

Saugatuck Township Board Meeting  
Wednesday May 1, 2019, 6pm  
Saugatuck Township Hall, 3461 Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck, MI 49453  
Approved Minutes

Clerk Bigford called the meeting to order at 6pm.

All board members present with the exception of Supervisor Chris Roerig and Treasurer Jon Helmrich. Jon Helmrich will be participating via phone, but will not be able to vote.

Bigford – in the absence of the Supervisor, we need to appoint a trustee to chair the meeting. *Bigford moved to appoint Brenda Marcy to chair this evening's meeting. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: None. Approved 3-0*

**Public Comments:**

Allegan County Commissioner Dean Kapenga – there was a vote last month for a Headlee Override. Superintendents from the schools were coming to the commissioners asking for officers in their schools. The Sherriff's Department has 9 less detectives. Township Supervisors and school superintendents have all said that a possibility for this is a Headlee override. Headlee came in as our property taxes were increasing and to levy that they put it to a given amount. What has happened to townships and to counties is that the general fund has gone on a slow decrease. With inflation from gas to wages, and insurance, we simply are not keeping up. What some of the counties have done is a Headlee Override to bring that taxable rate down to what it was. We are going to ask for the voters to decide on that August 2020. There will be a lot more information on that coming. Spoke about PFAS in Otsego wells. PFAS was put on all of the roadway systems as a base. The County spent about 500K to check on the aquifer to check on the condition of it. The Community Health Department was awarded a 2 million dollar grant for homelessness. They are going to put on 5 more people to look at what the condition is in Allegan. Spoke about issues with the court house. They are looking at a 3<sup>rd</sup> circuit court. Kent Co. came to the last Commissioners meeting. They will fill up their solid waste in 7-10 years. They purchased land in the Dorr area and presented their business plan to the commissioners. It is projected to be a 15 million dollar project. There will be public outcry on this – will there be smell? Will this drive down my property value? Last subject – we are working with the tribe regarding them purchasing other land and not paying taxes on it. The tribe is willing to look at negotiations on this.

Jim Searing- will get the board a draft budget for the parks in the next week and will answer any questions we have

Bill Rowe – Emergency access to lakeshore drive – asks the board to establish a committee for this. He would like to be a part of this. He is on ZBA and PC and lives near the wash out. Believes it is important to go forward with this in a timely fashion.

Albi- How do you get on the Planning Commission – wonders who to talk to about a variance as well. He was directed to check out the website and contact Andy Prietz. Albi said that he was not good at computers. Was directed to contact the township office directly to connect with the PC. Helmrich said the next meeting is June 3. Jon said he is happy to meet with him next week as he is the board representative on the PC.

**Approval of Agenda:**

Bigford – no additions, deletions or removals, but we did have some packet materials come in after the packet was posted. There were 4 documents total that will be referenced later in the meeting. They will be added to the packet on file.

*Bigford moved to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: none. Agenda approved 3-0*

### **Guest Speaker Dr. Tim Travis**

Spoke about the overall scope and cost of the Saugatuck Public Schools bonding issue. Communicated the planned improvements to Douglas Elementary School: 12 classrooms were built in 1957 and the goal is to renovate them to be in line with the newer classrooms, the restrooms in those classrooms would increase in size/have doors open to the classroom/be ADA compliant, those classrooms would increase in overall size as well, improved security in central office, media center upgrades, safety improvements to the parent drop off. Planned improvements to Saugatuck High School/ Middle School: Middle School is in good shape as it was built about 20 years ago – it only needs some carpet/paint, replace 45 year old heating and cooling system, renovate the old classrooms, restrooms, locker rooms, media center, and cafeteria. The plan also includes a safe/secure entrance and a new band room. Finances: We have less real dollars than we did 10 years ago per pupil to operate our schools. Solar energy is being looked into for efficiency/cost savings. How much does this cost the taxpayer? About 1.36 mills over the current tax debt rate. This equals about an additional \$5.67 per month for every 100K of home market value. Spoke about how this 27 year bond would be paid off. His last point was this bond issue is scaled back 20% from the one last May due to public input. Net increase .57 mills May to May. Encouraged people to vote and to reach out to him for more information.

### **Invoices**

Marcy presented invoices that were submitted after the packet was created.

*Bigford moved to approve the accounts payable at a total of \$21,864.88. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: None. Approved 3-0.*

### **Treasurer's Report**

Helmrich: Combined balance in both of our bank accounts as of the day he left for Mount Pleasant – ~~1.2~~ 2.1 million. The statements from the bank probably came out today electronically and he will be able to review on Friday. No disbursements in April as we are past the winter tax and disbursement season. Budget vs. Actual: we are at about 70% of spending for this year's budget 10 months in. If we were at "full speed" we would be closer to about 83% of spending. This is good news. The general fund is at 75% through yesterday. The reason he is not in attendance is he is attending the Michigan Municipal Treasurer's Association Institute.

### **Minutes**

Helmrich- pointed out 2 minor errors on the minutes from April 3.

*Bigford moved to accept the minutes from April 3, 2019 as amended. Supported by Bigford. Discussion: None. Approved 3-0*

*Bigford moved to approve the minutes as submitted from the April 23, 2019 special meeting. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: None. Approved 3-0.*

### **Correspondence**

Marcy – there was correspondence from Ed Welk which will be discussed at item "M" of new Business.

### **Water Main Extension 135<sup>th</sup> Ave**

Marcy- The fire department, for fire protection requirements, requires an 8" main extending a public water main on 135<sup>th</sup> Ave. It is our understanding the developer of parcel 20-003-049-01 is willing to install an 8" main. For future development purposes, the Township prefers a 12" main for additional capacity, and the developer is willing to install the 12" main as long as the township agrees to pay the difference between the 8" and the 12" mains. According to Prein and Newhof, that difference should be around \$22,700 per the March 7, 2019 letter from Prein and Newhof, Dana Burd. The agreement will require the Township to reimburse the developer up to \$22,700 from the water project fund to cover the difference between the cost of the 8" and the 12" mains. Fire Chief Greg Janik: water main is required to be extended to the development. Developer was willing to put in the 8" main it made economic sense to increase it to a 12" because of the future well and water main that would come down require a 12". Strongly encourages the board to go forward and approve this. Wants to move this project forward. The engineer recommends it, the Fire Department is in support of this, Mrs. Dean supported it – there is a letter on file from Natalie and this reinforces that everyone is on the same page. The developer will be able to get his permits as long as he installs the main prior to construction which is required. Helmrich- is there a time frame on installation? Janik - has heard that it will take 4-5 weeks to engineer it; they have to submit it to DEQ to get permits in place – so the sooner the better so we don't hold this up. So I can't answer your question directly. Helmrich – this could be an expenditure in our next fiscal year. Dana Burd township engineer – my letter speaks for itself. Put in the correct size so you do not have to come back and change it later. Janik - you will have, at some point to increase the 8" main under Blue Star – this will be at the township's expense. *Bigford moved to direct the township's attorney to draw up a memorandum of understanding between the township and the developer and authorize the clerk to sign it for an amount not to exceed \$22,700.00, which is the difference between the 8" and 12" pipe. That \$22,700.00 will be at the township's expense. Supported by Aldrich.*  
*Discussion: None. Approved 3-0*

#### **Appointment of Bill Rowe through June 30, 2019 Zoning Board of Appeals**

Helmrich- Bill came to us a few weeks back. Traditionally, the seat that he holds on the ZBA has always run concurrently with the seat that he holds on the Planning Commission. It was discovered that his ZBA seat had expired. The ZBA meets tomorrow. It is a critical meeting with a full agenda. It is important for all members to be there. Nick Curcio, our attorney will be there. We need to appoint Bill through June 30, 2019. Bigford – has an email from Chris Roerig appointing Bill Rowe to the PC and the ZBA. We do need that appointment from the supervisor. We just need to approve it. *Bigford moved to approve Supervisor Roerig's appointment of Bill Rowe to the Zoning Board of Appeals through June 30, 2019. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: None. Approved 3-0*

#### **Open seat on the Planning Commission**

Bigford – I did speak with Bill Rowe before the meeting and Helmrich did receive an email to be shared with the board from Bill Rowe. There were potentially going to be vacant seats on the PC and ZBA as Bill Rowe was considering stepping down. He is now, per the email and conversation, reconsidering being considered to continue in those seats. So there may not be any vacancies. He will be prepared to let us know before our June meeting and his term will not be up until June 30, 2019. Helmrich – ~~reinterred~~ reiterated what Bigford said. Notice an opening if needed and post it for other to apply. It could be an agenda item in June. Marcy – do we do that even if there is not a vacancy/if Bill decides to continue? Helmrich – we can wait to hear what he is thinking before we notice it. Bill will let us know in a few days.

#### **Temporary Office hour reduction**

Aldrich – lots of townships are closed sometimes, a day, a half day in order to get work done without interruptions. Because of being short staffed, is wondering if we should consider being closed to the public 1 day or a half day a week. Spoke with Babinski today. Her busy day is Wednesday. Marcy- We have looked at many other townships. There are few that are open to the public 5 days a week. We are not talking about a day off for the staff. It would be a day that the staff would report and get their work done. Agrees that we should close one day to the public as a temporary plan – for 8 weeks. Aldrich – this cannot happen before the election. Bigford- the hours to come in and vote were published as 8am-4pm Mon-Fri. Would phones be answered? Would emails be answered? Marcy: suggests phones should not be answered. Helmrich- our phone system can be adjusted so that the voice mail comes on quicker and directs people to the proper person. Did an analysis – will send it out if wanted. Most townships do not have 40hr a week office hours. Does think that modifying office hours is a good idea as we need to focus on open staffing positions, the budget and the audit. Supports this. Aldrich – it would be nice to decide tonight so we can give notice. Helmrich- Wednesdays are challenging days. Catherine Dristas- approached the podium – she is on the ZBA. Asked the board to consider having someone available for emergency issues. *Aldrich moved to close the offices to the public all day Wednesdays beginning May 8 until we revisit this in 8 weeks. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: None. Approved 3-0.*

#### **Open Township Supervisor Seat as of May 3, 2019**

Marcy – we need to move forward with this as we only have 45 days to fill this position. Bigford- suggests to open this up to applicants on May 4 and publish it in the newspaper and open it up to applicants until the position is filled. Helmrich – we need to place an ad in the Commercial Record. We would like to make this appointment at the June meeting. Bigford – an appointment at the June meeting would be best case scenario; if we have qualified applicants. *Bigford moved to open up the township supervisor seat for applicants May 4, 2019 and publish it in the Commercial Record. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: None. Approved 3-0.*

#### **Saugatuck Township Representative – Kalamazoo Lake Sewer and Water Board**

Marcy – Trustee Roerig was formerly the representative on this board. Bigford – that seat will be open after May 3 as well. Aldrich – I have been attending the meetings. You really do need a representative with some technical experience. Wants applications from the public. Helmrich – let’s combine that in the ad we run next week. Stacey should attend in the meantime. *Aldrich moved to open up the process of appointing someone to the Kal Lake board and advertise it in the Commercial Record. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: Bigford – you did not say when to open it up. Aldrich –May 4. Approved 3-0.*

#### **Frank Walsh Proposal, MTS proposal, Zoning Work proposals**

Helmrich – items g-i are related. We just accepted the resignation of our zoning administrator last week. We had some proposals on the table from back in December when we had an opening for Manager and Zoning Administrator. We were able to revisit these. And some other opportunities arose. Summarized the Frank Walsh proposal, Williams and Works proposal, and the Aligned planning proposal. I do not think we are in a position tonight to vote on them. One is per hour- one is a flat fee. We need to look at dollar amounts and hours spent. We need to be able to address this in an intelligent way. Expected questions and issues around the proposals to arise from today’s meeting. Note: as of Friday this week we will have the Supervisor off payroll, the Zoning Administrator/Manager off payroll and the assessor off payroll. Did an estimate on the impact that this would have. From next Monday to the end of the fiscal year it would be approximately 30K from these 3 positions that we could spend. We may need some of it if we appoint/hire someone sooner. Marcy/Helmrich- discussion/questions on Williams and Works proposal regarding hourly rates vs. office time. There is no way to predict how

many hours. They are not currently staffed enough to provide in office hours. Aligned does provide office hours. Walsh – the scope of work is so much larger than the proposal submitted in the fall. We went back with our 8 point priorities. Helmrich – we need to divide this up. We need to get back to these people. We need to negotiate. Maybe we need to make a decision on the Zoning work first. Consider looking at the Walsh proposal later. The Walsh proposal is more expensive, but perhaps he is factoring in the urgency of the situation and how much work that will entail. Helmrich – thinks we have the authority to put someone in place for temporary zoning work, but will look into if we need to have a special meeting to authorize. Bigford – getting zoning work covered is priority, we just received these proposals we need to analyze these proposals and get our questions answered. Not sure if a special meeting is needed or not to authorize. Aldrich – isn't there some emergency way to get someone in to do the zoning work and approve it later at a meeting? Marcy – we probably can't sign a contract. We are working around the clock to fill the vacancies. Aldrich – hoping by this week we can get someone in here. Bigford – when you say getting someone in here you mean zoning? Aldrich – yes Marcy – table and work on reviewing proposals and make a decision. Helmrich – we can use MTS in the future, but things are working ok for now. Table items g,h and I under new business for now.

### **Special Meeting in May for Budget Discussion**

Helmrich – we need to vote to approve our budget for the 2020 fiscal year that starts on July 1<sup>st</sup> in early June. We need to have a special public budget meeting as well. Suggests a budget discussion meeting in May. Our auditor may be helpful with this. Natalie was quite a way down the path with a proposed budget for next year. He has access to all of that material. He threw out the dates May 17, 20 and 22. Suggests a day meeting as we may need access to information in the office. It should be a 2-3 hour meeting. This is not the annual public budget meeting. This is a special meeting to discuss the budget. We will work out a date and post it. Bigford – it was Roerig's understanding that the budget is 90% far along.

### **Adopt Rezoning Recommendation for 2846 Hercules Drive**

Marcy –It is my understanding that the Planning Commission has approved this and recommends that we go forward with this. Marcy read section one of the proposed ordinance. *Bigford moved to approve the recommendation from the Planning Commission to rezone the property at 2846 Hercules Drive from C-3 to I-1. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: none. Roll call vote: all vote yes. Ordinance passes 3-0.*

### **Board of Review – Seeking applications**

Bigford – the tax board of review needs 3 members on that board. There are only 2 right now. Sherry Mason asked me to recognize Don Maeder for his many years of service on that board. We can open this up for applicants and publish that. There is one interested applicant already that Sherry Mason recommends. Does not know if there is a sample posting. Helmrich – we should publish this separately from the other postings. *Marcy moved to approve publishing this separately from the others in the Commercial Record on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: Bigford – by “this” you mean the open seat on the Board of Review? Marcy – yes. Approved 3-0*

### **Emergency Access to Lakeshore Drive**

Marcy read letter from Ed Welk that was part of the packet. Dana Burd – read his proposal that was part of the packet. We were previously authorized for 6K for consulting on this project. They have used just over 5K of that so there is some funding for some additional meetings. This issue has been around for 30 years. Aldrich – are easements difficult to get? Burd – you can usually work with people to get them to see the benefit, but there is no guarantee. There seems to be public support for this. Aldrich: would this be a road or a bike path? How big for an emergency vehicle to get through? Burd – it would

have to meet IFC requirements – 20ft of driving surface? Janik – here is what we had in mind: a very low impact two track, gated or chained, 12 feet wide. We don't need 20ft. Recommends considering a lower impact option. It would be chained and only the fire department would have the key. What he heard at the meeting was support for a low impact emergency drive. Encourages us to involve the fire department. Burd – it is easier to get one person up to speed before a committee is formed. Marcy – we are very interested in this subject and moving this forward. Bigford – Roerig did send an email regarding agenda items for today and said: The board should decide whether they want to pursue this, and then have Township Engineer Dana Burd work with a committee to investigate the potential options. Brenda and one of our STFD representatives should lead that committee, in my opinion. Marcy and Aldrich and possibly Bill Rowe will meet with Dana Burd and then form a committee.

### **Planning Commission**

April 22 meeting was significant. The first item was the first rezoning for medical marijuana growth facilities in the township it was passed 7-0. The second item also requested rezoning to C-3 for the property right across the street from Burger King. This was denied by a 7-0 vote as the applicant was not specific enough. There was a site plan application for the Bigby Coffee proposed to go into the parking lot area at Spectators. The site plan was passed unanimously, but is pending, needing a new survey. There was one more site plan application for the property next to the former Blue Star Nursery that is an artist's studio. They want to upgrade it to a retail space and add bathrooms. This was passed 7-0. The may PC meeting will be held on June 3<sup>rd</sup> due to Memorial Day.

### **Road Commission**

Marcy – is working with 3 different groups of people on paving issues. Is also working with Craig Atwood at Allegan County.

### **Interurban**

Aldrich read Babinski's update that was part of the packet.

### **Fire Board**

Aldrich - total incident response calls as of April 29, 2019 = 264, a 3% increase. Response times down slightly at 5 min. Friday is the day of the week with the largest call incident volume. Fire Board is going to be revisiting the International Fire Code with the 2018 book as there are marijuana guidelines in that version.

### **Parks Commission**

Jim Searing – has met with Natalie on the Budget. Would like to make sure that what he talked to her about is in the budget. Riverbluff bids- talked with Dana and he expects some bids by the 7<sup>th</sup> of May. Hopefully we can then go forward with the replacement of that bridge. The sidewalk at the church – hopes to meet with them in May and make a plan and get their approval to go forward with that sidewalk that would connect Old Allegan Road to Maple Street.

### **Open Board Report**

Marcy – the pre audit checklist has been provided to all for audit prep.

Aldrich – Assessor search – Brenda and I are on the committee to interview and make recommendations for a new assessor. There were 3 interviews with Sherry Mason and Natalie Dean prior to this new committee. We have 90 days to hire an assessor. Sherry will assist in finding the best candidate for our needs.

**Public Comment**

None.

*Marcy moved to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Bigford. Approved 3-0.*

Meeting Adjourned 8:05pm

Recording Secretary: Abby Bigford

Saugatuck Township Clerk

May 12, 2019