

VOLINIA TOWNSHIP
CASS COUNTY, MICHIGAN
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Monday, July 8, 2024
6:30 PM

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Larry Davis at 6:32pm. Members present: Supervisor Gwenn Johnson, Trustee Denny Grice, Treasurer Alex Williams, Trustee Nick Seelye and Clerk Annette Peters. Members absent: None.

Others present: Gary Locke, Victoria Locke, Jamie Chamber, Deb Chambers, Glenn Blough, Brenda Blough, Bob Lutz, Leslie Wilson, Chris Brooks, Beth Brooks, Joe Colgan, Anne Colgan, Jeff Hupp, Sue Conklin, Vic Fitz, Joe Mroczek, Connie Mroczek and Stacey High.

Prayer was given by Denny Grice.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Larry Davis.

Drug Enforcement Millage – Mr. Fitz

There is a 4-year renewal millage on the August 6, 2024 ballot that would be used in support of law enforcement, criminal justice and public safety for the citizen of Cass County, including the areas of drug enforcement, prosecution, education and treatment. Victor Fitz has been the County Prosecutor for 21 years and running for his 6th term, during that time there has been 30 homicides in the county and they have won all the cases. He has 41 years' experience and is longest serving prosecutor in Cass County. With him is his Chief Assistance Prosecutor Mary Foster. The key to the success is to keep a lid on the issues. They have a great drug team, when fully operating. Meth is the biggest problem in our area, it used to be mom & dad labs, now it's made in Mexico and shipped through the southern border. Today there was a case where a plea was given for 1,000-gram possession that led to another 6,000 grams in a house in south county. There are over 100,000 fentanyl overdoses every year, without the drug team this issue would grow like weeds.

Minutes

The minutes from the last regular meeting, June 10, 2024 were presented. Alex Williams made a motion to approve the minutes, Nick Seelye seconded the motion; all in favor; motion passed.

The minutes from the special meeting, June 20, 2024 were presented. Denny Grice said on page 1, second to the last paragraph, last word should be on not one. Nick Seelye made a motion to approve the Special meeting minutes with the correction, Denny Grice seconded the motion; all in favor; motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

The June Treasurer's Report was presented with a balance of \$299,209.52 in the general fund. Balances in the other funds are as shown. Receipts are as listed. Nick Seelye made a motion to approve the June Treasurer's Report; Denny Grice seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Grice – Yes
Peters – Yes
Davis – Yes
Williams – Yes
Seelye – Yes

The Board approved the June Treasurer's Report.

Bills

The Revised bills for June were presented with a new total of \$13,584.22. Denny Grice made a motion to approve the revised June bills; Nick Seelye seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Grice – Yes
Peters – Yes
Davis – Yes
Williams – Yes
Seelye – Yes

The Board approved the Revised June Bills.

The bills for July were presented with a total of \$30,627.36. Nick Seelye made a motion to approve the July Bills; Denny Grice seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Grice – Yes
Peters – Yes
Davis – Yes
Williams – Yes
Seelye – Yes

The board approved the July Bills.

Clerk

Last month the proposal for a Township Website Design by Civic Clarity Website Services was tabled. Alex Williams said that the proposal seems good, the cost of \$450 per year seems reasonable and would like to see if we can get email hosting. Denny Grice asked if there is an option to post notices, Annette Peters said yes that is something that would be there, but there are still State requirements that would require newspaper notices. Alex Williams said for the email notifications, people would have to enroll to get those notifications. Denny Grice made a motion to approve the propose for a Township Website design from Civic Clarity Website Services; Nick Seelye seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Grice – Yes
Peters – Yes
Davis – Yes
Williams – Yes

Seelye – Yes

The Board approved the Proposal for a website design with Civic Clarity Website Services.

Annette Peters stated that she did also start the .gov application process.

Cemeteries

Larry Davis said that he went to the County and all the Cemeteries now have physical addresses and can be mapped with GPS.

Alex Williams asked if we heard back about the headstone damages. Larry Davis said that we have a \$1,000 deductible. Alex Williams said that we should look into the cost to have it repaired.

Last month we tabled the CIMS Proposal. Alex Williams said that it looked like a good proposal, and doesn't see doing it for less, he would rather budget high and come in less (\$2,400 cushion). Denny Grice said that if we approve the proposal he would coordinate with Bob Rasmussen. Nick Seelye asked if we have the money. Annette Peters said that we need to review the budget. Denny Grice said that we have a discount on the proposal that only last though tonight's meeting. Nick said that he agrees that we need to do something better but we also need to make sure that the funds are there. Alex said that there was estimated \$36,962.25 and we took \$15,000 for the roads leaving approximately \$21,962.25. Denny said that we don't do something there's pending liability living on the burlap maps. Chris Brooks asked for an explanation of the burlap maps. Stacey High said that we need to computerize the maps. Victoria Locke said that Penn Township used that same burlap map system. Nick asked how much was the door that we just replaced, that's not correct, then we received quote for exit signs. Denny said that w took the new insurance with the goal to win the \$5,000 grant. Nick said that cost just keep adding up and we keep having to dip in the general funds. Denny said that the \$12,000 set up is just an estimate, our problems are not going away. Nick said that financially he just doesn't know. Denny said liability wise he doesn't know how we can't. Bob Lutz asked what the liability it. Denny said dog, fire, water etc. Bob is the key to the cemeteries. Money is the real issue but liability is getting closer.

Larry Davis made a motion to approve the CIMS proposal for cemetery software; Denny Grice seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Grice – Yes

Peters – No

Davis – Yes

Williams – Yes

Seelye – No

The board approved the CIM proposal for cemetery software.

Roads

Annette Peters and Nick Seelye marked the spot application dust control, and the application was applied today. Larry Davis said that he thought at the April 8th meeting we said that we were going to do the full application for the 1st and 2nd applications and the 3rd application would be spot application. Annette Peters said that we said that we were going to do the full applications then she thought at the next special meeting we discussed changing the order, that was on her if she misunderstood what she was told to schedule. Nick Seelye said that thought the same thing as Annette.

Nick Seelye said that while marking for the dust control there was a wash out on Dewey Lake Street found. He was able to contact Joe at CCRCC who meet him the next day. They were able to get signs put up and will be out to fix it ASAP. They will need to cut trees, check the culvert and fill to do it right.

Oak/Parker Street & Forest Stevens Lake Rd is about 3-1/2 weeks behind schedule for the chip and seal.

Fire and Ambulance Reports

No reports received.

Township Hall

Denny Grice got an estimate from Meulman Electric for \$1,130.61 to replace the exit signs and the emergency egress lights. This estimate should take care of the last of the township hall recommended fix from the insurance company, except testing the upstairs for lead paint. Alex Williams said that he feels that having work done upstairs is going to open us up to more issues. Annette Peters asked if since the upstairs is not open to the public, can we have it requoted to just do the downstairs. Alex said that his understanding was that the insurance company was making recommendations not requirements. Denny said that if we're not going to fix all why do half of them, he told us not to switch insurance companies to save \$900 per year to begin with, the way he sees it we're now \$800 in to the savings already. Denny said that we don't see the point to comply why spend the money. Alex Williams said that he thinks we should table the discussion to see where the cemeteries leave us.

Denny has received an invoice from Johnny's Custom for the new door, however he's not happy with the deadbolt so we will hold off paying until its complete.

Supervisor

There was a special planning commission meeting July 2, 2024 at 6pm. Beth Pompey said that this meeting was to approve the minutes from the previous meeting and to go over the new information that was received. There was legal advice given under closed session. August 29, 2024 at 6pm with be another Special Session, follow up. The CCRC has allowed us to use their room, Beth set up all the chairs.

Larry Davis asked Beth about a house on West Dewey Lake Street on the North Side, that appears to be a tiny home. Beth said that it does follow the permit and was approved.

Larry asked Beth about the barn that was put up on Little Fish Lake. Beth said that she is not a state certified building inspector and Joe Wickey would have to tag it, she can only issue a stop work order. Larry said Joe did red tag it but he will call Joe.

Larry asked Beth about the building on Decatur Road and Crane. Beth said that is the same situation.

Larry asked about the barn on McKenzie and Gards Prairie from a year ago. Beth said that this is the first she is hearing of it and will follow up.

Nick Seelye asked Beth when our contract with her ends. Beth said that she believes that it ends in August. Larry said that he believes that it is August 7th, 2024. Beth requested a closed session if we were going to discuss anything other than renewal of the contract with Zoning Solutions.

Nick Seelye made a motion to have a closed session meeting since the contract is up before the next meeting. Beth said that there is a clause in the contract that allows for renewals.

Nick Seelye made a motion to renew the contract with Zoning Solutions, so we would not need a special meeting; Alex Williams seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried.

Larry Davis requested a roll call vote:

Grice – No

Peters – Yes

Davis – No

Williams – Yes

Seelye – Yes

The Board voted to renew the contract with Zoning Solutions.

Larry Davis said that he voted no, because he wanted a shorter contract.

Beth Pompey said that she has had a site visit to Camp Matviz, 2 phone conference and it is now in the attorney's hands. There is supposed to be an agreement drawn up and signed by the board. If the board does not agree, that's up to them, but it's out of Beth's hands. Seth is the attorney representing this case. Larry asked what stops the board from putting the camp back on the tax roll. Alex Williams said that the Board cannot revoke the non-profit status. Chris Brooks asked if there is a special use permit. Beth said a long time ago, she has requested copies but haven't received anything yet. Bob Lutz asked if Special Use and Non-Conforming are the same thing. Beth said that they are not.

Denny wanted to explain why he voted no. Beth told him he was fine.

Stacey High asked Beth Pompey for her phone number. Beth said the phone number is 269-535-7367 and email address is zoningadmin@zoningsolutions.net

Board

Alex Williams said that he will be here for in person tax collection July 20, 2024 from 10am to 3pm and August 17, 2024 from 10am to 1pm or 2pm. Taxes are due on September 15, 2024 so the last day to pay is September 16, 2024. He will be here 9am to 6pm on September 16th. These date and times are listed on the tax bill and will be posted on the board outside.

Annette Peters reminded everyone to vote August 6th, 2024.

Public Comment

Anne Colgan said that she understands that Camp Matvix is tax exempt, but the owner Jake, is building a lake front home, and wanted to know if that home would be exempt or eligible for weed control assessment and be on the tax roll. Beth Pompey said that she was told that is a residential structure per the permit that will be used to house the councilors, so this would be a better question for the assessor. She can only go off what was put on the permit that was submitted to her. If anyone has any can provide or provide otherwise, please let Beth know.

Adjournment

Larry Davis made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Denny Grice seconded the motion; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 7:42pm

Respectfully submitted,
Annette Peters
Volinia Township Clerk