

**Webber Township**  
**Monthly Board Meeting 4/11/2024**  
2286 W. Springtime St.  
Baldwin, MI 49304  
231-745-3471

**Call to Order:** 6:02PM

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Attendance:** Kelly McCune-Here, Pat Williams-Here, Dan Cousar-Here, Deb Hanes-Here, Ernie Wogatzke- present

**Agenda Approved:** Additions to Agenda: Employee Handbook revisions, Housing Study, Clerk Election Duty Pay, Minutes of 4/3/2024 Special Meeting. March 20, 2024 Special Meeting Minutes approval moved to May meeting.

Motion to approve Agenda with additions and 1 change made by Deb with support by Pat. 5 Aye votes. Motion passes

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion to approve Meeting Minutes made by Kelly with support by Deb.

Kelly asked for a correction to be made to the Grant Report of the March 14, 2024 minutes. Report should read the County has taken ownership of the park gate through their donation of the cost of the gate.

Roll Call: Kelly-Yes, Pat-Yes, Dan-Yes, Deb-Yes, Ernie-Yes. 5 Yes votes. Motion Carries.

**General Fund:** Pat gave the General Fund Report. Motion to approve made by Pat with support by Kelly. Roll Call: Kelly-Yes, Pat-Yes, Dan-Yes, Deb-Yes, Ernie-Yes. 5 Yes votes. Motion Carries.

**Fire Fund:** Pat gave the Fire Fund report. Motion to approve made by Dan with support by Pat. Roll Call: Kelly-Yes, Pat-Yes, Dan-Yes, Deb-Yes, Ernie-Yes. 5 Yes votes. Motion Carries.

**Water/Sewer Fund:** Pat gave the W/S fund report. Motion to approve by Dan with support by Pat. Roll Call: Kelly-Yes, Pat-Yes, Dan-Yes, Deb-Yes, Ernie-Yes. 5 Yes votes. Motion Carries.

**Refuse Fund:** Pat gave the Refuse Fund Report. Motion to approve by Deb with support by Pat. Roll Call: Kelly-Yes, Pat-Yes, Dan-Yes, Deb-Yes, Ernie-Yes. 5 Yes votes. Motion Carries.

**Treasurer's Report:** Pat gave the Treasurer's Report.

**Correspondence:** Received proposal from Turf Care for treatment of the park for \$1726.64. Motion to approve by Pat with support by Deb. Roll Call: Kelly-Yes, Pat-Yes, Dan-Yes, Deb-Yes, Ernie-Yes. 5 Yes votes. Motion Carries.

Letter of resignation from Planning Commission Chair and Board of Review positions by Andrew Harter. Motion to accept made by Pat with support by Dan. Ernie stated this is a loss for the Planning Commission. Roll Call: Kelly-Yes, Pat-Yes, Dan-Yes, Deb-Yes, Ernie-Yes. 5 Yes votes. Motion Carries.

Jackie Jacobs had previously submitted her resignation letter from the Planning Commission and Board of Review. She has also submitted a letter rescinding her resignation from these boards. Ernie was reminded by the board he needed to abstain from any discussion or vote on this matter. Motion to accept Jackie's original resignation letter made by Pat with support by Kelly. Roll Call: Kelly-Yes, Pat-Yes, Dan-Yes, Deb-Yes, Ernie-Abs. 4 Yes votes and 1 abstain. Motion Carries.

Mark Barnett submitted a letter to the Board requesting a COLA increase for his Assessor services. This request will be moved to the annual meeting.

The Board has received a letter requesting a contribution toward the area Hazardous Waste Collection Event. Motion to approve payment equal to previous year payment, not to exceed \$500 made by Pat with support by Deb. Roll Call: Kelly-Yes, Pat-Yes, Dan-Yes, Deb-Yes, Ernie-Yes. 5 Yes votes. Motion Carries.

**Public Comment:** A member of the public commented that the new road treatment on Merrilleville Rd is being torn up by large trucks, possibly the trash trucks. Is there a warrantee? What can we do to repair and prevent further damage. Other spots on Merrilleville are also washed out.

The street light on the corner of 40<sup>th</sup> and Merrilleville is out.

#### **Department Reports:**

**Fire:** Yates Twp will be doing Aeromed training during our GO Day. Chief is trying to get the helicopter to land at the park for the kids that day.

The wifi at the Fire Dept is working great.

The new Employee Handbook is not relative to the Fire Dept. They operate under their SOP, which the board approved & are exempt from the handbook. They will return the books to the Clerk's office for future use.

Tanks are up for pressure testing and refilling. Chief asked for approval for up to \$4000 to complete this. Motion to approve by Pat with support by Kelly. Roll Call: Kelly-Yes, Pat-Yes, Dan-Yes, Deb-Yes, Ernie-Yes. 5 Yes votes. Motion Carries.

Fire danger is currently very high. There is no burning permitted at this time. May be lifted if we get the predicted rain in the next few days.

Chief discussed the reimbursement for downed lines in Peacock Twp.

Nothing new to report on \$30,000 grant for turn out gear and radios.

**Maintenance:** Jesse created a worklog and to do list which Ernie read. He is requesting a 10 Yard dumpster for 5 days to clean out the storage shed. The cost will be \$350 from Smith. Motion to approve made by Pat with support by Dan. Roll Call: Kelly-Yes, Pat-Yes, Dan-Yes, Deb-Yes, Ernie-Yes. 5 Yes votes. Motion Carries.

The dumpster will also be available to the FD and Sexton. A question was asked what can go into it. No cement, yard waste, haz mat, etc.

Jesse also asked for road gravel and top soil for the approach to the storage building. Ernie will get pricing.

**County Commissioner:** Bob Sanders stated Don Arquette passed away leaving an empty position on the Co Board of Commissioners. The position must be filled within 30 days. They do have 3 candidates and will be interviewing next Wed. The Emergency Management Director will be coming to address one of our board meetings in the near future. Bob thanked the board for contributing to the 911 Center upgrade project. 10 more body cams have been approved for the Sheriff's Dept. The number of building permits are going up. This year Jan-April there were 54 compared to 32 last year. Equalization report has been approved. Property values are going up.

**Sheriff:** N/A

**Cemetery:** Nikki understood the old area were all family lots, but found individual plots sold within this area. It was explained that a block is 10 lots, but there seems to be confusion between the terms "lots" and "plots". This needs to be defined so we are charging correctly. There is also an issue with the new posts being installed between, or nearly on grave sites, rather than in the walkways. . The issue was tabled.

**Grants:** The report has been sent out to our accountants for the ARPA fund. The walk through of the ORV park is scheduled for next week to finalize. Payment #4 of \$54,000 is still coming. Trust fund info needs to be submitted by July, including pictures of all improvements, etc. The final payment won't be made until everything is completed.

**Zoning Administrator:** Chris gave his zoning report.

**Planning Commission:** There was no meeting in April. CannaCare submitted a site plan to include outdoor growing. The Master Plan will need to be addressed In May.

**LCEDA:** Housing study, info only for developers. Indicates 100 blighted parcels and need for more apartments in the area.

**DDA:** N/A

**Parks and Rec:** Go Day is 6/8/24

**On Going Business:**

**Answers to Public Questions:** Ernie will get with Road Commission regarding repairs to Merrillville Rd. Clerk's office will turn in request to repair the streetlight on 40<sup>th</sup> and Merrillville.

Pay increase resolutions need to be voted on 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting, so will be discussed at the May meeting. Looking at providing COLA increases for Supervisor and Treasurer, and basing Clerk's pay on a 20 hour work week, rather than 12 hours. Per diems will increase 15%.

Training Pay Resolution needs to include Fire Chief. The Resolution needs to be changed to read "all salaried employees".

ARPA report is in the hands of our accountants.

GO Day to include pony rides, reptiles, exhibitors, 2 bounce houses, hoping to get Ludington Pirates, a hairdresser, and the COVE Women's Abuse Center. Need donations of food, etc.

**New Business:** June 1 will be the scrap tire collection from 9-2. Need volunteers. We have a \$3000 grant for this effort.

Housing survey will go out with summer taxes and include info from the County Housing study. This will ask Webber residents what type of housing they feel is needed in our community and what they'd like to see.

All Township employees have been given the new Employee Handbook, however, it has been pointed out by the Supervisor that the ZBA may be governed by its own Bi laws. The Board members are governed by the MTA. Planning Commission and Zoning are under their own enabling acts, the FD has their own SOP. It appears only the Deputy Clerk, Deputy Treasurer, Maintenance Supervisor, and Water/Sewer Supervisor are covered under the Township Employee Manual.

On page 8, #5 of the Employee Manual addresses firearms. We cannot forbid firearms on site. We can make an Ordinance that as an employer we prefer employees not carry firearms. Private employers can ban them, public cannot. A discussion ensued regarding the language of the concealed weapon license. The Courthouse only allows on duty deputies to carry weapons. The Manual will be revised to reflect the necessary corrections.

It was also noted the health statement in the manual may not be legal. This will also be reviewed, researched, and necessary changes made.

Per item tabled from the March meeting. Deb stated she spoke with our Attorney today regarding the Clerk being paid for working as an election inspector. The original question posed to our Attorney was if a Clerk could be paid for performing her normal duties during an election. The answer is no, however, per page 311 of the MTA rule book, if the clerk is a trained election inspector and works in that capacity, they can be paid election inspector wages for the hours worked for the election.

MTA conference is the week of 4/22. Some may go for the day on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. We usually don't attend the training sessions.

April 25 the Twp Assoc meeting will be held at Cherry Valley Twp Hall.

May 25 is the Park Grand Opening from 1-3PM.

June 8 is Get Outdoor Day.

**Adjourned:** Motion by Dan with support by Pat. Meeting adjourned at 7:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L Hanes, Clerk