

MERRILL TOWNSHIP REGULAR BOARD MINUTES

Merrill Township Community Complex

1585 West 11 Mile Rd.

Bitely, MI. 49309

June 19, 2017

Agenda

1. Call to order – Barry Baldwin called meeting to order at 7:07 pm
2. Pledge to flag – Frank Jackson led Pledge of Allegiance
3. Prayer – Denise Suttles offered opening prayer
4. Roll Call – Board members present – Supervisor Barry Baldwin, Clerk Janet Osmolinski, Treasurer Cathy Stroop, Trustee Frank Jackson. Trustee Denise Suttles.
5. Approval of meeting agenda – Frank Jackson made motion to accept agenda as written. Denise Suttles seconded. Ayes all. Motion carried.
6. Approval of consent agenda – Frank Jackson made motion to approve Consent Agenda, Denise Suttles seconded. All Ayes. Motion carried.
7. Public Comment – Large Community turn out due to flyers that were passed around stating the meeting was going to address the marijuana issue. Barry Baldwin explained this is the townships regular board meeting that the person who passed out the flyers had gotten ahead of themselves. Lots of comments pertaining to poor communication in the community. The board needs to do a better job of communicating. The township board should have notices on both sides. Some suggestions would be an email list to notify of meetings, send post cards, start a face book page, monthly newsletter. People also wanted to know where we are in the process of the marijuana plant being built. Barry Baldwin stated he will address that issue when he gives his supervisor report. One comment from Nichols Lake Association, is it possible to start service with first responders again in Merrill Township? Barry advised the board has been working on this issue. Lilly Township, not forthcoming with the information. Also comments about Zoning Administrator not doing his job if the community make a complaint nothing gets done.
8. Lilly Township fire report –Clerk, Janet Osmolinski read fire report. Copy filed.
9. Zoning Administrator’s Report – Barry Baldwin read Hog Bash report. Copy filed.
10. Supervisor’s Report – Barry Baldwin reported – He received a bid to repair the cemetery fence , also received a report from Road Commission they are close to starting the road projects. The electrical work is completed the sign is now lighted at night and the flag too. The board called a special meeting on June 6, 2017, for the presentation of the marijuana information. Our assessor Earl Spalo is extremely ill, we will need to look at hiring a new assessor. Barry is waiting

for an email from Mark Bates in regard to the boat launch. Barry apologized for the misunderstanding on the purpose of the meeting.

- 11 Clerk's Report – Janet Osmolinski reported received a quote from Speed Tech Equipment to repair a compactor at the Transfer Station in the amount of \$1336.45. Frank Jackson made a motion to pay the quote to keep the machinery in working order. Denise Suttles seconded. All Ayes. Motion carried. The Transfer Station had a septic tank problem, Janet called Frank Jackson, Frank went to the Transfer Station and pumped the tank. Frank added more work needs to be done. The snow plow not knowing where outlet was plowed over the area. Denise Suttles asked if this is a conflict of interest as Frank is on the board. Barry replied no. Frank Jackson will present the board with a quote for work needed to be done. Received paperwork from the Newaygo Road Commission. The board had signed an agreement to limestone Grant St., between M-37 and railroad crossing. Also, grade and limestone Parson Road. The Road Commission will need 50% down \$45,650 to start the projects, the balance is due when the projected is completed. Denise Suttles made a motion to pay the down payment of \$45,650 to the Road Commission to start the projects and the balance when billed. Frank Jackson seconded. All Ayes. Motion carried. Ted Cross sent a letter he would like to purchase a lot on Lakeshore Dr., the lot is owned by the township. Todd lives at 2463 Lakeshore Dr., the lot in question is across the street from him. We will table until next month for a vote.
12. Treasurer Report – Treasurer Cathy Stroop reported her report is attached to the agenda asked if any questions. She further stated taxes going out early July being due September 14, 2017.
13. Planning Commission Report – Denise Suttles reported, still working on getting ordinance done for approval. They are behind as May's meeting was the marijuana presentation. Now the planning committee is taken up with the marijuana issue. Many comments from audience on ordinance not being done. Very important issue need rules for the township. It was stated that without a change in ordinance the marijuana plant would be illegal. Denise Suttles made a comment that her mind was made up on the marijuana issue. That sparked lots of comments, people wanted to know how she could have her mind made up when we don't have all the information yet. The board does not yet know what the community wants. The community elected the board to do what is best for the community not for the board, and many more comments of that nature were stated.
14. Correspondence, Board action required - this was addressed under clerks report.
15. Unfinished Business
 - a. Credit Card/Taxes – Cathy Stroop Treasurer, looked into a different credit card company to collect taxes. She found Gov Pay does not charge fees like our current company. Upside is a person can pay their tax bill anytime day or night at an encrypted site. User friendly, go to website or call in payment. No contract which is a plus. Cathy Stroop recommends going this way for payments. Cathy Stroop made a motion to change credit card companies as a benefit to the township. Denise seconded. All Ayes. Motion carried.
 - b. Defibrillator – Janet Osmolinski Clerk, advised she was asked to look into getting a defibrillator for the township hall. Janet stated she had called Newaygo County as she was told they had

a grant for defibrillators. She called but only had 7 and all were already taken. Judy Morris contacted Red Cross who came to township hall to demonstrate 2 types of defibrillators. One was a Phillips a wall unit that was easy to use came with pads, battery, and various accessories for \$1486.80. The second one was a Zoll with same items \$1579.00 it was not as user friendly. Judy Morris and Janet Osmolinski both preferred the Phillips. Denise Suttles made a motion to purchase the Phillips defibrillator for \$1486.80 for the township hall. Frank Jackson seconded. Roll call vote, Denise Suttles Yes, Janet Osmolinski No, Barry Baldwin Yes, Cathy Stroop no, Frank Jackson Yes. Motion carried.

16. New Business

a. Gordon Elizinga – Gordon Elizinga read a letter with 7 items he would like the board to respond to. 1. Give a raise to clerk, works over 20 hours a week, for less than \$7 an hour. Wants this put on July agenda for a vote. 2. Does the township run background checks on employees? Barry Baldwin answered that we did. 3. Has the supervisor contacted a roofing company on roof leak reported March 13, 2017? Per Barry Baldwin he did contact a roofer. 4. When someone comes to the board meeting to complain about zoning enforcement the supervisor tells people our present zoning ordinance is unenforceable. Is the wording any different in new proposed ordinance? Per Denise Suttles, the junk and camping ordinance will be enforceable wording will be changed. 5. What has been done about tires behind Doornbos Repair and Variety Mall? Per Barry Baldwin he knows Ron Corrigan is working on this issue. 6. Will the board get a bid from Newaygo County Road Commission to rebuild unsafe railroad crossing west side on Grant St.? Barry Baldwin will see if he can get a bid. 7. Will the board investigate getting public transportation for Merrill Township like Dial-A-Ride? Per Denise Suttles this is federally funded and extremely costly.

b. Assessor - Barry Baldwin advised Earl Spalo, the assessor, is gravely ill and will not be back to his employment. As Earl Spalo, has not sent in his resignation in writing he will receive his pay until a letter is received. The board will be looking to hire a new assessor. Barry will contact Earl to see when we can expect a written resignation.

c. Cemetery Fence – Barry received a bid to repair the fence at the cemetery from DAR'S Snow & Mow. The bid is \$750 which includes material and labor. It does not include a new gate. If we wanted a new fence it would cost upwards of \$15,000. Denise Suttles made a motion to repair the cemetery fence for the bid amount of \$750. Frank Jackson seconded. Roll Call vote. Frank Jackson Yes, Cathy Stroop Yes, Denise Suttles Yes, Janet Osmolinski Yes, Barry Baldwin Yes. Motion carried.

A question was asked what is process going forward on marijuana issue? Per Barry Baldwin, the presenters of the marijuana issue came to a Merrill Township Board meeting, asking if Merrill Township had 100 acres they could purchase. The township board is going to research this proposal thoroughly, the township attorney has been contacted. The board is looking into sending a survey to Merrill Township residents to get the communities thoughts. The township board will meet the the Planning Commission to share information. Currently the township board is in a fact finding, information, setting only. Barry again stressed no flyers were issued by Merrill Township Board.

Adjourned – Barry Baldwin adjourned the meeting at 8:50pm

Respectfully Submitted

Janet Osmolinski

Merrill Township Clerk