

**WAYNE TOWNSHIP BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 9, 2023**

1. **Call to Order:** Supervisor Butts called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.
2. **Attendance:** Frank Butts, present; Kurt Reich, absent; Judith Fusko, present; James Griggs, present; Frank Maley, excused.
Citizens: Fifteen members of the public were present in addition to Fire Craig Yeager; Assistant Chief Cody Davis and several other members of the Wayne Township Fire Department. Members of the public included: Dave Davis, Thomas Jaslowski, Allen Middaugh, Sheriff Behnke, Lorri Behnke, Beth Cripe, Nancy Vylonis, and Tammy Yeager. Those attending for the special presentation included: Amberley, Cassie and Kolter Meyer; Violeta Meyer; Bonnie Converse, and Frank and LuAnn Campbell.
3. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The pledge to the United States flag was led by Trustee Griggs.
4. **Invocation:** Supervisor Frank Butts gave the invocation.
5. **Approval of Minutes:** October 2, 2023 Board Meeting: **Motion by Fusko to approve the minutes of the October 2, 2023 Board Meeting. Support by Griggs. Motion carried.**
6. **Treasurer's Report: General Fund Balance:** \$480,337.76 **Receipts:** \$14,702.18; **Expenditures:** \$36,388.96; **New General Fund Balance:** \$458,650.98; **Fire Department Fund Balance (includes Sinking Funds):** \$347,767.61; **Receipts:** \$21,919.75; **Expenditures:** \$5,694.28; **New Fire Department Fund Balance:** \$363,993.08; **Trust and Agency Accounts (Property Taxes, Special Assessment, and Fire Escrow) Balance:** \$152,318.28. **Motion by Butts to accept the Treasurer's Report as printed. Support by Griggs. Motion carried.**
7. **Agenda: Motion by Griggs to approve the agenda with the addition of: Ambulance Payments (\$951.91 and \$6,208.80; and Deputy's clerk's work for the November election (\$928.52). Support by Fusko. Motion carried.**
8. **Guest Speaker(s):** Sheriff Richard Behnke reported on the recent rash of thefts in Wayne Township commenting that the culprits were advertising the stolen property on *FacebookMarketplace*. They have moved on to not taking the property but just posting a picture and selling from that. He also warned against car/deer crashes, especially during the hunting season. In closing he reported on the great need for more officers – the department is covering the cost of training, including time at the police academy, in order to find qualified and interested people.
9. **Public Comments:** none
10. **Reports:**
 - A. **Administrator:** Butts said that Saunders had issued eleven permits.
 - B. **Zoning Report:** There was no report, but two Zoning Board of Appeal meetings were held in October. One appeal was approved and one denied.
 - C. **Electrical Inspector:** Four Electrical Permits were issued.
 - D/E. **Mechanical/Plumbing Inspector:** - 7 mechanical and no plumbing permits.
 - F. **Assessor:** Butts said that the December Board of Review meeting will be held on December 12, 2023 at 1:30 P.M. in the Township Hall.. on a run at 7:15 p.m. and had not yet returned.) Supervisor Butts reported that there were 17 runs in October.
 - I. **Blight Inspector:** Butts went over the report sent by Zoning Solutions.
 - J. **Unsafe Building(s):** Meade Street and 68th Street were briefly discussed
 - K. **Zoning Violations:** No report..
 - L. **Planning Commission:** The Planning Commission will meet in December and will hold a hearing on the Short-Term Rental Ordinance.
 - M. **Zoning Board of Appeals:** No new variance applications have been taken in.
 - N. **Dowagiac District Library:** No report.
 - O. **Emergency Services Authority:** The next meeting is December 4 at 5:30 p.m.
 - P. **Treasurer:** Fusko went over highlights in her report, noting that State Constitutional Revenue Sharing was down slightly in 2023 over 2022; building permits can finally be paid online by credit card, things are well in-hand for the mailing of the Winter tax bills; the City of Dowagiac paid the annual PILT amount for the Villamere subdivision (\$1,312.94 this year). The agreement with the City runs through 2046; the Township's F65 form was filed with the State, albeit a few days late.
 - Q. **Clerk:** There was no report.
 - R. **Supervisor:** Supervisor Butts said he attended many meetings this past month concerning (1.) the 911 communications tower that Cass County shares with St. Joseph County (2.) Leaders' meeting (Supervisors and members of the Board of commissioners) where they discussed the ambulance situation and a new aerial imaging computer program that would be beneficial for county assessors. The cost (\$30,000) would be split one-half to the County and one-half among the townships. (3.) sent email to the State House and Senate concerning the clean energy bill (4)

reported that the ballot box is on order for permanent installation outside the main door of the Township. Light and camera are required to highlight the box. This is just one facet of the tasks to be completed before the Presidential Primary in February. (5) completed a survey with the Licensing and Regulations Department on franchises (6) Answered questions about road ends, (7) reported on the grant received by the Fire Department that will supply new Scot-paks for each firefighter. Normally these would cost \$156,584. Under this grant the cost is only 5% of that total. (8) The internet mapping of Cass County is complete. Wayne Township is 95% covered.

S. **Township Website:** No changes at present.

T. **MEANDRS:** No report.

11. **Payment of Bills: Motion by Fusko, supported by Griggs to pay the bills as listed with the addition of three bills: Deputy Clerk - \$928.52 for election work; Ambulance costs - \$951.91 for missing introductory weeks; and \$6,208.80 for next quarter (13 weeks); Motion: Carried.)**

A. **Ambulance Report:** The bills listed above cover the extra few weeks at the startup of the interim service, and the next quarter (13 weeks) or service.

B. **Building Report:** Materials should be delivered on November 13 and work will begin within a few days thereafter.

C. **Master Plan:** No report.

D. **Accounting Assistance:** The accounting project is nearing completion and all necessary information sent to Yeo and Yeo for the audit which they then completed. Ongoing accounting services should only be needed about 4-5 hours monthly.

12. **New Business:**

A. **Homeless Encampment:** Several tents are located in the far rear of a large parcel on Flanders Street. The Supervisor will send a letter to the parcel owner explaining that this cannot continue.

B. **Discrimination / Harassment Policy: It was moved to adopt the Discrimination / Harassment Policy presented. Motion by Fusko, supported by Griggs; Motion: Carried).** This policy is necessary before accepting the Scot-pak grant.

C. **County Road Commission Road Tour:** Friday, December 8 at 3 p.m.

D. **Resolution 23-11-01 Permitting of Renewable Energy Sites: Motion by Butts supported by Fusko; Voting Yes: Butts, Fusko, Griggs. Absent: Reich and Maley; Motion: Carried.**

E. **Comcast Franchise Renewal:** This contract will be up soon.

13. **Public Comments:** There were no public comments.

14. **Adjournment: Motion by Butts to adjourn the meeting. Support by Griggs. Motion carried.**
The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 P.M.

Following the Board meeting Miss Amberley Meyer was honored for her role in preventing tragedy on February 1, 2023. Upon hearing the smoke alarm, six-year-old Amberley awakened her family so they could safely exit their burning home. The Wayne Township Fire Department honored Miss Meyer with a certificate, a very large bag of candy, and everyone posed for pictures. Many of Miss Meyer's extended family were in attendance.