

Watertown Township
2630 South Sandusky Rd
Sandusky, MI 48471

Public and Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 4, 2025 – 6 pm

Public Budget Hearing

1. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor, Scott Kenny at 6:10 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll call taken.

PRESENT: Coats, Cole, Diaz, Kenny & Ross

ABSENT: Cambridge

GUESTS: Matt Cole, Scott Straffon, Lauren Thrall, Diane & Don Ferguson, Gary Heberling, Bill Parrish, Jim Hacker, Lyne Stauffer, Dick Henderson, Jason Radloff, Jeff Renaudin, David Heberling, Andrew Palmer and Jim Cambridge.

2024-25 Proposed Budget Amendment:

Coats presented the 24-25 proposed budget amendment.

*** Motion by Cole, supported by Ross to approve the 24-25 Proposed Budget Amendment as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

2025-26 Proposed Budget

Coats presented the 25-26 proposed budget.

*** Motion by Cole, supported by Coats to approve the 25-26 Proposed Budget as presented All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment

No Comments

*** Motion by Cole, supported by Ross to close the public hearing at 6:15 pm. All in favor. Motion carried.

Regular Board Meeting

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Supervisor, Scott Kenny. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll call was taken.

PRESENT: Coats, Cole, Diaz, Kenny & Ross

ABSENT: Cambridge

GUESTS: Matt Cole, Scott Straffon, Lauren Thrall, Diane & Don Ferguson, Gary Heberling, Bill Parrish, Jim Hacker, Lyne Stauffer, Dick Henderson, Jason Radloff, Jeff Renaudin, Aaron Bennett, David Heberling, Andrew Palmer and Jim Cambridge.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES FROM THE LAST BOARD MEETING

Kenny requested approval of the February 4, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

*** Motion by Coats, supported by Ross to approve the February 4, 2025 minutes as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

Cole requested that:

- Board Work Session be placed under New Business, Number 7

*** Motion by Cole, Supported by Ross to approve the agenda as amended. All in favor. Motion carried.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS

County Commissioner Gary Heberling reported:

- The Personnel Committee
 - o Approved the hire of a Director of Parks, due to the large increase in park usage.
 - o Approved a part-time seasonal Sheriff Marine Director at the wage of \$24.50 per hour.
- The Board of Commissioners Committee
 - o County website has been updated.
 - o Approved the hire and education of two new sheriff's department officers. The cost of their recruit education is \$18,000, with housing costs of \$22,000, both of which will be reimbursed by the State of Michigan.
 - o Approved a bid to remodel the exterior of the Evergreen Park Office, not to exceed \$25,338.
 - o Received an email from Congresswoman Lisa McClain regarding funding for small projects in the township. The information was forwarded to Kenny and Ross, and the application deadline is in April.
 - o The new Sanilac County Emergency Manager, Greg Holman, would like to visit each township. Heberling will arrange for him to attend a Watertown Township meeting.

PRESENTATION

SLC Representative, Aaron Bennett:

- Coats will email him a list of service addresses.
- Kenny has the signed agreement and will send it to him.
- The Township needs to inform him whether each service address will use the garden hose spigot option. This would involve installing a spigot before the water meter so that outside water usage, such as washing cars, is not metered. Kenny mentioned that it would be the homeowner's choice to purchase the spigot.
- Cole inquired about the software syncing with the township's software. Bennett assured the Board that the systems will be compatible and sync together.
- Cole asked about the end-user cost of paying the fee monthly versus paying upfront for up to 10 years. Bennett explained that each year would consist of an agreed-upon number of end-user units. As the units are used, they will be deducted from the total amount purchased.
- The meter lifespan is 20 years.

CORRESPONDENCE

Kenny stated that he placed all correspondence on a table.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Coats

1) Approval of Checks Issued

- Coats requested the Board's approval of the monthly payments, check numbers 17890 - 17918 equaling \$22,742.87

*** Motion by Cole, Supported by Ross to approve the monthly payments as presented. All in favor Motion carried

CLERK'S REPORT: Ross

1) No Current Claim

CEMETERY REPORT: Tammy Ross

1) Burials

- One weekday burial at winter rates.

SEWER REPORT: Jim Hacker

Jim Hacker reported that:

- Meter reading are complete.
- There are two or three houses he can't get in contact with the owners.
- He believes that two meters are now reading correctly, whereas they hadn't been accurate before. He expects adjustments, as the previous readings were based on estimates.
- There were a few meters he had to estimate because he couldn't get a reading or access the yards.
- He confirmed the address numbering for the trailers behind the car wash on Marshall Drive. The numbers begin on the West side (closest to the car wash) and continue to the East.
- He informed the homeowners he met while reading meters about the upcoming meter conversion. Kenny will arrange a public hearing. Hacker & Kenny will ensure a notification regarding the meter conversion is sent out.
- He suggested filming the underground sewer station to show the Board what needs to be updated or repaired.
- Kenny reported receiving a call from a resident who claims their high-water usage was due to a leak. He instructed the homeowner to provide proof of the repair and the Board will review the issue.
- Kenny will work on gaining access to the System Raco and Hacker will request an invoice from the company.

WEBSITE/PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT/FACEBOOK PAGE: Becky Cambridge

Kenny reported that

- Cambridge is working on a Facebook Policy and will have it for the next meeting.
- No Planning Commission meeting was held.

TAX ASSESSOR: Jennie Diaz

Diaz Reported:

- Board of Review Meetings will be held on Monday (March 10th) and Tuesday (March 11th).

NEW BUSINESS

1) Jim Franzel Resignation from Planning Commission

- Kenny reported Jim Franzel submitted his resignation from the Planning Commission

*** Motion by Cole, Supported by Coats to approve the resignation of Jim Franzel from the Planning Commission. All in favor. Motion carried.

2) Planning Commission Appointments

- Kenny recommended David Heberling to fill the first position on the Planning Commission, open due to the resignation of Jim Franzel.

*** Motion by Coats, Supported by Cole to approve the appointment of David Heberling to the Planning Commission. All in favor. Motion carried.

- Kenny recommended Andrew Palmer to fill the second position on the Planning Commission, open due to the resignation of Jim Hacker. Discussion was held with Mr. Palmer.

*** Motion by Cole, Supported by Coats to appoint Andrew Palmer to fill the second position on the Planning Commission. All in favor. Motion carried.

3) Cemetery Mowing Request for Bids

- Kenny presented a rough draft of the cemetery bid and suggested sending it directly to the companies that have already expressed interest. Ross will handle this. Ross asked if the bids should be completed before the April Board Meeting, to which Kenny confirmed. Cole inquired whether lawn companies would be required to have their own liability insurance. Kenny responded that he would request a copy of their insurance coverage before making any recommendations on the bid.

*** Motion by Cole, Supported by Coats to approve the solicitation of lawn mowing bids. All in favor. Motion carried.

4) Road Brine 2025

- Kenny reported that Michigan Chloride's bid is 22 cents per gallon, while Wilkinson Chloride Dust Control's bid is 19.5 cents per gallon. He also shared that in 2023, the total cost for the job was \$72,443, with the service performed 3 times, whereas in 2024, the cost was \$48,316, with the service performed 2 times. Michigan Chloride is approximately \$24,000 an application and Wilkinson Chloride Dust Control is approximately \$14,029 per application. Discussion was held.

*** Motion made by Coats, supported by Ross to approve Wilkinson Chloride Dust Control for the 2025 road brining service, to be performed three times during the season. All in favor. Motion carried.

5) Budget Adoption Resolution

- Kenny read the resolution.

*** Motion made by Kenny, supported by Ross, to approve the resolution adopting the 2025-2026 Budget. All in favor, by roll call vote. Cambridge absent. Motion carried

6) Statutory Duties From Attorney

- Kenny facilitated a discussion on the statutory duties of Board Officers and Trustees, as outlined by the legal firm Foster & Swift. One issue raised was the conflict of offices—specifically, that a township trustee cannot also serve as a deputy clerk. Cole explained that prior to her appointment as Trustee, this issue was researched, and it was determined that the positions were not incompatible. However, the opinion provided by Foster & Swift concluded that a conflict does exist. As a result, Cole submitted her resignation from the Board.

*** Motion made by Coats, supported by Ross, to accept the resignation of Susan Cole from the position of Board Trustee, with regrets, effective March 31, 2025. Cole abstains. All in favor. Motion carried.

Kenny thanked Cole for her service.

7) Board Work Session

- Cole requested that the Board considers scheduling a work session to discuss the structure and composition of the Board Minutes. Ross shared that, based on her training with the MTA, minutes should include only the necessary information. A discussion followed, and Kenny will contact the attorney to clarify the requirements for the Board Minutes

ZONING: Jim Hacker

Hacker reported

- He will contact Cambridge to put Zoning Forms and instructions on the website.
- He is organizing a filing system.

PERMITS: Jim Hacker

Hacker reported

- Received two (2) Land Use Permits. One is a full garage build and one is a slight addition to an existing garage.
- There are a couple other permits still in process.
- He will contact Cambridge to put Permit Forms and instructions on the website.
- He is organizing a filing system.

OLD BUSINESS

1) Sylvan Drive Blight

- Kenny reported that a pretrial hearing will be held within the next 45 days. The hearing is open to anyone who would like to go. The homeowner claims he plans to move back into the house and will give the Township & Health Department access to home for inspection if/when that happened. The home has been vacant for over 30 years.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Township Residents spoke about

- Wage raises
- A dispute between two audience members after the last Board Meeting
- Conflict of public office duties
- Deputy Treasurer position
- The frequency that public comment periods are allowed at each meeting.

ADJOURN

*** Motion by Coats, Supported by Ross to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 pm. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Ross, Clerk