

**Merrill Township
Board Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2024
DRAFT**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Morgan at 8:04 pm. Followed by the pledge of allegiance by Mr. Morgan and prayer by Ms. Fisher.

Roll Call

Ms. Debra Fisher, Treasurer
Ms. Venola Walton-Stanciel, Trustee
Mr. Peter Morgan, Supervisor
Mr. Harold Yancy, Trustee
Tabatha Glezman, Clerk

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Yancy motioned to approve agenda, Ms. Glezman seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Approval of December 18, 2023 board minutes
Approval to pay bills: from 12/18/23-3/18/24 general account, total \$47,994.61
Transfer Station account, total \$30,041.83

Ms. Walton-Stanciel motioned to approve the consent agenda, Ms. Fisher seconded, the motion was carried.

Lilley Township Fire Department Report:

Mr. Morgan read the report by the Fire Department describing the type of calls received over the last three months. He added that Lilley is looking for people to hire if anyone has a recommendation or is interested.

Zoning Administrator

Mr. Morgan delivered the report for Mr. Wroblewski who was unable to attend.

- 13 individual pending properties
- 2 going to court on Tuesday, March 19th.

Supervisor's report

- Cost sharing with Newaygo County Road Commission will be addressed below in the New Business section.
- Board of Review went well. It was slow. They reviewed 4 poverty exemptions and 2 over paid tax concerns.
- Repair of kitchen hood will need to be completed in the future. The hood is working, safe and functional. Estimated costs are \$12,000-\$15,000. Mr. Morgan waiting on bids.
- Mr. Morgan met with the Forestry and Road Commission to address a home that was built in a road way to Bub and Sis Lake. The Forestry isn't interested in moving the road or working to fix the issues. The Road Commission will help but they need the Forestry to help too. Mr. Morgan has a call into the Township attorney to determine the best way to fix this.
- Phones: Mr. Morgan acknowledged Chuck Hanlon's research and suggestion of adding a single point of contact for the community regarding cell phones and a phone to be used as a call tree for the members of the board and the zoning administrator. Pete will address this if the millage passes in August. This was also addressed during the Annual meeting prior to the Board meeting. Mrs. Glezman motioned and Ms. Walton-Stanciel seconded, motion carried if millage passes.

Clerk's Report

Election went well. Added new cameras, as required by the state, to be installed prior to June 1, 2024.

Purchased a new laptop because the old one would freeze when Ms. Glezman tried to run the reports needed for the election. This cost was \$605.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Fisher stated the tax collection season is completed and she settled and balanced with the county with no adjustments.

New Business

- Brine bid for the roads approved at \$11,031.25 per brine. Ms. Glezman motioned, Ms. Fisher seconded, the motion carried.
- Equalization contract needs to be signed by the Board members and returned to the County by 4/1/24 but the County is requesting a 5-year contract and the Board members are allowed to sign contracts only as long as their term. Ms. Glezman recommended contacting the attorney. Ms. Glezman motioned, no second so the motioned died. Ms. Glezman and Mr. Yancy asked Mr. Morgan to contact the attorney for guidance to change the term of the

contract or advise if they are able to sign a 5-year contract.

Ms. Glezman motioned; Mr. Yancy seconded, the motion carried if the attorney approves.

- 2024/2025 Board meeting schedule. Mr. Morgan purposed for the Board to meet every other month. Ms. Walton-Stanciel motioned, no second the motion died.
Ms. Glezman recommended keeping the existing schedule of meetings once a quarter and if needed, and if the millage passes, add special meetings as they did in 2023. This would schedule meetings to 6/17/24; 9/16/2024; 12/16/2024 & 3/17/2025.
Ms. Glezman motioned, Ms. Fisher seconded, Ms. Walton-Stanciel opposed, the motion carried.
- Poverty Exemption Guidelines being approved for current year 2024.
Ms. Glezman motioned, Ms. Walton-Stanciel seconded, motion carried.
- 2024 Newaygo County Road Commission and Merrill Township partnership with the Construction Plan; no additional plans for 2024. Still waiting on the stripe at the transfer station to be completed.
Ms. Glezman motioned, Ms. Walton-Stanciel seconded, motion carried.
- Correspondence - Leslie & Eric Anderson inquired of the Township to purchase property that is being sold at the tax sale and sell it to them to avoid bidding at the tax sale. The Board voted against this request.
Ms. Glezman motioned, Mr. Yancy seconded, motion carried.
- Correspondence - Leslie & Eric Anderson inquired about transfer station fee reduction. They asked the Board to reduce their transfer fees for owning multiple properties. Mr. Morgan stated if this is done for one it will need to be done for all. The Board voted against the change.
Mr. Yancy motioned, Ms. Glezman seconded, the motion carried to leave fees as is.
- Resolution to add the millage for blight to the August ballot.
Ms. Glezman motioned; Mr. Yancy seconded. Roll call vote: Ms. Fisher-Y; Ms. Glezman-Y; Ms. Walton-Stanciel-Y; Mr. Morgan-Y and Mr. Yancy-Y. motion carried.
- Resolution for fire millage. The current millage will be expiring and needs to be added to the ballot in August. It will remain at the same millage as it is currently.
Ms. Glezman motioned; Ms. Fisher seconded. Roll Call vote: Ms. Fisher-Y; Ms. Walton-Stanciel-Y; Ms. Glezman-Y; Mr. Morgan-Y; Mr. Yancy-Y. The motion carried.
- Mr. Morgan proposed adding to the August ballot to abolish the Annual Meeting. This was brought to the Board from the public for consideration. Ms. Glezman motioned; Mr. Yancy seconded. Roll Call: Ms. Fisher-Y; Ms. Glezman-Y; Ms. Walton-Stanciel-N; Mr. Morgan-Y; Mr. Yancy-Y. motion carried. The option to continue or discontinue the Annual Meeting will be on the August ballot. Motion carried.
- Ms. Glezman explained the budget adjustments and moving of funds to cover the accounts with surplus or negative balances. The funds are balanced for the final budget for 2023. Ms. Glezman motioned, Ms. Walton-Stanciel seconded. Roll Call: Ms. Glezman-Y; Ms. Fisher-Y; Ms. Walton-Stanciel-Y; Mr. Morgan-Y; Mr. Yancy-Y motion carried
- New budget approved. Ms. Glezman motioned, Ms. Fisher seconded, Roll Call: Ms. Glezman-Y; Ms. Fisher-Y; Ms. Walton-Stanciel-Y; Mr. Morgan-Y; Mr. Yancy-Y, motion carried.

Public Comment

- Ms. Morris: brought forward to the Board the items from the Annual meeting that the community would like the Board to consider:
 - Phones: Add a single line for people to call that they could select from a call tree, the Board member they need to leave a message for or speak to.
 - Posted office hours for Board Members
 - Zoning Administrator to work 20 hours a week
 - Update electrical wiring to the township building to support the Red Cross for a generator
 - Township rental of the building – for community events it was requested to wave rental fees.
- Ms. Walton-Stanciel motioned, Ms. Glezman seconded, motion carried.

And it was suggested that it would be helpful for the community to create an event committee and appointment a committee chair before the next board meeting.

- Mr. Misner asked the Board to consider allocating a couple of ½ days during the Spring (early May-June) for the Zoning Administrator to have set hours to make it easier on the campers to purchase their annual permits. This might increase money for the township.
- Mr. Redding commented on the issue at Bub & Sis Lake.

Update on Cemetery

Cemetery follow up: All the downed trees have been cleaned up at the cemetery. There are approximately 8 12"-28" trees still leaning and about to fall down. Mr. Morgan has a bid from the previous request that had been posted in the paper for \$4,250.00 but it is over a year old now. Mr. Morgan is waiting on a response from MTA for direction whether he has to place a new bid request in the paper or if he can use the old bid that he has on file. He isn't sure if he can accept this bid or if too much time has passed from the acceptance of the last bids requiring him to repost the bid in the paper. Ms. Glezman purposed that if the current bid does not need to be reposted in the paper the Board should accept it and complete the work. If it needs to be reposted in the paper, it should be posted immediately to complete it by May 1, 2024. If the new bid is \$4,250.00 or lower move forward with the lowest bid. Ms. Gleman motioned, Ms. Fisher, seconded, the motion carried.

Mr. Yancy motioned to adjourn at 9:20 pm, Ms. Glezman seconded.

Adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Bonnie St. Amour
Deputy Treasurer

Merrill Township