

Saugatuck Township Board  
Regular Meeting  
June 10, 2020  
Approved Minutes

Supervisor Osman Called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

Roll Call: All present

Zoom Instructions: Manager Graham gave Zoom instructions for public participation. All votes should be taken via roll call. Also please say your name before speaking. Mute yourself when you are not speaking. This meeting is being recorded. Please do not interrupt. If any public member is disruptive in a way that interferes with the board conducting their business, they will be blocked. Also highlighted that if there are any individuals that would like to participate, but need special accommodations, we will do our best to make those adjustments. Please do not click on any links on Zoom.

Approval of Agenda: *Bigford moved to approve the agenda and to ratify the procedures for public participation and meeting conduct as described in the Notice of Public meeting via Video Conference.* Supported by Helmrich. Roll call vote: all yes. Approved 5-0.

Public Comment:

Jay Fredrickson- Representing Riverside Mobile Home Estates. Wants to speak about the buoy issue. Is willing to help with buoy maintenance and placement. This is a safety issue. We are concerned about loss of life.

Dean Kapenga- The County Commissioners just passed a resolution asking the Governor for more support for those effected by the high water levels on the lakeshore. The Tax Limitation Committee- approved a resolution for this to appear on the November ballot- it would bring the voters back to 5.7 - which the voters had already agreed on. Ground water study- 15 townships have completed the study. They hope to complete the study by the end of June. Allegan County Senior Services is offering fresh food boxes to Seniors.

John Riley- spoke in favor of the Township purchasing and placing the No Wake buoys on the river. Stated that there were more than a handful of property owners effected by this- there are at least 130 property owners affected. Primary concern is safety. Believes the township has a statutory duty to place these buoys. He is part of a group of property owners that have offered to help with placement and maintenance of the buoys.

Brent Sheridan- Spoke in favor of the township placing the No Wake buoys. Believes more than a few people benefit from this. Asks the township to consider all users and to focus on the safety issues. Asks that the township follow its own ordinance. Asks the township to follow the DNR's recommendations. There have been many close calls. Will help with maintenance and placement.

Review of Invoices:

No questions or concerns from board members.

*Aldrich moved to approve all bills and payroll in the amount of \$89,453.06 as presented. Supported by Marcy. Roll call vote: all yes. Approved 5-0.*

Treasurers Report: Helmrich -General fund bank balance is \$2.8M - up slightly from April 30. Budget v. Actual through May was \$390K positive, an increase from April; spending is running 38% under budget while revenue is running 19% under budget with one month left in Fiscal Year. Fund balance transfers will affect the final FYE. CD Value = \$756K - flat to April. Suggest we study our Investment Policy and activities in the new FY especially in light of the economic impacts of Covid 19. YTD FY2020 (through 5/31/20) there remain no department level expense overages. On the revenue side, Tax Admin fees, Comcast franchise fees, and Zoning fees for marijuana businesses are nearly \$40K above budget combined. Preparation for Summer Tax bills has begun. Goal is to have them in the mail by July 1 if possible. Pending legislation in Lansing may extend due dates and interest rules that need to be on the bills. County and some of our disbursement partners are understandably behind schedule in providing necessary information to Township. Suggests that he and one other trustee form a committee to look at investment opportunities.

Approval of Minutes:

*Aldrich moved to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2020 regular meeting as presented. Supported by Helmrich. Roll call vote: all yes. Approved 5-0.*

Correspondence: Mantels Letter- Fire Flow Testing. Fredrickson Letter - No Wake Buoys. Eder Letter - Junk Pick- Up. Riley et. al. Letter - No Wake Buoys. All correspondence taken as information.

FY 2020-2021 Budget:

Osman - Opened the public hearing at 6:23pm. Invited the public to comment via the same procedures used for public comment. Brent Sheridan - asks that the board follow the manager's recommendation that the board purchase the new buoys for \$1500.00. Osman - we have discussed this budget at great length at the previous two meetings. Closed the public hearing at 6:26pm. Helmrich- related to our township board priority list goals- financial stewardship and millage planning. Going forward we need to have more information on this in order to possibly move on this. Second, we need, at some time soon, to look at rebidding our professional services and contractors. In the near future we should use an RFP for our legal representation and auditor. Wanted to make sure the new rate for the ambulance is in the budget and the budget is still balanced. Graham - yes the updated ambulance amounts are included in the budget. The special assessment will still need to be updated in the future. *Helmrich moved to adopt the tentative budget, as presented as the FY 2020-2021 Budget and Resolution No. 2020-08, a resolution to establish a general appropriations act for Saugatuck Township; to define the powers and duties of the Saugatuck Township Officers in relation to the administration of the budget; and to provide remedies for refusal or neglect to comply*

*with the requirements of this resolution. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: none. Roll Call Vote: all yes. Approved 5-0.*

No Wake Buoys - Osman - this is a budget amendment to allow to purchase and place the no wake buoys. Any questions or discussion? Marcy - there was an incident recently where a small child was fishing on a dock and a boat went by at a fast rate of speed and its wake almost swept the child off the dock. This is a safety issue. Is appreciative of the residents that have spoken up and offered to help. Bigford - wanted to emphasize that no one on the board did not recognize this as important, we simply wanted more information on whose responsibility it was to purchase and place the buoys. Could manager Graham please summarize what he found in his research regarding what other townships do regarding no wake zones? Graham - regarding liability - there is a risk of liability if the township does not purchase and place the buoys but did not find that there was any recorded court decision that would hold a township liable for not installing no wake buoys. Many townships struggle with buoy issues. There are many no wake zones across the state that go unmarked or are marked inconsistently for a variety of reasons. Helmrich - Graham, what is your recommendation? Graham - the township should authorize the budget amendment and go ahead and purchase and place the buoys and then coordinate with volunteers going forward if that is what the board wants. Marcy - in your research did you find that the high water levels would force us to do this? Graham - no. Aldrich - apologize if she seemed insensitive towards the buoy issue. Just wanted to investigate other options. Does believe we need to go forward with this and then check out volunteer options. *Bigford moved to approve the requested "no wake buoy" budget amendments, as submitted, and authorize the Township Manager to proceed with purchasing the necessary buoy equipment and having them installed in the Kalamazoo River. And to direct staff to explore options that would relieve the township of the responsibility of maintenance, storage, and installation and removal of the buoys going forward. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: none. Roll Call Vote: all yes. Approved 5-0.*

#### Tri-Community Joint Board/Council Meeting

Helmrich - this will remain on our agenda until the meeting actually happens. Has not forgotten about it even though it has been put on hold due to Covid-19. Suggests we look at a date in September. Is willing to continue to coordinate with Saugatuck and Douglas.

#### FY 2020-2021 STFD Budget

Fire Chief Janik- The budget, consists of a millage of 2.20 mills, levied against the real property taxable value within the Fire District. The budget is pretty straight forward but is happy to answer any questions. Pointed out that all wage increases were held out of sensitivity of many people being out of work due to the pandemic. There were no cost of living increases. This will be evaluated in 4-6 months. There was talk of hazard pay for fire fighters, but this will be determined by the Senate. Utilized \$151K in grants this year. Did \$9778.16 in cost recovery. Appreciates the support of the township. The pandemic has been a challenge. It has changed many things for the Fire District. Aldrich - has carefully reviewed the budget and believes it looks great. *Aldrich moved to*

*approve the FY 2020-2021 Saugatuck Township Fire District budget, as presented. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: Osman appreciates that the Chief and the other township representative, Eric Beckman took the time to be on the call tonight. Beckman - appreciates the township's support and passing of the budget. Bigford - that you for being so conscientious of the current situation folks are in and for freezing wages. Thanks too for pursuing grants and cost recovery. Roll Call Vote: All yes. Approved 5-0.*

*Pride Month Proclamation- Osman - this is something we did last year per the suggestion of trustee Marcy. Marcy- This makes an important statement of acceptance. Helmrich moved to approve the proposed proclamation designating June 2020 as Pride Month in Saugatuck Township and that encourages residents to reflect on the ongoing struggle for equality members of the LGBTQ community face and celebrate the contributions that enhance the township. The township, as of tomorrow, will fly the pride flag throughout the month of June. Supported by Bigford. Discussion: None. Roll Call Vote: All yes. Approved 5-0.*

*COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan- Osman - Graham has prepared for us a comprehensive and detailed plan. Acknowledges all of the good work he put into this and suggests we confirm the plan. Helmrich - commends Manager Graham for leading a training with office staff regarding this plan. Marcy - is concerned about only suggesting that the public wear a mask. Perhaps those who are medically unable to tolerate a mask could be met in the parking lot by staff. Aldrich moved to confirm the updated COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan, as presented and prepared by the Township Manager. Supported by Bigford. Discussion: None. Roll Call Vote: All yes. Approved 5-0.*

*Life Ambulance Agreement- Osman- we have discussed this item in detail at previous meetings. Tony Schippa (the township's representative on the emergency services committee) - we do have our Life Ambulance representative on the call with us - John Heinkstra. Life Ambulance has been a pleasure to work with and they have been willing to really work with the township. Thinks that Life Ambulance will be a good fit for the township. John has even come out to ride around the township with me to get a really good feel for the needs. John Heinkstra- thanks for having me. Has been with Life Ambulance for 24 years. Life serves 10 counties in Michigan. Has reviewed all of the suggestions brought by Graham and other members of the emergency services committee and is working hard to incorporate as many of those suggestions as possible. Helmrich - thanks for joining us tonight. Thank you for addressing all of Manager Graham's concerns. Marcy - wants to acknowledge all of the hard work that Schippa has done. Appreciates his level of expertise and his donation of his time. Chief Janik- Believes that if Schippa is endorsing Life Ambulance, then the township should go with it. Is grateful that Schippa is involved in this. Marcy moved to approve the proposed service agreement with Life Ambulance and authorize the Township Clerk to sign it on the behalf of the Township Board contingent upon successful review by the Township Manager and Township Attorney. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: Bigford- thank you Schippa for your work and dedication towards securing quality ambulance*

*service for your community. Schippa- thank you everyone. Roll Call Vote: All yes. Approved 5-0.*

Street Light Special Assessments- Graham - these are not new special assessments. Some have been in place for many years. They are used to provide street lights to a number of subdivisions in the township. A good practice for the township to follow for light districts is to annually adopt a resolution to confirm the special assessment roll for each district. Staff will work to prepare a similar resolution annually moving forward. Helmrich - thank you Graham for pushing the board to use best practices. Strongly supports doing this annually to increase transparency. *Helmrich moved to approve the adoption of Resolution 2020-09, a resolution to confirm the Township's light district special assessment rolls and levying assessments for 2020, as presented. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: none. Roll Call Vote: All yes. Approved 5-0.*

Code Enforcement Process Overview and Options - Osman- there is only so much we can do with the resources we have in relation to code enforcement. Would like Graham to review what he has prepared for us. Graham- this was prepared by zoning administrator Wells. She and I work together on Code Enforcement. Over the last year, staff observed an increase in reported code enforcement violations. We are struggling to keep up as we do not have the time or financial resources to dedicate to them. Code Enforcement is a low success rate task, so the nature of it is difficult. This memo is a signal to the board that this is something we are struggling with but we also wanted to provide options moving forward to pursue a heightened enforcement process. All options will require more time and resources. Really there are three options for the board. The board can take the information and acknowledge that staff is struggling to keep up with the demand and ask that staff keep doing the best they can with the resources that they have. Second, the board could pursue one of the other options presented, but in doing that we would need to identify what other budget item would be cut to fund this. Lastly, the board could look at additional funding sources moving forward. This could be a way to really justify those additional tax dollars as it would be a value add for the community. Osman - having been in code enforcement for the last 34 years, I have found that code enforcement is extremely time consuming, there is low compliance and prosecution is expensive. Its a very difficult and laborious procedure. Thinks that staff is doing the best with what they have. Helmrich - happy that this is an agenda item. Thanked Wells for producing this memo and for providing options. Does believe that residents care about code enforcement for quality of life and its impact on property values. Does recognize all of the challenges. Hopes we can explore the options more as we move forward. Graham and Wells have been doing a great deal more code enforcement than what has been done in the past.

June 2020 Budget Amendments and Interfund Transfer Authorization Requests- Osman- this is a year end report that we do to make sure our budget is complete at the end of the year when we look at where money did get spent and did not get spent. Graham - these are end of the year end amendments to make sure we do not go over any of the departmental allocations. They are largely reductions. *Marcy moved to*

*approve the requested June 2020 Budget Amendments, as submitted, and authorize the Township Treasurer and Deputy Clerk to make the requested interfund transfers. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: none. Roll Call Vote: All yes. Approved 5-0.*

PC/ZBA Appointment Term Expiration Announcement- Osman - we have some appointment term expirations coming up. Graham - the township's adopted appointment policy states that once an opening is official or a term is near expiration, the clerk or the manager will announce the vacancy at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. We have 5 terms that are set to expire on June 30, 2020. The next step would be to post the openings consistent with the appointment policy then bring any applications and encourage applicants to attend the next regularly scheduled board meeting on July 8, 2020. *Aldrich moved to acknowledge the aforementioned Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals term expirations and direct the Township Manager to post notice of the openings consistent with the Township's adopted appointment policy. Supported by Helmrich. Discussion: none. Roll Call Vote: All yes. Approved 5-0.*

Planning Commission: Helmrich - planning commission did not meet last month. Question- Ryan Kilpatrick has presented to both the township board and to the planning commission. As the board representative on the planning commission, my question is do we want to direct the zoning administrator and the planning commission to look at potential ordinance recommendation changes to allow for smaller lots and homes? Osman- I think this is important, but perhaps it could be put off a little longer as we tackle some other things we have on our plate. Aldrich - is excited about the Kilpatrick project but wants to be careful not to overload Wells. Helmrich - is also sensitive to capacity issues; wants to simply let the planning commission know that we have heard the same presentation and we support exploring this further. Osman- as a discussion item this is appropriate for the planning commission at this time. Graham- encourages the board to make a motion if they wish for the planning commission to explore this issue further. Osman - giving them direction is a little formal. I think we just need to let them know we are in support of this. *Helmrich moved to inform the planning commission and zoning administrator of the board's interest in further pursuing the notion of allowing smaller homes and lot sizes in the township for their review and recommendation back to the board. Supported by Bigford. Discussion: none. Roll Call Vote: All yes. Approved 5-0.*

Fire Board: Aldrich - April was a very slow month. May made it to the other end of the scale with 83 calls. Year to date call volume is 305 and 12% down compared to last year. Type of calls are back to normal as well. EMS counts for 53% of our volume. Motor vehicle incidents are low due to the Stay Home order. Douglas and the Township had 37% and 38% calls compared to Saugatuck City that list 25%. There have been 6 structure fires in 30 days which is not typical. No particular reason, just a surge.

Parks Commission: The parks commission met last week. They hosted their first zoom meeting. Discussed some ongoing maintenance issues. Are

considering hosting their July and August meetings at one of the township's parks, not only to promote social distancing and safety, but also to give residents a good reason to attend a meeting and visit one of the parks. Aldrich- the new sidewalk by the church is great. It really fits in well with the community and seems to be being utilized. Helmrich - the new trails and signage at the Riverbluff park are fantastic.

Emergency Services Committee: Schippa- rep for the emergency services committee. Wants to thank Graham for his feedback and comments on the new ambulance contract. EMS is a team effort. You have made an important decision tonight to ensure your community has quality ambulance service. You are an important part of that team.

Interurban Board- A budget adjustment was needed due to the pandemic from the loss of revenue and expenses and ridership., The transit authority received two new buses from the 2019 grants. Also, a new administrative vehicle that replaced the minivan will be reimbursed through grant money. The three older vehicles are going up for bid. Ridership for April was 820 vs. 3680 last year. Carrying about 30 passengers per day. Venetian Festival is cancelled and summer ridership will be down with the loss of the parking shuttle and reduced visitors. Covid-19 response- continue to operate with only one bus per day. Four staff members laid off. From May 3 to June 13, 7 of the current 9 employees have been enrolled in the Work Share program through Michigan Unemployment. Bus and office cleaning procedures are in place, signage at the office and on busses, mask use is required in the office and for both drivers and passengers on the buses. Director Yff is developing a Preparedness and Response plan. The board agreed to renew the current health insurance plan with the 5.5% increase and also renew the vision and dental plans as presented. Submitted by Lori Babinski, Saugatuck Township Rep.

Open Board Report: Bigford - Encouraged board members to utilize the free online training/education available through the MTA right now due to the pandemic. Would like to partner with Helmrich on pursuing investment opportunities for the township. Helmrich - is agreeable to partnering with Bigford on exploring investments for the township. Was on a Michigan Municipal Treasures Association Zoom meeting today. There is a wide variety of ways that townships and cities across the state are dealing with office procedures in relation to Covid-19. Is working on a memo to share with the board and manager Graham to outline what some of these municipalities are doing.

Managers Report: Spring clean up day was cancelled due to current public health concerns related to the Covid pandemic. Sundown Park remains closed due to the high water levels and the damage sustained to the drain. Have been working closely with the drain commissioners office and are working on a solution together. Last week the Michigan Supreme Court decided to hear the lawsuit between the township and the Saugatuck Dunes Costal Alliance. The

townships legal team will prepare the necessary briefs. Please direct question on this topic to me. Code enforcement has been a struggle this year. We are going to work with one of our attorneys to look at next steps regarding enforcement matters. It is planned to review the fee and escrow policy at next months meeting if time allows. End of year budget amendments and transfer requests will also be brought before the board at the next meeting. Osman - wants to acknowledge some of the great accomplishments that have been made by the board and by Manager Graham in the last year. We are coming to a point where we really need to look at what are our priorities are. We need to decide if we want to provide minimal services or if we want to secure additional funding and add or enhance our current services.

Manager's Report: Thanks for the adoption of the Budget. This was a significant undertaking. The board previously authorized two speed studies in the township. They have been completed and new signage is posted. Township staff is back in the office. Will be open to the public next week. Completed safety workplace training. The safety measures are for the good for the team and for the public. Lakeshore Drive conversations have picked up again in the last few weeks. Allegan County and the Board of Commissioners are getting more involved in finding additional financial options. There has been a significant amount of technology work done in the office in the past month. There have been some technical difficulties . We have been making the tweaks necessary to adjust. Many of these upgrades were long overdue.

Public Comment: Riley - thanks the board for their attention to the buoy issue. If there is anything we can do to help, please ask. John Gay- Grateful to the board for how they handled the buoy issue tonight.

*Aldrich moved to adjourn the meeting of June 10, 2020 at 7:56pm. Supported by Marcy. Roll call vote: all yes. Approved 5-0.*

Prepared by:  
Abby Bigford  
Township Clerk



