

Watertown Township
2630 South Sandusky Rd
Sandusky, MI 48471

Board Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 4, 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, and Ross

ABSENT: Diaz

GUESTS: Matt & Susan Cole, Kevin Smith, Jason Radloff, Gary Heberling, Mike and Christine Papp, Randy Fahs, Samsung Lawyer Seth Arthur, Soyoung Park, Jim Hacker, Clint Stoutenburg, Don & Diane Ferguson, Trudy Bowers, Scott Kenny, Brenden Miller, John Arnold, Mr. & Mrs. Jim Boyles, Nick Stone, Joe Stone, Brad Rich, Bill Parrish, Gary Radloff, Jim Cambridge and Mr. Scribner.

MINUTES

Cambridge requested –

- Under Public Officials – Replace March 14, 2023 with March 16, 2023

*** Motion by Dixon, Supported by Cambridge to approve the March 7, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Minutes as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

AGENDA

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

PUBLIC OFFICIALS

District 2 Commissioner Gary Heberling reported:

- The Board of Commissioners approved new security cards throughout the courthouse.
- The Board of Commissioners approved additional security cameras for areas in and around the courthouse.
- The Board of Commissioners elected Joe Allen, Jim Bowerman and new member Jim Terpenning to the Parks and Recreation Committee.
- Sanilac County benefited from the Opioid Settlement in the amount of 1.2 million dollars and will receive another 650 thousand dollars. The Health and Mental Health Departments will put together a steering committee to plan the use of the funds for counseling and health care needs. Funds may be spent over the next 15 years and will be received in sections.
- There is a push to enlarge Camp Grayling. The camp now has 7,400 acres that have never been used and the proposal is for the people of the State of Michigan to give them another 74,000 acres, for 20 years, through the Department of Natural Resources for military training and other uses. There is a group of elected officials opposed to this expansion. The Board of Commissioners passed a resolution supporting this opposition. Mr. Heberling read the resolution.

Franzel questioned the Sanilac County Planning Commission's stance on the solar systems. Mr. Heberling said the document was reviewed, but the Planning Commission cannot make a decision or make a finding on anything that comes from a township. They review it and send it back.

Franzel questioned why the Planning Commission's minutes are not on the website. Mr. Heberling will look into this.

Franzel question the Board of Commissioner's stance on solar systems. Mr. Heberling said commissioners are to be neutral on township issues and township decisions in order to serve all the people of the county. It creates a conflict to take one side or another. The commissioners do have information booklets that they are disbursing about alternative energy and this information should be considered by each township board and sent out to residents. Surveys have also been sent out to Sanilac County residents.

County Treasurer Trudy Bowers thanked the Board for all they do. She also thanked Coats for her work and stated the importance of submitting tax reports in a timely manner.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Samsung Lawyer Seth Arthur, stated his concerns on the solar moratorium and urged the Board to vote no on the moratorium.
- Resident Christine Papp stated that she and her family are against the moratorium and explained why.
- Resident Diane Ferguson thanked Coats for the paperwork she needed, and expressed that she does not agree with the Solar Projects and believes there is a need for a moratorium. She requested a clarification of the medical and recreational marijuana ordinance amendments. She reiterated that she believes there is a direct conflict with the Medical Marijuana Act of 2008. She is also commented on the Smart Community signs and what she believes they mean.
- Brenden Miller, Land and Liberty Coalition Field Director stated that it is time to get the Solar Project done and urged the Board to vote down the moratorium.
- Samsung Project Coordinator Soyoung Park, stated that for the reasons attorney Seth Arthur gave, she urges the board to vote down the moratorium. Samsung's interest in spending time, energy and money by investing in the community by sponsoring road improvements or festivals rather than the moratorium conflict. She also clarified that the rumor is false regarding the Samsung Company taking legal action no matter what the township votes on the moratorium. The company accepted what is in the ordinance and adjusted their project plans accordingly. Samsung has no intentions of taking legal action on what is in the ordinance.
- Jim Boyle, Solar Project Participant stated that after careful consideration, he and his family decided to be part of it. He is fearful that if this isn't done now, the higher up government will force it upon the community and they won't have a say in how it is done. He does not support the moratorium and would like to see the project go forward.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Treasurer's Office – Disbursement Discrepancy
 - See Public Officials – Trudy Bowers.
2. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
 - Franzel stated the minutes were given to the Board.
3. Sanilac County Health Department - Compliant Letter
 - Trash at 420 South Sandusky Road will be picked up.
4. Cemetery Deeds – Contradiction to the Survey
 - a. Discussion on New Survey
 - Franzel explained that there is a 5-foot discrepancy between the prior cemetery survey and the resident to the North and the new survey. The 5-foot discrepancy was split evenly between the homeowner's property and the cemetery property.

*** Motion by Coats, Supported by Dixon to approve the survey as presented. Dixon, Cambridge, Coats and Ross in favor, Franzel opposes. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Solar Moratorium Discussion & Vote
 - Franzel and Dixon reported that Foster, Swift, Collins and Smith Attorney Michael Homier now thinks the township can move forward without a moratorium as litigation is costly. This is a conflict with his last recommendation. Discussion was held on making and needed changes with amendments rather than a moratorium. Discussion was also held on possible legal action from Samsung and other legal teams. Samsung Project Coordinator Soyoung Park, again assured the Board that Samsung will work with the township.

*** Motion by Franzel, Supported by Dixon to vote on a moratorium. Coats and Cambridge support a moratorium, Ross, Franzel & Dixon do not support a moratorium. Vote passed to not support the moratorium.

2. Office Records Keeping Organization
 - Coats requested Dixon order office file cabinets and accessories. Dixon will order. A Saturday will be setup for file organization.
3. Planning Committee Appointments
 - Discussion was held on the committee size, work, a solar sub-committee to review applications, and to accelerate the Planning Committee meeting schedule. Dixon and Franzel volunteered to be on the solar sub-committee and two members from the Planning Committee will be needed.

*** Motion by Dixon, Supported Coats to form a Planning Commission Solar Sub-Committee with two Board of Trustee Members and two Planning Commission Members to meet and review the Samsung Solar application.

*** Motion by Dixon, Supported by Franzel to approve accelerating the Planning Commission meeting schedule to every month on the 3rd Thursday. All in favor. Motion carried.

*** Motion by Cambridge, Supported by Coats to reappoint Jason Radloff and Nathan Campbell to the Planning Commission. All in favor. Motion carried.

4. Credit Card Policy
 - Cambridge distributed a credit card policy. Each board member will sign the policy and return to the treasurer. The process is - receipts will go to the clerk to be held, monthly statements will go to the treasurer too be recorded, then the statement will go to the clerk to be matched with receipts and filed. Credit card payments will be set up as an automatic debit from the bank account.
5. 3rd Annual Watertown Community Cleanup Day
 - Discussion was held. The item was tabled until next the regular board meeting.
6. Road Improvement Committee
 - Cambridge requested a Road Improvement Committee to address bad roads. Dixon suggests making a long-term plan for roads. No action taken.
7. Board Member Internet Stipend
 - Discussion was held, but no action was taken.
8. Ordinance Review
 - This item was tabled until the next regular board meeting.

ROAD COMMISSION

1. Townline Road Improvement
 - Franzel reported that Sanilac Road Maintenance Director, Andrew Palmer sent in a quote of \$30,338.12 for Townline Road work.

SUPERVISOR/ZONING *Scott Franzel*

1. Kevin Smith – Elmer Township Trustee
 - There is a brine issue on Townline Road. This is a shared road with Elmer Township. Watertown Township is having a double pass brine 3 times a year and Elmer Township is doing a double pass brining 2 times a year. This is a lot of brining on one road. Franzel proposed still brining the road 3 times a year, but alternating the brining between the townships. Smith will take this offer back to the Elmer Township Board.
 - At the last Clerks meeting there was 3 MTA representatives present, blight was discussed. The sheriff's office suggested getting a blight enforcement officer and have townships, that are interested, share the cost. Franzel stated that the Watertown Board would be happy to have Mr. Smith look into this and possibly share the program costs. Ross will be the contact on this for Watertown Township.

TREASURER'S REPORT: *Sheila Coats*

Coats requested approval of the March 2023 checks number 17159 thru 17190 for a total amount of \$93,420.97.

*** Motion by Dixon, Supported by Cambridge to approve the March 2023 checks as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

Coats reported that she gave the Board the year end financial statement and that, during the last tax cycle, the township collected \$1.9 million dollars in property tax.

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*

No burials during the month of March 2023

1. Database Update
 - This item was tabled
2. Cemetery Tree Replanting Discussion
 - Cambridge suggested a cemetery tree replanting committee to look into this issue. Cambridge also passed out literature on the issue. Dixon suggested waiting until the mess is cleaned up and having a tree replanting fund that residents could contribute to. He also suggested looking into grants and only planting new trees on the perimeter of the cemetery only.
3. Cemetery Fee Schedule
 - The item was tabled.

SEWER REPORT *Jim Hacker*

- Replaced two meters pads.
- More meter pads are needed. Dixon will order.
- Safety vests were received
- ID cards are done
- Dixon reported that the lift station cycled approximately 200 times in 24 hours due to the wet conditions.

PLANNING BOARD *Becky Cambridge*

- Heard the Samsung presentation
- Passed out the minutes
- 611 acres of solar project
 - Group should have the survey ready for June's meeting. Sixty surveys were received by mail and one hundred and sixty were received online. Jim Hacker will contact the Spicer Group regarding the Planning Board's accelerated meeting schedule

WEBSITE REPORT: *Becky Cambridge*

- Added minutes and agendas as needed
- Added announcement of March 2nd Special Planning Commission Meeting and Public Hearing
- Added Lawn Mowing Bid Announcement
- Added an educational opportunity on May 15th in Frankenmuth – Breaking The Code In Zoning
- Google Analytics report showed that in a month 206 users entered the main page. The report also shows any other pages they accessed and the time spent on the website.

TAX ASSESSOR *Jeannie Diaz*

No report

PERMITS ISSUED:

- Franzel gave the Board his permit. Will give Ross a check tomorrow.

OLD BUSINESS

1. ARPA Money Plan
 - Franzel reported that this issue is still being worked on. Dixon is working on administrating the funds. Dixon is picking up the new township computer on April 14th.
2. Waste Removal Dates of Importance
 - Franzel reported that a public meeting will be held in May 2nd. Dixon created a draft refuse and recycling ordinance. It isn't finished, but is a good start. Franzel will contact Township Attorney Kyle O'Mara for a notification for the Public meeting. This notice will be posted and printed in the newspaper.
3. Weaver Sewage Issue
 - Franzel reported that this matter is just about rapped up.
4. Replacement Worker's Compensation Check
 - Ross reported that the check will be replaced and she is waiting to receive it.

ADJOURN

*** Coats made the motion to adjourn the meeting 7:51. Dixon supported. All in favor. Motion carried

Next Regular Board Meeting and Public Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 2, 2023, 6 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Ross, Clerk