

Saugatuck Township Board Meeting
Wednesday July 3, 2019, 6pm
Saugatuck Township Hall, 3461 Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck, MI 49453
Approved Minutes

Supervisor Osman called the meeting to order at 6pm.

All board members present

Public Comments:

Rebecca ~~Israel~~ Israels– 3447 Palmer Drive would like to be considered to be appointed to the board of review. Believes extensive work experience in health care has prepared her well for this role. Is open to and looks forward to training opportunities. Is skilled in dealing with complaints and concerns. This leads to greater customer satisfaction. Takes her roles on the PC and working elections very seriously. Cares deeply for the township and its residents.

Approval of Agenda:

Aldrich moved to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: none. Agenda approved 5-0

Invoices

Osman – we all have had a chance to review all of the invoices. Are there any comments?

Helmrich – the refunds to Gaslight are in the invoices as promised.

Helmrich moved to approve the invoices. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: None. Approved 5-0.

Treasurer's Report

Welcomed our new manager

Frank Walsh has decreased his fee by \$2800 as it went so quickly

Budget vs. Actual through June 30. – Revenue \$208,000 above and expenses approx. \$300,000 below.

The \$300,000 will likely come down due to some payments that were approved today.

There are 4 departments that are over in the budget. We will need to adopt a resolution to rectify those overages.

General fund - \$2,376,000

Report on pension plan from MERS (they are always a year behind in reporting) as of 12.31.18 pension is 44% funded which is up from 30% in 2017.

Budget Update- last Tuesday this board accepted the budget presented and prepared by the treasurer.

Should be reviewed again before first quarter. Budget is balanced with a deficit of \$55K that will be taken out of the general fund reserve as we should look at using some of that.

Minutes

Aldrich moved to accept the minutes from June 5, 2019 regular meeting. Supported by Helmrich.

Discussion: None. Approved 5-0

Helmrich moved to accept the minutes from the June 25, 2019 special meeting minutes. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: none. Approved 5-0

Correspondence

Osman- communication from Toby Hutchins – Clerk Bigford read the letter regarding garnering community feedback on Fennville Recreation. This letter is part of the packet. Osman- we received a

letter from David Swan regarding the appointment of a planning commissioner. This letter is part of the packet. We also received several other letters regarding appointment to the planning commission. We received one recommendation from Kat Cook recommending Daniel Defranco for appointment to the Planning Commission. Helmrich -There was one letter received from a resident today concerned that the budget was not on the website. It is on the website now.

Emergency Services Committee

Osman -We are in the process of the rejoining that committee to provide ambulance service to the south side of the river. The committee has accepted ~~for us to rejoin~~ our rejoining. We will review the contract and take action at the next board meeting. Bigford – we need a representative on this board. Helmrich – we should post this. Bigford- we will open this up and advertise for it.

Cemetery Agreements With The Cities

Osman – we have not had a response from the cities so this remains as unfinished business.

Planning Commission Appointments

Osman – Would like to ~~public~~ publicly thank Maggie Conklin for her 10 years of service on the planning commission. She was well educated and did her homework. She did withdrawal her application for reappointment as she is looking forward to spending more time with her husband and to a more stress free life.

Daniel Defranco- applicant for the open planning commission seat. Has been a property owner and resident of Saugatuck Township since 2016. Is a philosophy professor by trade which affords him much expertise in research, writing and teaching that would lend itself well to this position. Has experience with dealing with the planning commission as a resident. Since October 2017 has been a part of a neighborhood group opposing sand mining in their residential area. Gained much in relevant experience through this endeavor. Did a great deal of legal research regarding this issue. Connected with many other townships regarding this issue. Is very open to further education related to the planning commission.

David ~~Isle~~ Ihle – Marcy read his correspondence that was related to his application to the planning commission (part of the packet).

Richard Brady – Helmrich read his letter (part of the packet)

Marcy- acknowledged that all of the candidates were impressive

Aldrich – Has worked with Defranco on issues regarding the sand mine. She believes he is qualified and eager. Also acknowledged that all of the candidates are good.

Helmrich pointed out that Brady is out of town for 3 month out of the year – 25% of the time. Osman – you can't have more than one person on both the ZBA and the PC.

Bigford – Defranco does his homework and research. He is very eager. He has a strong desire to serve and is open to training. ~~Isle~~ Ihle – extensive relevant background. Strong leadership.

Marcy- ~~Isle~~ Ihle will help her with her appointment as road commission

Osman – it is the state regulation that the supervisor makes the appointment and the board can either support or not support.

Osman – I would like to appoint Dave ~~Isle~~ Ihle to the planning commission. Supported by Bigford.

Discussion: Helmrich – all great candidates. Hope everyone will stay involved. Roll call vote: all yes.

Approved 5-0

Zoning Board of Appeals appointments

Osman – there are 3 ZBA members that are interested in reappointment. Bill Rowe for 2 years to get our staggered terms back in order. Catherine Draitsas for a 3 year term and John Tuckerman for a 3 year term.

Helmrich moved to reappoint Bill Rowe for 2 years, Catherine Draitsas for 3 years and John Tuckerman for 3 years to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: none. Roll call vote: all yes. Approved 5-0

Bill Rowe- does that reappointment to the ZBA also reappoint me to the PC? Osman – we do need to vote on his PC reappointment as well. This was by design as there can be only one person on the PC and ZBA.

Osman- I would like to appoint Bill Rowe to the Planning Commission. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: Helmrich – thanks to Rowe to pointing this out. Roll call vote: all yes. Approved 5-0.

Board of Review

Osman – Don Mader has resigned from his position on the Board of Review for personal reasons. Becky ~~Israels~~ Israels is the only applicant. She spoke at the beginning of the meeting.

Marcy moved to appoint Rebecca ~~Israels~~ Israels to fill the remainder of the term on the Board of Review expiring June 30, 2020. Supported by Bigford. Discussion: Bigford- Pleased that Becky has stepped up to fill this position. Our former assessor, Sherry Mason very much supported this appointment. Becky is available for the training in February and for both Board of Reviews. Roll call vote: all yes. Approved 5-0

Office Closure on Wednesdays

Osman read her staff report on this that was part of the packet.

Osman moved to continue this practice until the new manager can get his feet under him and would like it to continue indefinitely. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: Helmrich – It is really working. He has received no complaints. Helps in meeting deadlines. Aldrich- all employees are coming in and working. The office is not closed. Bigford – Babinski has found this helpful as well. Many townships have much more limited hours than this. Approved 5-0

Township Manager Contract

Osman – it is with great pleasure that the township finalized a contract with Griffin Graham. He has agreed to the terms of the contract. This was done with the assistance of Frank Walsh.

Osman moved to approve the contract and to authorize the township clerk to execute the same with the new Manager Griffin Graham. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: None. Roll call vote: all yes. Approved 5-0.

Conditional Rezoning Request – Aaron Smith, 3577 64th Street

Helmrich – When the planning commission rules on anything it is a recommendation that the board can approve. The application was denied by a vote of 5-2. Ed Welk and I voted for the rezoning.

Aaron Smith – raised in Portage, MI. State Licensed medical marijuana. Recently opened a provisioning center in Muskegon. Will be opening a center in Ottawa Co. soon. The property is zoned C-1, but he spoke with the realtor and he told him that it had been considered for rezoning to C-3 in the past. There is a vacant house on the property. Had a civil engineer look at the property and he confirmed that it will meet zoning requirements to move from C-1 to C-3. The parcel is surrounded by C-3. About 70% surrounded by C-3. The PC rezoned a parcel from C-1 to I-1 in April. This was not part of the master plan. Went in front of the board a first time and they asked for more information. He went a second time and gave more information. The Burger King and the Dentist were rezoned from C-1 to C-3. He is asking for less than a move from C-1 to I-1. Presented a conditional rezoning agreement that would prevent “big box” stores and would limit it to the Medical Marijuana. Was denied by the PC. Would like

to do business in Saugatuck Township. Will work with the PC and the Township. Muskegon store is open. It employs 19 people. It is like a pharmacy. It is over and above what the state requires. They are thinking of repurposing the existing house. Helmrich – only .7% of the township is ~~rezoned~~ zoned as C-3. To him, this property fits in the C-3. The 6 points of the conditional rezoning will serve to protect the township. Is a big fan of the Master Plan. There is ~~not~~ no mention of medical marijuana in the master plan.

Osman – we have 4 options – we can vote to uphold the planning commission’s decision. We can vote to ignore their recommendation and approve the rezoning. We can send it back to the planning commission for further review or we can table it.

Helmrich moved to reject the recommendation of the Planning Commission and accept the conditional rezoning application to convert 3577 64th St from C-1 to C-3 for the sole purpose of a medical marijuana provisioning center. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: Aldrich – came in intending to vote no on this but has changed her mind due to the compelling presentation. Believes this is a good place for it. Marcy – typically defers to the subject matter experts and to the Planning Commission. We don’t want to set precedent, but there was a bigger change that occurred with the other rezoning. Helmrich- the C-1 to I-1 was done for a grow facility. Smith shared pictures of the business in Muskegon. Bigford – While your presentation was compelling and much of it made sense, limiting provisioning centers to C-3 was done by design to limit the number of licenses. Has concerns with precedent. Osman – agrees with Bigford. Overturning a PC decision is a big deal. It undermines their authority. It is very rare that a township or city overrules a planning commission decision. Thinks we should accept the recommendation of the PC or send it back to them. Roll call vote: Yes – Aldrich, Marcy, Helmrich. No – Osman, Bigford. Approved 3-2.

Harbor Authority and Buoy placement:

Helmrich – has much experience with the Harbor Authority. They have reached out to him. They would like for us to rejoin. Thinks they should come and present to us. Expects that he will support this. He and Aldrich were invited to meet with the director of the MI tech research institute to discuss a DNR matching grant, the Allegan Co. commission has voted to fund the initial study. There is grant out there to do a proper hydrological study to find out up to date information on toxins. The township and the 2 cities would have some financial obligation. Will invite them to come and present in August.

Helmrich – buoy placement – has been delayed due to high water levels. Graham – has coordinated with both Saugatuck and Douglas regarding this issue. High water levels have delayed this process. Our Buoys are not properly fitted with proper length of chain or weight. Brent ~~Birkholtz~~ Birkholz is updating the Buoys. He believes they will be placed next week. We need to get this done the right way. Will reach out to concerned residents and update them.

Planning Commission

Met on June 3rd. Public hearing on Aaron Smith rezoning was denied. An approval was granted to change “Spirit Space” on Blue Star Hwy. back to residential on the condition that the owner remove the sign. Special approval was tabled to a company called JARS for a medical marijuana provisioning center at the Amble Inn. The PC needed more information. Culver LLC is the first fully approved and licensed medical grow facility in the township. It was approved with 8 conditions. Next meeting July 22.

Road Commission

Marcy has a meeting with Craig Atwood next week regarding about 5 residential issues. The washout issue will be addressed, but is currently on hold.

Interurban

There was none as Babinski was not able to attend the meeting.

Fire Board

Aldrich – June was a record month. Reached 99 calls total. June had one fire call. EMS counted for 60.6% of calls. Township is the busiest with 168 calls so far this year. Douglas had 139. Response time remained within 5-6 min. On the August township board meeting we will be discussing reinstating the 2018 International Fire Code. Wants to thank the FD for hosting the benefit car wash for the Betts family.

Parks Commission

Searing – waiting for the contractor to get his insurance then construction will begin on the culvert at River Bluff. Will keep us updated. Parks budget –has met with Jon. Jon will come to the next parks meeting to explain the budget and look at future budgeting for some improvements at River Bluff including replacing the roof on the shelter. The sidewalk on Old Allegan Road near the church – found out that one of the houses that would be effected is a rental. Did have permission from owner a couple of years ago but now needs to reconfirm that agreement. Did get approval from the Church to go ahead with it. Dana will coordinate with the Road Commission regarding this project. Annual walk around of the parks was completed. Dog park – pot holes in parking lot are to be filled and wood chips will be added to some of the wet spots. There are signs at the dog park advising owners to inoculate their dogs.

Kalamazoo Lake Water and Sewer Authority

McGuigan- Attended June 10 meeting – also attended several meetings with Darryl. The meeting covered budget issues and 4 of the biggest issue the township faces. The lead/copper rule, and PFAS – we will face these issues over and over again as we find new ways to test for contaminants in water. Also attended an event put on by the AWWA on PFAS removal. Also discussed at the June 10 meeting was water head and the last issue is that there are 4 entities (Saugatuck Township, Saugatuck, Douglas, and Laketown) and there are 4 different opinions on what their agreement is with Kal Lake. Helmrich – should we be concerned about the foam that the FD uses as it contains PFAS? Mcguian – it could help to eliminate foam, but it is only a drop in the bucket. PFAS removal is fairly easy, but expensive.

Open Board Report

Marcy – elected official compensation is based on MTA research. Supervisor pay was cut from \$17,604.00 to \$12,500.00. Supervisor was overpaid compared to the 50th percentile. 50th percentile Treasurers pay for across the state is \$16,780.00 so we adjusted the Treasurer's pay to \$12,500.00 from \$10,937.00. 50th percentile for Clerk across the state is \$15,875.00 we were paying our clerk \$10,428.00. The Clerk's pay has also been adjusted to \$12,500.00. The pay scale is based on equity. The salaries have decreased overall by 8%. Happy to share the research to anyone who would like it. Helmrich – the Clerk and the Treasurer's administrative pay is now the same as well. Helmrich – at some point would like to address the following two issues: the short term rental situation and property maintenance problems. We need to talk about possible ordinances and how to enforce. Reminder tomorrow from 12:30-5pm the township will be working at the 4th of July Rotary event. We can't make a monetary donation but we can volunteer.

Public Comment

Greg Mackie- In Muskegon we took a run down building and made it really beautiful. You will see the same thing from us in this community. We are local; you will see a difference in the way that we do business.

Rob June Joon – wants to thank the board for overriding the PC. Thank you for allowing Aaron Smith to speak and to give his full presentation. This property could have always been a C-3 property.

Elliot Sturm – PFAS related to FD. In the 5 years I have been on the FD I believe we have used foam 2 times. 99.9% of the time we do not use it. We only need it for chemical fires.

Bigford moved to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Marcy. Approved 5-0.

Meeting Adjourned 7:54pm

Recording Secretary: Abby Bigford

Saugatuck Township Clerk

July 31, 2019