

The Austin Township Board Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Kenneth Vredenburg on August 9, 2016 at the Township Hall at 14132 Pierce Road, Stanwood, MI, 49346 at 7:34 p.m.

Present were: Kenneth Vredenburg, Carolyn Towsley, Elizabeth G Carr, John Brockway, and Sandra Mayo. There were four guests present.

Public Comment: A group of 180th Avenue residents expressed their concerns that with the paving project delayed for one year the funds would still be there to finish the project next year. The funds are reserved in a CD for the project. County Commissioner Tom O'Neil-The EMS Director, Tim Ladd, resigned. He will be working in another community. The Emergency Management System will be looking in-house to try to fill his position. The Park Millage went down.

Minutes: Moved by Carolyn Towsley, supported by Sandra Mayo to approve the July 12, 2016 Township Minutes, the July 12, 2016 Austin Township Election Commission Minutes, the July 12, 2016 Burnham & Flower Meeting Minutes, the June 14, 2016 Township Minutes with a correction to Public Comment "Tom O'Neil-Running for County Commissioner District 5", and the June 14, 2016 Austin Township Election Commission Minutes. Motion carried.

Finance Report: The Township balanced at \$396,622.08. CD#9671 was rolled over for one year. FYI- the State of Michigan Revenue Sharing check came in last month, but shows up this month on your report. Also we received the Metro Act payment and it has been transferred to the General Fund. The Cemetery balanced at \$6,606.30. There were four deposits into the Property Tax Account and the distributions were sent out. \$150.00 was drawn out to be in a petty cash account. Moved by Sandra Mayo, supported by John Brockway to accept the Financial Report as given. Motion carried subject to audit.

Payment of the Bills: Moved by John Brockway, supported by Carolyn Towsley to pay Township check #'s 8803-8836 with the addition of Election Inspector checks #8829 Nichole Smiegel, #8830 Heather Zukowski, #8831 Karen Sanderson, #8832 Pam Maharg, #8833 Marilyn Yvon, #8834 Shirley Skarda, #8835 B & E Coating Services, and #8836 to Megan Giuliani to replace check #8623 which she misplaced; and to pay Cemetery check #'s 1562-1563. Motion carried.

Unfinished Business:

1. Fire Department and First Responder Report: \$350.00 was moved from Contingency to Social Security to cover the amount required to pay Social Security. Donations to the Fire Department has its own line in the budget now, 208-000-697. Budget settlement was \$75,220.16 with \$2,895.69 going into their Money Market account. Invoices for the First Responders totaled \$1,401.24. Invoices for the Fire Department totaled \$19,139.42. Payroll was \$3,398.37, with \$12.84 to EFTPS for Withholdings, for a total of \$23,951.87. The Fire Board moved to allow Chief Palmer to draft a letter to the City of Big Rapids Fire Department to request that they be listed as our automatic mutual aid. After the fatal accident on the Muskegon River grief counseling services have been made available. The Mecosta Austin Fire Department expresses its sincerest thanks to Muskegon County for their assistance with their sonar during this incident. There is no company willing to install a natural gas generator. We will need to find an alternate way to use the generator we have. The most viable option would be to move the generator to a separate building or room added onto the back of the Fire Hall. The Fire Department and First Responders will be replacing several pagers that are aging and falling apart. They are \$450.00/pc. Rescue will pay for three and the Fire Department will pay for two. There will also be a \$200.001 reprogramming fee. Big Rapids Township has acquired two drones through a grant program. They will be under stringent restrictions where they will be able to use them. The DNR, Coast

Guard, and Air Med will not share the same air space as a drone. They will need to acquire our participation before deploying the drones at any of our incidents. The Fire Reporting Systems upgrade is working well. Our software will be free for the next year. Tender Truck operation training and Pump Draft training at Brower Park have been completed. There has been trouble starting the Grass Rig. Parts have been ordered to fix that. There are serious problems with the brakes on Engine 3-11. The brakes are only working intermittently. Tri-County came and adjusted the brakes. MFR-there have been 41 runs since May. The MFR Board Meeting was July 21, 2016. Firemen's Fund-The auditor's conclusion and recommendation is that the Firemen's Fund should not be part of the Fire Department Budget. It should be a stand-alone Fund administered by the Fire Department. The Michigan Unemployment Agency will not allow the Fire Department to continue to only file once a year. Wages will have to be paid quarterly or they will revoke our FEIN. We will pay the Fire Chief's Wages quarterly to satisfy that requirement. Because of the way the Fire Department and First Responders were organized, the First Responders will not be allowed to acquire their own FEIN. They will also not be allowed to write their withholding checks out of their checking account. The Fire Department will have to write the withholding checks and the First Responders will have to reimburse them. Austin Township is still looking for a more compact report from the BS&A program for the Fire Department and First Responders.

2. Assessor and Supervisor Report: The Tulley more appeal on their taxes is still in process with Morton Township
3. Treasurer's Report: 25% of the taxpayers have paid 23% of the tax dollars. We received the ANR check.
4. Clerk's Report: The MTA On the Road Regional Meeting will be at the Big Rapids Holiday Inn on October 25, 2016. Four board members will attend. Received and returned the paperwork to continue to receive tax-free purchases at Staples. The Morton Township Library Champagne and Chocolate Gala Fund Raiser will be Friday, September 23, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25.00 at the door. There were 69 Absent Voter Ballots returned for the election. All together including AV ballots there were 181 ballots cast at Austin Township. It was a very low voter turnout.
5. Wish-a-Mile: They came, set up, processed bike riders, and were cleaned up and gone by 9 a.m.

New Business:

1. Roads: The 180th Ave paving project has been put on hold until next summer. This will allow the road to properly settle and harden over the drains that were put in at wet spots. The Township will ask for the road to be brined by the County Road Commission to facilitate the hardening for the road. Will also ask for gravel to be put on the low spots on 8 Mile Road.
2. Audit: There were no material problems with our audit. We are cited as a weakness, though, because we do not prepare our GAAP report ourselves but rely on our auditor to do it for us. The Township would like to question our auditor about how we could change this and get this removed from our audit statement.
3. Trail Towns: Dick Wheeler and Yulanda Bellinger from Morton Township are part of the Trail Towns initiative. Trail Towns refer to any of the towns touching the White Pine Trail or any of the other connected trails in Mecosta County. They are exploring ways to bring a trail from the Village of Mecosta and Canadian Lakes to connect with the White Pine Trail. They are looking for participation and ideas from other Townships.

Adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Elizabeth G Carr

Austin Township Clerk