

Lee Township
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 8, 2023

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

Amendments: None.

Board Comments: Clerk Friel gave an update regarding the recent election. She stated that everything went well that day. She expressed sincere gratitude for the election inspectors, and the great work they did, stating that she fell sick the day of the election. The workers picked up the slack and did not miss a beat. She informed that the Bloomingdale Public School Millage was passed at the election.

Trustee Galdikas expressed condolences on behalf of the board to the Bosby family following the recent tragedy and loss of their family member.

Supervisor Owen thanked residents for coming out to the meeting.

Citizens Comment:

Patty Conway of Beautify Pullman informed that there will be a free community picnic on Memorial Day, Monday, May 29, which is sponsored by Beautify Pullman and other donors. She stated that they are looking for volunteers to help serve the free meal. She gave an update on the upcoming farmer's market, which will be kicked off on Thursday, June 15. She informed that Bridge cards will be accepted. She finished with an update on the story walk, informing that a new book will be available on May 9.

Charlotte Goodell expressed concern on whether 2nd St. is public or private. After contacting the county, she stated that it is no clearer of the status of the street. She stated that use of the road would make the construction detours much more convenient for residents. She also spoke about a rumored park on 55th, north of the water. She believes the city is not maintaining the park, and voiced concerns that the neighbors plan to acquire the property based on abandonment laws.

Ben Lewis spoke about companies who claim to be bringing fiber into the Township. He stated that he heard there will be a few companies providing it in different areas. He voiced concerns about having information available to residents on its availability. He also spoke about the road construction in town, asking that everyone be patient, as he believes the outcome will be really nice.

Debbie Laraway submitted a statement on behalf of the family of Babe Laraway, read by Clerk Friel. She thanked the first responders, specifically Ted Chamberlain and Larry Maccune, for their professional and kind care during his last illness. She stated that it was a relief to see them come through the door and know he was in such competent hands. She also thanked the board on behalf of the family, for their kindness through the passing of their father. Stating that it is a blessing to be part of this community.

Guest Speaker: Matt Biolette from Fleis & Vandenbrink spoke on behalf of his company and what they do and offer. He explained that they provide engineer of records for municipalities. He continued that they are available to the Township as the Township's attorney is, as they only charge if they are utilized. He stated that they help find, write and secure grants and funds available for township matters. Supervisor Owen asked if any grants are available to help with funding the Township Hall renovations, to which Matt informed there currently are none. He finished by explaining that if Lee Township wishes to hire an engineer of records company, they would need to create a request for bids. Samples could be provided by other local municipalities, like Fennville.

Approval of Regular Board Minutes:

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Hatfield to approve the April 10, 2023 minutes as presented. All voted: "Aye." Motion carried.

Approval of Special Board Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Friel to approve the April 28, 2023 special meeting minutes as presented. All voted: "Aye." Motion carried.

Treasurer's report: The treasurer's report was read by Treasurer Lowery.

A motion was made by Galdikas and seconded by Hatfield to receive the Treasurer's report as given. Roll call vote was taken: Yes –Hatfield, Galdikas, Lowery, Owen, Friel. Motion carried.

Commissioners Report: None.

Deputy Report: None.

Fire Department/ EMS Report: Chief Chamberlain reported that for the month of April there were a total of 55 calls, including 2 powerlines down, 3 cancel enroute, 2 controlled burns, 3 medical assists, 4 rubbish fires, 1 false alarm, 3 forest fires, 2 building fires, 1 citizen complaint, 1 motor vehicle accident and 35 medical emergencies. He continued that training was on drafting and water movement, which they will continue to work on all summer. He stated that it is a good training for the younger crew, who need to know how to move water as they used to do in the past.

He gave an update on Engine 25, which is not in great shape and needs replacement. He informed about an opportunity the department has to bid on an ATV for grass fires. He stated that many departments are moving toward ATVs as opposed to Jeeps, due to better drive train and all around better for this type of work. He continued that the ATV is being sold by another fire department in Wisconsin. He is thinking of putting \$10-11,000 toward it. He stated that he would be happy to go check it out, but believes it will have been taken care of based on it being sold by another department. He stated that bidding closes for this on June 1, and that he believes purchasing this could phase out one of the Jeeps they have. Nelvin DeWeerd questioned if USDA offers finance or offer grant options for vehicles. To which Supervisor Owen clarified that they did supply a partial grant for the Township's former police vehicle. It was suggested that Chief Chamberlain continue to research and collect information on the ATV and keep the board informed.

Code Official Report: Code Official Jeff Olney informed that there are currently 12 open complaints for blight and vehicle storage. He continued that nearly half of the open complaints are close to completion. He stated that everything is going well.

Assessor's Report: None.

Ambulance Reports: None.

Building Inspector's Report: Supervisor Owen reported in the month of April there were 2 electrical permits, 7 mechanical permits, 1 plumbing permit and 2 building permits, bringing in a total of \$359,000.00 in improvements to the township.

Cemetery Report: Supervisor Owen informed that spring cleanup has begun, and the crew will be back again to finish before Memorial Day. He stated that the branches that were reported have been cleaned up, and that Jim Rawson collected the bags from the first cleanup.

Library Report: Clerk Friel reported based on submission from Debbie Laraway that although they have had struggles with volunteers, the library continues to be open for regular hours through road construction. She updated that they are selecting books in the adult, youth and children's category for a summer reading experience that will coincide and celebrate the logging festival in September.

Transfer Station Report: Jim Rawson reported that for the month of April the Transfer Station brought in \$1562 and 65 tickets. He stated that free dump day went well and that they did not need to close due to being too full. The next free dump day will be held on June 17.

Lake Board: Supervisor Owen gave an update from John VanGessel that they selected Commissioner Dean Kapenga as the new Chair. Also, that they authorized the final payment for the Solitude contract work. He also informed that the board agreed to proceed with an RFP for partial and/or entire lake remediation and will seek pricing for continued lake and channel assessments for algae treatment and/or administrative support for the board. He continued that the cost may be spread over 2 years of assessments with the maximum proposed expense of \$45,000 this year.

Newsletter Report: Trustee Galdikas informed that the Spring newsletter is at the printer and will go out next week. It was pushed back pending the senior scholarship ceremony where they will learn of their selection for the scholarship.

Holiday Committee Report: Trustee Galdikas reported that the Memorial Day parade will be held at 2:15 pm on Memorial Day. The cemetery ceremony will be held at 3:30 pm.

Pullman Pride Report: Trustee Galdikas informed that the scholarship winners will be announced at the June meeting. Pullman Pride Day will be held on June 24. She stated that there is still time to sign up for the craft show. The car show has no registration, to participate, please just show up at the Linking Center. She continued that AES Solar will be providing a trolley to allow people to get around more easily, and they will be offering tours of the Solar Farm in the afternoon. She reminded that Will Haenni, WWMT Meteorologist will be joining to MC in the morning and will offer weather related activities for kids.

Road Committee Report: Supervisor Owen informed that Chuck wishes he could be with us, and asked for continued prayers for Chuck's son's recovery.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Town Hall Renovations: Supervisor Owen informed that there have been no bid submissions for renovation, stating that the board may need to reach out beyond the Township to find a contractor. Suggestions were made to advertise specificities of the jobs that need bidding.

NEW BUSINESS:

Engine 25 Replacement: Chief Chamberlain explained the best option for a new chassis on 55 would be to not go with Dodge due to unavailability. He continued that Ford is looking like the best option. To move forward 10% would need to be paid down, and nothing more would need to be paid until the completion of the project. He expressed the necessity of the replacement, as 25 is in rough shape, and goes on nearly every fire and EMS call, adding that the local roads have not been kind to it. Approving the down payment soon would ensure the time slot to finish as soon as possible (estimated completion February 2025). The 10% downpayment would be around \$35,000.00 which could come from EMS' money market fund.

A motion was made by Galdikas and seconded by Hatfield to move forward with the replacement of Engine 25. Roll call vote taken, "Yes"- Hatfield, Galdikas, Lowery, Owen, Friel, Motion carried.

Dust Control:

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Friel to maintain the two applications of dust control in the township this year. Roll call vote taken, "Yes"- Hatfield, Galdikas, Lowery, Owen, Friel, Motion carried.

Treasurer Resignation: After nearly 32 years of service, Treasurer Lowery read her appeal to the board requesting to resign from her position, effective May 31, 2023, due to personal reasons. Treasurer Lowery spoke about her time as treasurer and expressed her appreciation to the residents of Lee Township. She

requested that the current Deputy Treasurer, Chaquara Moragne, be appointed to complete her term, as she would be available to help her in the position.

Many people communicated stories and experiences they had with Treasurer Lowery in her time serving the community. The board expressed their sadness to see her go and thanked her for the exceptional job she did throughout the years. Many residents, and former Township officials were in attendance to congratulate and celebrate Treasurer Lowery. The board presented her with flowers and a gift, including a Certificate of Appreciation presented by Supervisor Owen for her to take with her.

A motion was made by Owen and seconded by Hatfield to accept Treasurer Lowrey's resignation as Lee Township Treasurer. All voted "Aye," motion carried.

Supervisor Owen stated the board has 45 days in which to appoint a replacement and suggested that Chaquara Moragne reach out to the board to express her desires to take on the position of Treasurer. Treasurer Lowery informed that Cara was unable to attend the meeting, despite her wishes to, as she was unwell.

Payment of the Bills: Presented by Clerk Friel, with the addition of one bill for \$579.00 to Endeavor, from the fire department account, for a total of \$52,047.09.

A motion was made by Galdikas and seconded by Hatfield to approve the payment of the bills with the addition of \$579, totaling \$52,047.09, as presented by Clerk Friel. Yes –Galdikas, Lowery, Hatfield, 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 8:42 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Heather Friel, Clerk