

Saugatuck Township Board Meeting
Wednesday October 2, 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 with the exception of Jon Helmrich, Treasurer

Public Comment

Ingrid Boyer- Director of the Saugatuck/Douglas District Library, and township resident. Supports the reappointment of Mark Chancey to the Library board. He has been a good board member and is very involved in the new Library project. Believes it would be disruptive at this point to replace him. Is happy that others applied but supports Chancey for the reappointment.

County Commissioner Dean Kapenga- Update annual report from prosecutors office – changes in crime trends over 10 years. The most serious crime is controlled substance. This is 3 times as many as 10 years ago. Many of the abuse/neglect cases are because of drugs. Spoke about a community survey to find out what the public really wants. The courthouse entrance relocation and upgrade was passed. Also passed changing/upgrading the prisoner transferring and holding to be more secure and adequate for males and females. In October will finalize the 2020 budget. Smart 911 passed. This will give the dispatchers/responders more information. There will be a big press release on this.

James Brandis- Roundup issue – believes we are making some progress. The response (from the road commission) to the township board’s communication was in the latest issue of the Commercial Record. It was finally put in writing that land owners could maintain their own guardrails. Also learned that they spray once a year and they do not spray on Lakeshore Drive. It appears that the township could choose to maintain their guardrails on their own dime. Wants more transparency with this issue.

Bill Lubbers – Saugatuck Christian Reformed Church – Spoke in support of the sidewalk project and the FOBST. Believes this is a safety issue.

Mike VanLoon – Kalamazoo Lake and Harbor Authority- Spoke in support of the Township re-joining the authority and looks forward to working with the township and having one voice for our harbor.

Approval of Agenda

Bigford – moved to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: none. Approved 4-0.

Invoices

Aldrich moved to approve the invoices totaling \$72,859.15. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: None. Approved 4-0. .

Treasurer’s Report

General fund bank balance = \$2.4M

CD value = \$749K – up \$1K from September

YTD 2020 – revenue is 13% below budget; timing differences. Expenses are 15% below budget.

Summer Tax Collection season ended

Minutes

Aldrich moved to accept minutes as written from September 4, 2019 regular meeting. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: None. Approved 4-0

Correspondence

Osman- this month we received a number of correspondences. Ingrid Boyer – Library Board reappointment, Carrie Courier – application to the Library Board, Daly letter – regarding sidewalk – Old Allegan and Blue Star Highway, Friends of Blue Star Trail – regarding sidewalk – Old Allegan and Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck Christian Reformed Church – regarding sidewalk – Old Allegan and Blue Star Hwy., Road Commission – response to herbicide letter.

Harbor Grant Resolution

Graham – this is the 2nd time this has come before the board. The Allegan County Board of Commissioners was awarded a grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Waterways Division to sample, map, and study contamination of the Saugatuck Harbor. The cost of the project was estimated to cost \$160K with a required 50% match (80K) which was assumed to be split between Allegan County, Saugatuck Township, the City of Saugatuck, and the City of the Village of Douglas. The original costs associated with this project were found to be prohibitive due to the limited budgets of the local units of government. It was determined that the sediment contamination analysis was the most critical component needing funding. The estimated cost was reduced to \$50K - \$25K local match. A commitment with the cooperation of Allegan Co., the City of Saugatuck, the City of the Village of Douglas, Saugatuck Township and the Saugatuck Area Chamber of Commerce, a commitment of 5K is needed from each entity to participate in the grant. Donations will be pursued to complete the project in its entirety. The City of Saugatuck, The City of The Village of Douglas, and Allegan County have all formally supported the grant via resolution. Dr. Bob Shuchman with Michigan Tech is present if there are questions. RJ Peterson is also present for questions.

Bigford – Supports the township’s participation in the harbor grant. Values assessment of water and sediment quality, potential for mapping/bathymetry, the potential for more ecofriendly/cost effective alternatives to dredging. Would not have supported the original 20K. Believes that Saugatuck and Douglas are connected more closely to the harbor than the township. Due to the township’s different landscape and make up, would likely not support funding project further in the future.

Osman – is this project budgeted?

Graham – No. The Township can decide to appropriate additional funds, however, a budget amendment would be needed before the funds could be provided. There is currently \$2400 budgeted in the Harbor Commission department, some of that was set aside for buoy placement, but some could go to the 5K needed to support the grant. Sediment testing is the first priority, so if there are no contributions exceeding \$25K, this would be the extent of the project. It is reported that fundraising is going well, so it is hoped that the project will be completed entirely.

Marcy – normally would not advocate for use of unbudgeted funds, but does support this as she believes it is important and that it is valuable for the 3 communities to work together on this.

Marcy moved to approve the adoption of the proposed Resolution of Support indicating Saugatuck Township’s intention to participate in the Harbor Grant and cost sharing in an amount not to exceed \$5,000. Supported by Bigford. Discussion: none. Roll call vote: All yes. Approved 4-0.

Ambulance Special Assessment District – Public Hearing and Resolution

Osman – opened the public hearing at 6:25pm. Invited public to speak.

~~Norman~~ Norma Green – wondering why we need pay extra for ambulance service when we already have ambulance service. Wondering how much we will all have to pay.

Tony Schippa – Our ambulance service 30+ years ago was established when the hospital closed in Saugatuck. In order to have ambulance service, there needed to be a subsidy. Back then, our community agreed to partner with other neighboring communities to subsidize this service. We are now being serviced by AMR out of Fennville or sometimes Holland. But, we need to share in that subsidy along with Clyde Township, City of Fennville, Ganges Township, Lee Township, half of Manlius Township. Only the southern half of our township would pay the subsidy. The southern half of our township receives better response times from an ambulance out of Fennville.

Graham- We do have a print out of every property in the Special Assessment District and what they would be paying. He would be happy to go over that with any concerned citizen. For example a property with a taxable value of 208K would pay \$10.16 a year.

Bigford – Thanked Schippa for his presentation and work. Pointed out that the other communities that are paying the subsidy in order to have the ambulance in Fennville are frustrated that we are not paying, but receiving services. At least one of those communities has suggested that they will not pay as well. If the ambulance service is not subsidized, it will disappear and our response times will be greatly affected.

Osman – Closed the public hearing at 5:34pm

Graham – there is a resolution in front of the board for consideration regarding the Township’s ambulance special assessment roll. Drew the board’s attention to the last “whereas” statement.

Osman- thank you to Graham and our assessor, Kyle for all of their hard work on this.

Marcy - this Special Assessment was passed in an election in 1980.

Bigford – Moved to approve the adoption of Resolution XX to confirm the Township’s Ambulance Special Assessment Roll and Levying Assessment for 2019. Supported by Marcy. Roll Call Vote: All Yes 4-0.

Personnel Policy and Organizational Chart Update

Aldrich – thank you Griffin. This is very detailed.

Bigford – This has been a work in progress. There has been much involvement and input from the Board and much work from Graham.

Graham- this is a living document. This and other documents/policies should be evaluated annually.

Bigford – Moved to approve the adoption of the proposed Personnel Policy and organizational chart updates, as submitted by staff. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: none. Approved 4-0.

Financial Policy Handbook

Osman- We did all receive a revised copy. There were some changes suggested by our attorney and our auditor.

Graham - drew the board’s attention to page 6 of the handbook and highlighted that any purchases above 10K require approval of the Township Board. Documented policies like this institutionalize processes and systems that set us up for success. These are important for transparency. Our residents can see these and provide feedback.

Bigford – Moved to approve the adoption of the updated Financial Policy Handbook, as submitted by staff. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: none. Approved 4-0.

Resolution of Intent to join the Kalamazoo Lake Harbor Authority

Graham- Saugatuck Township was invited to join the Kalamazoo Lake Harbor Authority as a full-voting member. Previously, the Township had a non-voting seat on the Authority. Highlighted the process for joining the KLHA (included in the memo).

Osman- this process is not a fast one. There are many steps.

Graham – yes there are 4 steps (included in the Memo). This is an example of intergovernmental cooperation.

Marcy- will the attorney review this again?

Graham – the board could adopt this resolution. The authority would review. It would come back to us again. So yes.

Marcy- Moved to approve the adoption of the updated Resolution of Intent to Consider Joining the Kalamazoo Lake Harbor Authority. Supported by Aldrich. Discussion: None. Roll Call Vote: All yes. Approved 4-0.

Old Allegan Sidewalk Construction

Osman – this is regarding the construction of a sidewalk from Maple Street to the Blue Star Trail on the north side of Old Allegan Road west of Blue Star Hwy. This was recommended by the Parks Commission. This was part of the Parks and Rec plan. The money is in the budget. We received 2 letters of support and 2 letters (from the same person) that believed this sidewalk construction would devalue their property. This is in the right of way and the Township has the authority to construct a sidewalk.

Graham- the Parks Commission has also received letters from the concerned family (regarding devaluation) and has considered those concerns. They have attempted to address these concerns by replacing trees. Staff will continue to check in with this family. This will provide a safe connection.

Aldrich – who is responsible for snow removal?

Graham- we would have to look into that.

Searing (Parks Commission Chair) – knows the person that plows the Church next to the proposed sidewalk and is planning on asking him to plow the sidewalk if this construction is approved.

Aldrich – Thinks that this construction is a good idea as it will address safety issues.

Graham – this project would likely occur in the spring.

Aldrich – Moved to authorize the Parks Commission and the Township Manager to proceed with the Old Allegan Road Sidewalk Construction Project. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: Bigford – thank you to the Parks Commission for their hard work and to the Church for sharing their space. This is an improvement to Township recreation. Approved 4-0.

Saugatuck Douglas District Library Board Appointment

We have an open seat on the Library Board and we have Ingrid Boyd here who advised how she would like that seat to be filled.

Aldrich – has spoke with Mark Chancey (current representative for the Township on the Library Board). He really wants to complete the project (new Library construction). Hopes that he is reappointed.

Marcy – believes that in the middle of this construction project that continuity is very important. It is important to reappoint him.

Bigford- there were 3 other applicants (Christine Currie, Kathy Nania, and Carrie Courier) they all were quite qualified. Hopes that they become involved in the Library in the future or in the Township. Is grateful to have applicants who are qualified and willing to serve. Does agree that it is important for Chancey to see this work through on the construction project.

Aldrich - Moved to appoint Mark Chancey to the Saugatuck-Douglas Library Board for a 4 year term from October 2019-September 2023. Supported by Marcy. Discussion: None. Approved 4-0.

Planning Commission

Report from PC member and Township Treasurer Helmrich

- ZA Wells presented an overview of the status of State Rules for Recreational Marijuana; PC agreed to hold a Public Hearing at the November 25th meeting to further discuss Opting In or remaining Out on Recreational Marijuana in the Township.
- Wells also reported that she expects PC to receive two new medical marijuana applicants – a growth and a provisioning.
- ZA reported on certain Ordinance inconsistencies and edits that she recommends be approved for revising.
- New zoning maps had some errors that need to be fixed before we receive the final version from the county.
- October 28 meeting will feature a presentation on ‘tiny homes’ from Ryan Kilpatrick (at 6:00pm).
- Aaron Smith commented that recreational marijuana sales will include a 10% tax, some of which would go to the Township.
- Becky Israels shared materials from the Michigan Townships Association seminar on Hot Topics in Planning/Zoning that she attended on the Township’s behalf along with Supervisor Osman (copies are available if interested). Topics included sand mining, tiny houses, short-term rentals, and limits on local zoning control.

Road Commission

Marcy- no report

Graham – Attended the last Road Commission meeting on September 18th. They announced at that time that our local subdivision projects that were started back in July and then were delayed due to the strike are tentatively rescheduled for the middle of October. Wants to note that this is tentative as the strike is still ongoing.

Interurban

August the transit carried 12,302 passengers, a record-breaking month, over 4 passengers than our 2013 record. The parking shuttle carried 8774 passengers this year – a 45% increase over last year. Training is in progress for the new dispatch and tablet software. Planning on October 7 going live with the new software.

The board approved the wage proposal which gives the new staff a large increase to bring them to a market rate and our long-term drivers a 3% increase as well as our director, Phyllis Yff. Yff’s goals for this coming year are to begin using data from our new dispatch system to determine service level needs, use our asset management plan and grant opportunities to keep our vehicles and building in good repair, bring staff training/review records up to date, continue to be a part of this incredible public service our community is so fortunate to have, and to work as a team member with our wonderful staff.

The board amended the Defined Benefit Adoption Agreement to include a 1% employee contribution for full time staff enrolled in the Defined Benefit Plan beginning January 1, 2020.

Submitted by Lori Babinski, Saugatuck Twp rep

Fire Board

Last month almost tied the record for September 2018. 80 calls total as opposed to 83 for September 2018. There was an increase in fire calls, 6 total, one structure fire in our township and a vehicle fire on the highway. EMS counted for 47% of our calls. Township is still the area with the most calls 279 compared to 209 and 203 in the other cities. 8 motor vehicle incidents for September. We received 2 grant awards. FEMA granted \$123,588.09 for radios and headsets, and MMRMA granted \$3150 for fencing for the Live Fire Training facility.

Parks Commission

Searing – The grass has been growing at the river bluff new construction. A new gate has been installed at the dog park. Laurie Goshorn has been instrumental in getting that completed.

Goshorn – we received notice from some residents that dogs were escaping somewhere in the forested area. She and Searing investigated and discovered that where they had cut the fence to bring in the chips was not really secured properly and dogs could easily get underneath the fence. Noticed another hole in the fence that was inadequately patched. Met with a friend that is a local contractor. Has done much fencing for sheep. Bid for new fencing and posts. Now anytime new chips need to be brought in, there is a new solid gate to utilize. Is happy with the quality of the work and the value. Is there a key to the gate onsite at the township?

Graham – believes we do have a key at the township for the gate. Is currently working on accounting for all of the township related keys.

Emergency Services Committee

Tony Schippa – Township Representative- attended the meeting on September 12. 4 of the 6 committee reps were there and the operations manager for AMR was present. The AMR account executive was also present. Manager Graham's questions were addressed. The committee was glad that we were again at the table. We had 33 calls on the south side of Saugatuck Township for the last 3 months. Nothing out of the ordinary on response times.

Open Board Report

Bigford – Osman and I attended the Allegan County Emergency Preparedness meeting on September 30. Has a great appreciation for all of the things that are being done behind the scenes to protect our citizens from natural disasters, active shooters, outbreaks, ect. If we receive an email/survey regarding this please fill it out as it could help us qualify for State dollars towards emergencies.

Aldrich – roundup/guardrail issue. The best way to get noticed and get a discussion going is for residents to deal with the county directly. Hopes that residents can be notified when spraying will occur and put flags out after spraying. Will work with any concerned residents.

Osman – the County Road Commission can make the change. This should be done at the County level.

Bigford – happy that the Road Commission has made some changes like advising that spraying happens once a year and allowing residents to maintain their own guardrails.

Marcy – is pleased with the intergovernmental cooperation as shown in today's meeting

Manager Report

Graham – accomplishments from the last month: The fall e-newsletter was sent to over 200 subscribers. People can still signup for the newsletter through our website or by emailing info@sautatucktownship.org. Door frame repairs are scheduled for this Friday. This is important work that needs to happen to preserve our building. The Township purchased over 1300 flower bulbs that will be planted in the 2 cemeteries on October 19 in the afternoon. This is the 2nd year that the Township has contributed to this. Darby development – Prairie Ponds update – the Township participated in a joint legal review of the 1998 retail water system contract with Laketown Township. Staff is pursuing an access with conditions approach with the goal of preserving the long term integrity of our water system. Next steps include Mr. Darby working directly with Laketown Township to go through their site plan review and PUD processes. Staff will continue to review our obligations in the 2000 water agreement with the City of Saugatuck, The City of the Village of Douglas and the Kal Lake Water and Sewer Authority to make sure we are upholding our obligations. Lakeshore Drive washout area- A committee was formed before he came on board. Has had several meetings with our engineer, the Road Commission, to get caught up on this topic. All of the parties involved want change; it comes

down to financial and staff capacity. Is looking for board guidance moving forward on this topic. Has a meeting with Fire Chief Janik on October 14 to discuss emergency routes. Is his perspective that if an emergency route is what is desired and needed; that process needs to be led by the fire district. Wants some guidance from the board regarding their desires for involvement and pursuing this topic. Working on scheduling a township board retreat in the next couple of months. Someone would be brought in to facilitate goal/priority setting. Will be out of the office tomorrow at the MTA's regional meeting.

Public Comments:

VanLoon- Both the Cities are excited to have the Township rejoin the Harbor Authority. Encouraged the Board to do what they can to keep manager Graham.

Aldrich moved to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Bigford. Approved 4-0.

Meeting Adjourned 7:19pm

Recording Secretary: Abby Bigford

Saugatuck Township Clerk

November 2, 2019