

**Watertown Township**  
2630 South Sandusky Rd  
Sandusky, MI 48471

Board Regular Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, February 7, 2023 – 6:00 pm

The Watertown Township Board meeting was called to order by Supervisor, Scott Franzel at 6:00 pm. All present rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: Cambridge, Coats, Dixon, Franzel, Ross

ABSENT: Diaz

GUESTS: Gary Heberling, James Hacker, Jason Radloff, Al Stoutenburg, Clint Stoutenburg, Bill Parrish and Samsung representative Soyong Park

**MINUTES**

\*\*\* Motion by Coats, Supported by Cambridge to approve the January 3, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Minutes as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

\*\*\* Motion by Dixon, Supported by Cambridge to approve the January 10, 2023 Special Board Meeting Minutes as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

**AGENDA**

ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

Cambridge requested that

- Review of Ordinances be placed under New Business, Number 5
- Record Retention/Storage be placed under New Business, Number 6
- Unclaimed Property be placed under Old Business, Number 6
- Township Bylaws be placed under New Business, Number 7

Franzel requested that

- Grants for Water be placed under Correspondence, Number 2
- Comcast Government Liaison be placed under Correspondence, Number 3
- Road Commission Letter be placed under Correspondence, Number 4
- Spicer Group Survey Launch be placed under Planning Board, Number 2
- Filkins Private Road Agreement be placed under Supervisor/Zoning, Number 1
- Depot Party Store be placed under Correspondence, Number 5
- City of Sandusky Approval be placed under Correspondence, Number 6
- Semco Request be placed under Correspondence, Number 7
- Property Zoning be placed under Supervisor/Zoning, Number 2

\*\*\* Motion by Dixon, Supported by Cambridge to approve the agenda as amended. All in favor. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- James Hacker -- Speaking on behalf of the Planning Commission, James reported that the Spicer Group gave informational handouts and postings. They are requesting a mailing list, preferably in excel format and they will do all mailings.

## **PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

District 2 Commissioner Gary Heberling, reported

- Septic Issue Update - The owners were unaware that a septic field was needed, but they got a permit and a contractor. The contractor was out of town causing further delay. However, it is planned to get this issue resolved in the next few weeks.
- New Dog Kennel Update – A large part of the 1.5 million dollars project cost is due to having to follow state guidelines. In an effort to reduce this cost, the Commissioners are looking at more than one place to do the project and Boone Construction is redoing the engineering drawings.
- Nathan Roskey received information from Michigan Economic Development Corporation announcing that the 2023 Community Development Block Grant has been released for City Parks, Town Squares, Playgrounds, Amphitheaters and Farmer’s Markets.
- The Commissioners approved agricultural, commercial and industrial appraisal agreement Funding is coming from the Equalization Department. Approval was for 2023
- Delaware Township and the Sheriff’s Department have agreed that the Sheriff’s Department will assign a deputy to enforce Township Ordinances. It may be possible for the County to provide this service for all participating townships.
- Nick Lusher, Custodial Supervisor is getting bids on new boilers in the courthouse. The present ones are believed to be 80 years old.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Samsung/Varnum Letter to attorney, Kyle O’Mara
  - Varnum Attorney at Law sent a letter to Township Attorney, Kyle O’Mara on behalf of Samsung regarding the Township’s Permit Fee for Large Solar Energy Systems. Discussion was held. This email has been forwarded to Foster Swift Law Firm for further review. Going forward all Solar Ordinance issues will be handled by Foster Swift Law Firm.
2. Grants for Water
  - Franzel reported he received information regarding grants available for drinking water.
3. Comcast Government Liaison
  - Franzel reported he received correspondence from Comcast regarding their new liaison.
4. Road Commission Letter
  - Coats presented a letter she drafted to the Road Commission requesting a representative report to the Board at least twice a year and also regarding the trees surrounding the Walker Road location.

\*\*\* Motion by Cambridge, Supported by Dixon to send the letter to the Road Commission as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

5. Depot Party Store
  - Franzel reported he received a letter from the new owner of the Depot Party Store stating where he would like his correspondence sent to. Coats stated that his information has not been officially changed.
6. City of Sandusky
  - Franzel reported he received a letter from the City of Sandusky giving authorization to submit the new Watertown Township Master Plan electronically to [dfavor@misandusky.com](mailto:dfavor@misandusky.com) when finished.
7. SEMCO Franchise Agreement
  - The SEMCO Franchise Agreement is about to expire and the company is requesting it be renewed.

\*\*\* Motion by Dixon, Supported by Coats to approve the SEMCO Franchise Agreement. All in favor. Motion carried.

- Dixon will publish the agreement and invoice SEMCO.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Annual Budget

- Coats reported the annual budget meeting will be held at the March 2023 Regular Board Meeting. Input is welcome. King and King, CPA is requesting an audit date on July 26<sup>th</sup>. Dixon will look the budget over and make any recommendations he sees.
- 2. Cemetery Tree Removal Progress
  - Franzel reported that Patterson Tree Service stated most of the removed trees were hallowed out and split at the top. Cambridge reported that there is insurance coverage on fallen cemetery trees. Should a there be a claim made on the tree that fell down on the North side? The cost was minimal and not enough to claim.
- 3. Foster/Swift Ordinance and Moratorium Opinion
  - Moved to Planning Commission
- 4. Sanilac Drain Commission 2023 Drains at Large Assessment
  - Franzel reported that the 2023 estimated drain assessments total \$8,318.69.
- 5. Review of Ordinances
 

Cambridge reported that the Board is scheduled to work on two ordinances.

  - Prohibition on Marijuana Establishment Ordinance
    - o Spelling and grammar errors will be addressed.
    - o Dixon recommended the wording “is anticipated to pass” be updated to “passed” in the following sentence: The Michigan Regulatory and Taxation Marijuana Act is anticipated to pass in November of 2018.
    - o Coats recommended the date of adoption be added.
    - o The updated ordinance will be numbered 2023-02
  - Medical Marijuana Ordinance
    - o Spelling and grammar errors will be addressed.
    - o Dixon recommended removal of: for non-medical purposes.
    - o Cambridge commented that part of the ordinance is missing on their copy. Evaluation cannot be completed until the original ordinance is found.
    - o The ordinance will be set aside and addressed when the original ordinance is found.
- 6. Records and Retention
 

Cambridge reported that she attended a webinar about retention and storage of Township Documents.

  - Even if in digital format, a paper copy of minutes must be kept.
  - Two backup copies of digital information should be kept off site. Dixon suggests proceeding with the purchase of a new township computer and following this procedure.
  - There will be another class on record retention at the up-north conference.
  - Discussion was held on holding an organizational work day.
- 7. Township Bylaws
 

Cambridge asked if the Township has bylaws and where they are kept at. Coats said there are bylaws.

**ROAD COMMISSION**

No Update

**SUPERVISOR/ZONING:** *Scott Franzel*

1. Filkins Private Road Agreement
  - See Tax Assessor, Number 1
2. Property Zoning
  - A resident is requesting to combine property. She is adding 1.4 acres to the back of her property. Franzel approved and the information will be passed on to Jeannie Diaz, Assessor.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** *Sheila Coats*

Coats requested approval of the January 2023 checks number 17107 thru 17136 for a total amount of \$33,597.83.

\*\*\* Motion by Dixon, Supported by Franzel to approve the January 2023 checks as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

1. Township Credit Card for Highline Internet and Other Business
  - Franzel reported that the credit card has been received

- Cambridge inquired about a credit card policy and presented sample policies. Coats and Ross will be authorized users.
- Franzel directed Cambridge to draft a policy for the Board's consideration.

**CLERK'S REPORT:** *Tammy Ross*

Ross requested a motion to approve payment of the monthly bills.

\*\*\* Motion by Dixon, Supported by Cambridge to approve payment of the bills as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

**CEMETERY REPORT:** *Tammy Ross*

- The first invoice for Patterson Tree Service has been paid.
- Dixon handed out information on Green Burials.

**SEWER REPORT** *Jim Hacker*

- Did not receive his monthly compensation.
- No reading warnings.
- The website login was not working. Dixon said it was under maintenance and should be working again.
- Hacker and Jason Radloff will do meter readings this month.
- Requested high visibility vests for safety reasons. Dixon will also get ID cards.

\*\*\* Motion by Dixon, Supported by Cambridge to approve the purchase of high visibility vests with the wording Watertown Township Meter Reader from Stoliker's Design. All in favor. Motion carried.

**PLANNING BOARD** *Becky Cambridge*

1. Special Planning Commission Meeting

- Meeting was held on January 12<sup>th</sup>.
- She handed out the minutes for the Board's review.
- She read the following Planning Commission request: The Watertown Township Planning Commission is in the beginning stages of updating its Master Plan. This has opened up areas that we feel need improvement. The Planning Commission is requesting that a moratorium on all renewable energy be put in place for six months to allow for proper review of the ordinances and completion of our Master Plan review. The Planning Commission and its members are also requesting that a second attorney be contacted for a more thorough review of the renewable energy ordinances. Our consensus is that it would be a disservice to the township residents to not have a further review of this ordinance by another attorney office. Upon much research and review, we would like to recommend the law offices of Foster Swift. They have multiple attorneys on staff that deal specifically with municipal township law as it pertains to zoning, land use, renewable energy, Master Plan Ordinances, etc.

Franzel reported that the items have been sent to Foster Swift and firm issued the following: They would recommend that the Township's moratorium be temporary and for a relatively short period of time (six-twelve months). They are not aware of any pending applications(s) for such uses in the Township so a developer would not have any investment-backed expectations, nor would the moratorium deprive them of all economically beneficial use of their land. The moratorium would likely be found reasonable on those grounds. They also reviewed the Solar Ordinance and sighted 9 items that may be issues.

Dixon reported the Varnum correspondence has also been sent to Foster Swift. There may other modifications due to the Varnum letter.

Dixon recommended having Foster Swift draft the moratorium and outline the steps in the review and approval process. Franzel directed Dixon to contact Foster Swift.

\*\*\* Motion by Dixon, Supported by Franzel to approve a special meeting of the Planning Commission if needed. All in favor. Motion carried.

## 2. Spicer Group Survey Launch

\*\*\* Motion by Dixon, Supported by Cambridge to approve the Spicer Group Survey Launch. All in favor. Motion carried.

### **WEBSITE REPORT:** *Becky Cambridge*

- Added and archived minutes as needed.
- Added 2023 Property Guidelines.
- Added Petition to Board of Review 2023
- Added Property Exemption Application 2023
- Added Board of Review Notice 2023
- Updated the Calendar

### **TAX ASSESSOR** *Jeannie Diaz*

#### 1. Filkins Land Split Application Status

- Franzel reported that the split will be approved upon receiving a private drive road maintenance agreement and receiving Detroit Edison and Road Commission approval.

### **PERMITS ISSUED:**

None

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### 1. ARPA Money Plan

- The Board may apply funds to purchasing file cabinets, computers for the hall, external hard drive backups, updating the Master Plan and additional election expenses. Cambridge reported that funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and fully expended by December 31, 2026. Also, all recipients must complete a report by April 30, 2023 whether funds are expended or not.

#### 2. Master Plan

- Cambridge handed out a timeline as submitted by the Spicer Group.

#### 3. Update all Ordinances & Completing Updating Ordinances (Get them Updated & Recorded)

- See New Business, Number 5
- Dangerous Buildings and Blight Ordinances will be reviewed at the March 2023 Board Meeting

#### 4. Completing updating ordinances

- See New Business, Number 5

#### 5. Waste Removal For Township In Process

- Cambridge reported that the first public hearing is scheduled to be held on May 1<sup>st</sup> before the regular Board Meeting and the second public hearing is scheduled for July 11<sup>th</sup> before the regular Board Meeting. Franzel will have Township Attorney Kyle O'Mara draft the Special Taxation District.

#### 6. Unclaimed Property/Replacement Check

- Cambridge reported that the check for \$87.75 has been received and the address is correct with PO Box 47.
- Ross is working on a replacement check from the Workman's Comp.

### **ADJOURN**

\*\*\* Franzel made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m. Dixon supported. All in favor. Motion carried

Next Regular Board Meeting is Tuesday, March 7, 2023, 6 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Ross, Clerk