

**WAYNE TOWNSHIP BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 4, 2024**

1. **Call to Order:** Supervisor Butts called the meeting to order at 7:34 P.M.
2. **Attendance:** Frank Butts, present; Kurt Reich, present; Judith Fusko, present; James Griggs (arrived at 7:38), present; Frank Maley, present.
Citizens: David Davis, Tom Jaslowski, Allen Middaugh, Craig Yeager, Tammy Yeager, Kathryn Yoder.
3. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The pledge to the United States flag was led by Trustee Maley.
4. **Invocation:** Supervisor Frank Butts gave the invocation.
5. **Approval of Minutes:** February 5, 2024: ***Motion by Fusko to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2024 Board meeting as printed. Support by Maley. Motion carried.*** February 19, 2024 Budget Work Session: ***Motion by Butts to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2024 Budget Work Session as printed. Support by Fusko. Motion carried.***
6. **Treasurer's Report:** General Fund Balance: \$540,171.24; Receipts: \$55,586.40; Expenditures: \$20,827.47; New General Fund Balance: \$574,930.17; Fire Department Fund Balance (includes Sinking Funds): \$345,788.06; Receipts: \$2,218.74; Expenditures: \$5,143.14; New Fire Department Fund Balance: \$342,863.66 Trust and Agency Accounts (Property Taxes, Special Assessment, and Fire Escrow) Balance: \$217,218.22. ***Motion by Reich to accept the Treasurer's Report as printed. Support by Maley. Motion carried.***
7. **Agenda:** ***Motion by Butts to approve the Agenda as printed. Support by Fusko. Motion carried.***
8. **Guest Speaker: Commissioner Jim Lawrence:** Lawrence reported that the County is working on a plan for spending the Opioid Settlement funds given to Cass County. Butts asked if townships could apply for some of the funds. Lawrence said there will be an application form on the County website.
9. **Public Comments: Craig Yeager:** Yeager said that at the corner of Atwood Rd. and Dewey Lake St. some of the pilings holding up guard rails are loose due to erosion.
10. **Reports:**
 - A. **Building Inspector:** Butts said that five Building Permits had been issued.
 - B. **Zoning Report:** Two Zoning Permits had been issued.
 - C. **Electrical Inspector:** Two Electrical Permits were issued for \$386.00
 - D/E. **Mechanical/Plumbing Inspector:** Seven Mechanical Permits were issued for \$1,140.00.
 - F. **Assessor:** Butts said the notices for the March Board of Review meetings have been sent to the newspaper for publication.
 - G. **Cemetery Report:** Once again there had not been any sales or burials. The Cemetery Committee had met and the report was discussed. Fusko said that the committee would like Charlene Brown appointed to the committee to replace Fusko with Fusko then acting as the Township Board liaison to the Cemetery Committee. Brown has a lot of experience with Excel and will be working to get many of the cemetery records computerized. Fusko explained a proposed rule on the number of lots an individual may purchase and that a person cannot sell lots/plots to an individual. ***Motion by Griggs to appoint Charlene Brown to the Cemetery Committee. Support by Maley. Motion carried. Motion by Maley to adopt the Cemetery Committee report and budget. Support by Griggs. Motion carried.***
 - H. **Fire Board:** Chief Yeager said that there had been 10 runs in January. He said that the new laptop computer has been purchased and is being used by Cody Davis to make fire reports to the State. Yeager said that a new printer/copier just like the Township's that is outside Fusko's office is being looked at. He said that due to the dry conditions there was a very large grass fire off Twin Lakes Road and he is contemplating issuing a Burning Ban. Fusko said she will put such a notice on the announcement board if Yeager issues such a ban. The Board also received a proposed budget from Mike Watts for the Fire Board. ***Motion by Fusko to approve the Fire Board report and its proposed budget. Support by Maley. Motion carried.***
 - I. **Blight Inspector:** There was no report. Butts said that demolition on 69th St. is scheduled to take place.
 - J. **Unsafe Building(s):** no report
 - K. **Zoning Violations:** There was no report.
 - L. **Planning Commission:** The Planning Commission held elections with Lyle Springsteen elected Chairman, Lori Schoff elected Vice Chairman and Craig Schmidt elected Secretary.

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- M. **Zoning Board of Appeals:** No new variance applications had been taken in.
- N. **Dowagiac District Library:** Reich was able to attend the February meeting with zoom. He said the biggest issue was over a picture in the library of an Indian being used to sell items. The local tribe is very upset and wants the picture removed. The budget is doing fine.
- O. **Emergency Services Authority:** Butts said that there is a meeting on Wednesday, March 6 at 6:00 PM. in the Wayne Township meeting room. A contract with SMACAS for a second ambulance will be the main topic of discussion.
- P. **Treasurer:** Fusko had another excellent written report. She said that her office had been very busy last week as it was the end of the month and February 29 was the last day to pay property taxes for 2023. Fusko stated that late payers must pay at the County Treasurer's office (by State law) but that the County Treasurer won't be ready to collect late taxes until at least March 20th. She said that she will be sending her tax collecting information for 2023 to the County Treasurer on March 12. Fusko said that the owners of a parcel with only a fence on it wanted the parcel reclassified so they do not have to pay the \$50.00 ambulance special assessment. There was a brief discussion and, ***Motion by Fusko to reclassify the parcel to non-improved to remove the \$50.00 Ambulance Special Assessment. Support by Griggs. Motion carried.*** She said that other property owners have expressed interest in combining parcels to avoid the extra \$50.00 assessment. Fusko also said that the State Revenue Sharing is down a little. She added that the signature stamps for the clerk and treasurer had arrived and are securely filed.
- Ambulance Fund Budget:** When Pride Care (the ambulance that had covered the township for many years for free) ceased operation there was an "emergency" situation. The Emergency Services Authority set a goal to contract with an ambulance service to have at least one ambulance to cover the members of the Authority. After intense negotiations SMCAS agreed to cover the area for a fee. This fee had not been covered in the General Fund budget. The Township Board had collected Ambulance Assessment fees on the winter tax bill in anticipation of the fees a new ambulance service would charge. The Board decided to have Fusko set up a separate Ambulance Fund at 1st Source Bank with its own budget. This budget would include a new source of revenue (the Assessment fees) with new expenditures and the old expenditures listed in the General Fund Budget would be transferred to the new Ambulance Fund Budget. Before this Fusko had to use General Fund money to pay for the new fees needed to pay SMCAS. She said that once the Ambulance Budget is approved by the Board, funds collected for the ambulance will be used to pay bills for the ambulance instead of being taken out of the General Fund. ***Motion by Reich to adopt the proposed Ambulance Fund budget to cover the final months of the township's fiscal year and the budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Support by Maley, Roll call vote: Kurt Reich, yes; Judith Fusko, yes; Frank Maley, yes; James Griggs, yes; Frank Butts, yes. With five yes votes and zero no votes, the motion was passed.*** Fusko said that for the 2023 – 2024 budget expenditures of \$15,000.00 needed to be included and the publication line item would have to be raised from \$200.00 to \$250.00. ***Motion by Fusko to adopt the proposed amendments to the 2023 -2024 budget. Support by Maley. Roll call vote: Judith Fusko, yes; Frank Maley, yes; James Griggs, yes; Frank Butts, yes; Kurt Reich, yes. With Five yes votes and zero votes, the Supervisor declared the motion had passed. Motion by Fusko to take \$309.68 from the Ambulance Fund Budget to pay back the General Fund. Support by Griggs. Motion carried.***
- Blight Information:** Judy went over changes to procedures of how the Blight Ordinance would be enforced that she would like implemented. There was consensus to have Fusko take complaints approved by the Board and send out letters giving the property owner 30 days to clean up their property before their case is turned over to Zoning Solutions.
- Q. **Clerk:** Reich said that the Presidential Primary had gone very well but that the turnout was very low. He said that he needs to get more election inspectors trained on the EPB (electronic poll book).
- R. **Supervisor:** Butts said that Newberg Township has said it will be sending out a bill of \$750.00 for every ambulance run its ambulance makes out of the township because most of the county is being covered by one ambulance. Butts read the letter from Roxane Seeber saying such bills will be ignored. Butts explained several complaints or questions concerning Wayne Township.
- S. **Township Website:** Griggs continues to put in updated articles from Board members and has included tax information the state is requiring to be posted and OS information on the election.

- T. **MEANDRS:** Maley said that a meeting is being held tonight.
10. **Payment of Bills:** *Motion by Griggs to pay the list of bills. Support by Griggs. Motion carried.*
11. **Old Business: Roads:** Butts said that the contracts for the previously approved road work had not yet arrived to be signed by the Board members.
12. **New Business:**
- A. **Resolution R-24-03-01 to Allow Citizens to Send Letters to the Board of Review Appealing the Assessment of Their Property (to be received by the last day of the Board of Review Spring meeting):** *Motion by Judith Fusko to adopt Resolution R-24-03-01 Allowing letters to be sent by citizens to the Board of Review appealing the assessment of their property. Support by Frank L. Butts. Roll call vote: Judith Fusko, yes; Frank Maley, yes; James Griggs, yes; Fank Butts, yes; Kurt Reich, yes. With five yes votes and zero no votes, Butts declared the resolution adopted.*
- B. **Resolution R-24-03-02 to Adopt the Budgets of the Wayne Township: General Fund, the Fire Department, the Fire Department Equipment Sinking Fund, the Cemetery Sinking Fund, the Township Hall Sinking Fund, the Bridge and Culvert Sinking Fund, the Special Assessment budget, and the Ambulance Special Assessment budget:** *Motion by Frank Butts to adopt Resolution R-24-03-02 approving the several budgets of Wayne Township. Support by James Griggs. Roll call vote: Frank Butts, yes; Kurt Reich, yes; Judith Fusko, yes; Frank Maley, yes; James Griggs, yes. With five yes votes and zero no votes, Butts declared the resolution adopted.*
- C. **Twin Lakes Improvement Association (TLIA) Fireworks Permit:** Butts said that the TLIA had submitted all of the necessary paperwork to hold a fireworks show on July 6, 2024. *Motion by Maley to approve a Fireworks Permit for the TLIA to have a fireworks show on July 6, 2024. Support by Griggs. Motion carried.*
13. **Public Comments:** There were no Public Comments.
14. **Adjournment:** *Motion by Maley to adjourn the meeting. Support by Griggs. Motion carried.*
- The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Kurt E. Reich, Wayne Township Clerk