

BENTON TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING

MARCH 5, 2024

5012 ORCHARD BEACH ROAD, CHEBOYGAN MI 49721

The March 5, 2024 board meeting was called to order at 7:00pm and began with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call: Present were 4 board members: Supervisor Bruce Brandt, Trustee Pete Redmond, Trustee Ron Fenlon and Treasurer Jayne Passeno. Absent was Clerk, Carol Neumann. In addition, Commissioner Mike Newman and 11 electorates were present.

Additions & Deletions: Supervisor Brandt added support staff wages to Old Business and Treasurer Passeno added line item transfers to New Business. Motion carried.

Minutes and bills: Library Liaison, Mary Ellen Enos clarified the wording in the February 6<sup>th</sup> minutes, that a \$600.00 donation was received for Mrs. Neiland's memorial. A motion to accept the February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 minutes and February bills was made by Treasurer Passeno and supported by Trustee Redmond.

Correspondence: Supervisor Brandt presented brine prices for the 2024 season. The best rate is with American Waste, Inc. (GFL) and pricing has increased by \$.03 per gallon to \$.35 per gallon. Bids for a camera system are still being collected. PIE & Gas Co-op gas cost recovery rate will be reduced by \$0.0016 effective April 1, 2024. The residential distribution rates will increase by \$0.02036 per ccf and the monthly availability charge will increase by \$5.00. EGLE correspondence regarding a second notice of violation for Yovich and a request for information for Elliott.

Library Liaison: Mary Ellen Enos reported that a model, replica ship of the Leviathan is on display, the quilt show is through the end of March and the bank balance is \$434,673.65.

Fire Chief: Chief Fenlon reported that 72 smoke alarms and 36 carbon monoxide detectors have been received from the state. Due to the unavailability of a large quantity of smoke alarms, a notice will be in the summer newsletter regarding prioritizing recipients. Alverno firemen participated in the Burn Camp for children at Black Lake UAW. The AFD Fire Board has approved a new organization within the fire department to provide refreshments to the firemen on scene.

Groundskeeper: Doug reported that the park and walking path have been getting a lot of use with the mild weather.

Old Business: Supervisor Brandt presented the revised resolution to support staff wages. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

New Business: Treasurer Passeno presented the recommended 2024/2025 budget for Benton Township. Supervisor Brandt made a motion to approve the budget as presented supported by trustee Redmond. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote. Treasurer Passeno presented a list of line item transfers requested by Clerk Neumann in the amount of \$28,380.00 and the transfer of \$271,000.00 funds from

ARPA to road construction. Motion made by Treasurer Passeno and supported by Trustee Redmond. Motion carried.

Public Comments: Commissioner Newman remarked on the jail expansion project that is temporarily on hold for materials. A dog park has been requested in the City of Cheboygan and the fairgrounds is an area that is being considered. Ken Paquet from the CCRC stated that road restrictions are on a day to day basis at this time. CCRC has 5 million in road projects scheduled for 2024. Paquet inquired about getting on the list for road upgrades. Supervisor Brandt explained that priority is set by the PASER rating from the CCRC. CCRC, Matt Hall reported at the MTA meeting that the Mognrain Bridge project has been bundle with other bridge projects by the State, inquiries are being made by congressmen and progress is optimistic.

Board Comments: Trustee Redmond inquired about the progress of acquiring AED's for the community center and hall. Trustee Fenlon reported that the meeting for the cemetery is March 20, 2024. Supervisor Brandt reported the Wearhouse Company is evaluating harvesting the timber at the transfer station. Brandt is researching a request for a cemetery on private property. BOR is March 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. Property taxes increased by 5% this year. Supervisor Brandt reported on a state wide petition regarding the repeal of the law enacted last year that eliminates local authority for solar and wind energy. This would place the proposal on the November ballot. Also, an AxMITax petition to eliminate property taxes. This proposal is opposed by MTA. Treasurer Passeno reported that tax settlement has been completed with the County Treasurer and the collection at the township level was over 95%. Revenue sharing has increased for 2024.

A motion by Trustee Fenlon, supported by Trustee Redmond to pay bills as presented was carried.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 was made by Supervisor Brandt and supported by Treasurer Passeno. Motion carried.