

**WAYNE TOWNSHIP BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
July 1, 2024**

1. **Call to Order:** Supervisor Butts called the meeting to order at 7:31 P.M.
2. **Attendance:** Frank Butts, present; Kurt Reich, present; Judith Fusko, present; James Griggs, present; Frank Maley, present.
Citizens: David Davis, Craig Yeager, James Lawrence, Marsha Butts, Katherine Yoder, Mary Heirty, Michael Casey, Dolores McNeary, Tammy Yeager, Thomas Jaslowski, Richard Behnke, Gary Gnidoric, Kathy Gnidoric,
3. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The pledge to the United States flag was led by Supervisor Butts.
4. **Invocation:** Trustee Maley gave the invocation.
5. **Approval of Minutes:** June 3, 2024 Township Board meeting minutes: **Motion by Fusko to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2024 Board meeting. Support by Maley. Motion carried.**
6. **Treasurer's Report:** General Fund Balance: \$630,206.63; Receipts: \$63,669.84; Expenditures: \$119,978.81 New General Fund Balance: \$573,897.66; Fire Department Fund Balance (includes Sinking Fund); \$380,446.79; Receipts: \$3,215.66; Expenditures: \$24,548.97; New Fire Department Fund Balance: \$359,113.48; Trust and Agency Accounts (Property Taxes, Special Assessment, and Fire Escrow) Balance: \$112,110.22. **Motion by Reich to accept the Treasurer's Report as printed. Support by Griggs. Motion carried.**
7. **Agenda:** There was no request to amend the agenda. **Motion by Griggs to adopt the agenda. Support by Fusko. Motion carried**
8. **Guest Speaker: (1.) COA:** There were three members of the COA who came to ask for support for the millage renewal that provides 66% of the funding for the COA. Many activities the COA offers were described. **(2.) Sheriff Richard Behnke:** Sheriff Behnke said the program to get people to take classes to become deputies has worked out very well with a total of ten having attended various programs. He warned of an increase in scams requesting money to pay off tickets. The Sheriff asked for support to renew the drug millage.
9. **Public Comments: Gary Gnidoric:** Gnidoric complained about the decision of the Zoning Board of Appeals in regards to his application for a variance.
10. **Reports:**
 - A. **Building Inspector:** Fusko said that fourteen Building Permits had been issued for \$2,883.30.
 - B. **Zoning Report:** There was no report from Mark Davis.
 - C. **Electrical Inspector:** Twelve Electrical Permits were issued for \$2,024.00.
 - D/E. **Mechanical/Plumbing Inspector:** Six Mechanical Permits were issued for \$1,050.00 and zero Plumbing Permits had been issued.
 - F. **Assessor:** Butts said that the summer meeting of the Board of Review has been set for July 16 at 1:30 PM. He said that Kays has requested the adoption of a new form for drawing up Land Divisions. **Motion by Judith Fusko to adopt the Land Division form proposed by Bill Kays. Support by James Griggs. Motion carried.**
 - G. **Cemetery Report:** Yeager said that there had not been any sales of lots or plots. He relayed that there had been two burials. He told the Board that the cemeteries had little damage done by the storms that had hit the area recently.
 - H. **Fire Board:** Chief Yeager said that there had been 19 calls in June with a total of 102 calls so far this year. He said that Colin Dudek had been named as Fireman of the Year. Jim Lawrence, Fire Board Chairman, said that the list of bills had been approved for payment. He went on to say that the budget had been amended in anticipation of bills for truck repairs coming in shortly. Reich, Township Clerk, said that he needed a copy of the Fire Board minutes so he can make official amendments to the budget that he has in his computer. Lawrence said that he would get a copy of the minutes to Reich so the budget amendments can be recorded. Yeager said that a big drawback for getting new firemen is the problem of the classes being difficult to attend. He said that some of the classes are being held virtually which saves on travel time and expense.
 - I. **Blight:** Judy said there was no report possibly due to the tornado as was the case last month. She said that she had viewed the MTA webinar on Blight. Fusko said that part of the program listed steps that should be taken concerning blight violations. She was happy to say that Zoning Solutions does follow the steps that had been listed.

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- J **Unsafe Building(s):** Butts said that there had not been an update on the homes at Twin Lakes that might need to be condemned.
- K. **Zoning Violations:** There was no report.
- L. **Planning Commission:** The regular meeting that had been scheduled was not held due to the lack of a quorum.
- M. **Zoning Board of Appeals:** The two variance hearings held on June 27 resulted in the denial of the request to allow storage sheds (accessory buildings) to be placed in the front yard. Butts said that the Township Board has no say in a decision of the Zoning Board of Appeals. He said that property owners can appeal to the Circuit Court. Butts wondered out loud if the ZBA had considered any hardship claimed by the variance applicant. Butts suggested that the Planning Commission revisit the issue of lake property owners not being allowed to have accessory buildings in their front yard. Fusko said she supported the suggestion that the Planning Commission be asked to reconsider the rule of the placement of accessory buildings.
- N. **Dowagiac District Library:** Reich said that finances are good. He said that the Library Board had gone into a closed session over a letter sent to the Library Board concerning how an autistic young man had been treated by certain staff members. At the end of the closed session the Library Board determined that the staff had acted appropriately.
- O. **Emergency Services Authority:** Butts said the ESA is still m trying to come up with a contract with SMCAS for 24 hour ambulance coverage for the entire area currently covered by the contract ambulance services. He said that SMCAS has agreed to hire more personnel but that it is not ok with the sleeping accommodations in the Dowagiac ambulance building. Butts said that other ambulance services are being looked into.
- P. **Treasurer:** Fusko said that she will be going on vacation starting July 9. She said her deputy will be covering her Tuesday office hours and the Fridays set up to collect taxes. Fusko reported that the ARPA funds have been spent and that the ambulance money is in a separate account. She said that she had asked the County Treasurer to go over record retention. U Tube videos set up by the State were pointed out as were some rules listed in various papers. She said a bill from the USDA on the water district had been paid.
- Q. **Clerk:** Reich said no budget amendments were necessary. He said that ballots for the August Primary are going out.
- R. **Supervisor:** Butts suggested tat Planning Commission members be **encouraged to attend** trainings sponsored by the MTA. The Board voted to pay for any Planning Commission member to attend trainings run by the MTA. Butts said there w no news on the Urban Drain. He said the Gant property is being lived in as a single residence—separate from the house the Gants live in. He believes the attorney will have to be contacted to get legal advice on the problem.
- S. **Township Website:** Griggs said there had been 244 visits to the website in June.
- T. **MEANDRS:** Maley said there had not been a meeting in June.
10. **Payment of Bills: *Motion by Fusko to approve the list of bills. Support by Maley. Motion carried.***
11. **Old Business:**
A. Cleanup: The township participation in the Cleanup was discussed.
B. Digital Switch: Griggs reminded the Board about the approval given a few months ago to purchase a digital switch to process items faster. ***Motion by Fusko to authorize Griggs to purchase a digital switch. Support by Maley. Motion carried.***
12. **New Business:** Supervisor Butts announced that he would be resigning as Township Supervisor at the end of tonight’s Township Board meeting. He thanked everyone for the support he has been given over the last many years of his various positions in the Township. He said that he would like the Board to appoint David Davis as Supervisor. Butts said that he had told Davis that he is willing to serve as his deputy. ***Motion by Reich to appoint David Davis to the position of Township Supervisor and Frank Butts as Davis’ deputy. Support by Fusko. Motion carried.*** Butts said that he regretted the fact that the ambulance issue had not been resolved. ***Motion by Fusko to appoint Butts as the Township Board liaison to the ambulance committee. Support by Griggs. Motion carried.***
13. **Public Comments: James Griggs:** Griggs remarked on the great progress the Township made under the leadership of Frank Butts.—from the creation of a township fire department to the building of a new Township Hall/Fire Department. **James Lawrence:** Lawrence said that Tom Langley would have been present at the meeting tonight except that he is sick; he also thanked Frank Butts for his many years of service to Wayne Township. **Craig Yeager:** Yeager thanked Butts for his service to the Fire Department

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and to the township. **Frank Butts:** Frank presented his gavel to David Davis after explaining that it had been given to him by Levi Van Tuyle who had received it from John Morford who had made the gavel from wood found within the township.

14. **Adjournment: *Motion by Maley to adjourn the meeting. Support by Griggs. Motion carried.***

The meeting was adjourned at 9:28 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Kurt E. Reich, Wayne Township Clerk