trustee Galdikas suggested that

someone reach out to the Allegan County Housing Commission for options to provide to people in violation of the ordinance. Trustee Hatfield will make that contact. Hustafa informed that if he is arriving at a house on official township business, he will have a safety vest, light on his vehicle and business cards to provide reassurance he is acting officially.

Fire Department Report: Chief Chamberlain reported that in the month of December was very busy with 24 runs compared to the 14 runs last month. Training was for chimney fires. He reported that the new truck 55 will be ready for pickup the week of January 17th. He stated that the truck passed both certification inspections. There were a combined 675 calls for fire and first responders in 2021, which exceeded the high number of calls from 2020. He expressed his gratitude to Sam Kasinger who has been working intensely to cover the first responders who have been off sick. He stated that due to lack of instructors, the first responder class has been rescheduled for mid-March with completion in June. He stated that he reached out to another fire department who have agreed to help out as back up with our first responders numbers being low.

Trustee Galdikas reminded that the Lee Township Fire Chief, FT position is posted on Indeed.

First Responders Report: Pam Rawson was out, Sam Kasinger mentioned that it was day 10 of 2022, and they had run 13 calls so far.

Assessor's Report: Kyle Harris was out due to COVID exposure.

Ambulance Reports: Trustee Galdikas reported that there will be a meeting January 13.

Building Inspector's Report: Supervisor Owen reported in the month of December, there were 8 electrical permits, 6 mechanical permits, 0 plumbing permits and 3 building permits. Bringing in a total of \$247,200.00 in improvements for the month.

Community Center Report: Trustee Hatfield reported that for the month of December there were no rentals. She reported that they did Toys for Tots, which was very successful.

Cemetery Report: None

Library Report: Clerk Friel reported by submission from Debbie Laraway: The library and Beautify Pullman are joining forces to conduct a township wide community read. They will have one book for adults and a book with similar subject matter for children to read. They will have related activities including discussion groups, potentially asking a local teacher to lead, prizes and a fund raising dinner to pay for all of the books. They will continue to keep the board updated as the plans evolve. She mentioned that they will be having a large book sale in the spring, and they welcomed a new volunteer at the library.

Transfer Station Report: Supervisor Owen reported that for the month of December, there were 42 tickets and \$724 taken in.

Lake Board: Supervisor Owen reported on behalf of Rustin Scherer that the board approved a consultant and are close to choosing a weed provider to provide a mechanical treatment. The Lake board met last week.

Newsletter Report: Trustee Galdikas reminded everyone that the kiosk that held the newsletters and other information at the post office was removed, and she is working on getting it back.

Holiday Committee Report: Trustee Galdikas reported that the holiday decorations on the utility poles in town were removed and put in storage on January 2. She thanked Tim Kotas and Tim Looman for their help in getting this done.

Pullman Pride Report: Trustee Galdikas reported that scholarship applications have been sent to the high schools and are available on the township website. The deadline for applications is April 15th. She reported that Pullman Pride celebration has been moved to June 3-5, 2022. She asked that anyone interested in working on this year's activities should contact Trustee Galdikas. Organizational meeting will take place in February.

Road Committee Report: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Road Millage: Supervisor Owen spoke regarding the bids made for work on 53rd St, between 105th Ave and 52nd St. He spoke on a quote to fix Sophia way and Cameron Ct. The cost to treat all 3 areas would exceed the budget amount. As a compromise he suggested that for \$150,000.00, the portion of 53rd St and Cameron Ct could both be fixed, leaving some money left over to work on things like gravel roads or other road projects.

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Hatfield to move forward with the work order for the portion of 53rd St and Cameron Ct. Roll call vote was taken: Yes –Friel, Owen, Galdikas, Hatfield. Motion carried.

ARPA (SLFRF) UPDATE: Tim Kotas spoke regarding the value of having Broadband in Lee Township. He noted it has been a priority of residents as identified through the Master Plan process, long before the ARPA funds were an option or COVID. These issues only amplified the need for Broadband in the area. He stated that a Broadband Action Committee has been formed through Allegan County, and they meet bimonthly, to identify the need for broadband in the county and make recommendations to the commissioners. He stated that all of the meetings are recorded, people can join physically, virtually or watch later. Lee Township submitted a broadband initiative for Lee Township to this committee last fall, asking for 7 million dollars of ARPA funds to support this project. He brought up the issue that Frontier, the current provider for our area, recently presented to the committee that Lee Township already has Broadband (using old standards). As the sole provider in the area, they are making it seem that Lee Twp does not need broadband. The State is currently pursuing a lawsuit with Frontier regarding this very issue. Discussions with Bloomingdale Communication have also taken place as they have been working in the area and have a fiber optic footprint. Kotas suggested the township board earmark a large portion of the Lee Twp ARPA funds for Broadband and state strongly, that we are committed to bringing it to our community. He stated he believes that local commitment will increase the odds of us getting additional county funding.

Supervisor Owen inquired if a Broadband line could be installed above ground. Steve with BTC-BCI informed that for many reasons, they only install the lines underground. Trustee Galdikas suggested the board work at identifying phases of work to begin now that we know the amount of the ARPA funds coming (around \$437,000.00). Discussion was had regarding prioritizing the spending the ARPA funds.

A motion was made by Galdikas and seconded by Owen to make a public commitment to move forward with Broadband our priority with the spending of township ARPA funds. All voted: "Aye." Motion carried.

Sale of Community Center Resolution: Supervisor Owen read a resolution for the sale of the Community Center to People Helping People.

A motion was made by Galdikas and seconded by Friel to sign the resolution for the sale of the Community Center. All voted: "Aye." Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Annual Training Conference: Supervisor Owen spoke regarding the upcoming MTA conference April 25-27. He stressed the benefits of attendance for all board members. He informed that the early registration cost for each member would be \$388, and asked the board to approve the budgeted funds for attendance of any board member who wished to attend.

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Hatfield to approve funds, not to exceed \$4,000.00 for board members to attend the MTA conference. Roll call vote was taken: Yes –Galdikas, Friel, Hatfield, Owen. Motion carried.

Law Enforcement Contract: Supervisor Owen explained there is an issue with the township owning and insuring a vehicle that is used by the Allegan County Sheriff Department, according to our insurance company. Discussion was had regarding the costs required to contract through the county sheriff's department, using their vehicle, versus the costs we have owning our own. The change makes sense, and saves the township money in the long run.

A motion was made by Galdikas and seconded by Owen to approve the law enforcement agreement draft. All voted: "Aye." Motion carried.

Land Division 12-030-025-00: Supervisor Owen reported regarding the land split, that it meets all requirements and the fees have been paid.

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Galdikas to approve the land division for 12-030-025-00. All voted: "Aye." Motion carried.

Tire Grant 2022: Supervisor Owen stated that last year the township got rid of 17,000 tires, with great thanks to the Rawson family. He stated Lee has the opportunity to be part of a consortium to remove tires in 2022. We must also consider storage regulations for large quantities of tires at the transfer station.

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Friel to approve to sign the agreement for a 2022 tire grant. All voted: "Aye." Motion carried.

Payment of the Bills: Presented by Clerk Friel with one addition to the general fund for \$23.96.

A motion was made by Galdikas and seconded by Hatfield to approve the payment of the bills with additions noted in the amount of \$71,541.06, as presented by Clerk Friel. Roll call vote was taken: Yes – Hatfield, Galdikas, Owen Friel. Motion carried.

Correspondence: None

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Heather Friel, Clerk