

Au Train Township Regular Board Meeting
July 11, 2022
6:00 o'clock p.m.

Pursuant to adjournment, the Au Train Township Board convened on the above date at 6:00 p.m. at the Au Train Township Hall, N7569 Spruce St., Au Train MI 49806

The Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Michelle Doucette, with the following members present: Mary Johnson, Clerk; Kristy Cota, Treasurer; Jake Miller, Trustee; and Tom Balmes, Trustee.

*VISITORS PRESENT – Approximately 8 persons attended the meeting in person. A complete list is on file.

*APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Additions and Changes to the Agenda were made as necessary. MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Trustee Balmes, to approve the Agenda as amended. MOTION CARRIED.

*MINUTES

MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Treasurer Cota, to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2022 Regular Board Meeting, as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

*BILLS AND CLAIMS

MOTION by Treasurer Cota, second by Supervisor Doucette, to accept this month's bill list as presented and authorize that they be paid as funds are available. COTA, YES; DOUCETTE, YES; MILLER, YES; BALMES, YES; JOHNSON, YES. MOTION CARRIED. (General Fund Checks Numbered #16745 through #16755; Fire Fund Checks Numbered #8808 through #8818; Garbage Fund Checks Numbered #2102).

*BOARD MEMBER REPORTS -

- TREASURER'S REPORT - For the Month ending June 30, 2022

GENERAL FUND CHECKING	
Beginning Balance	\$ 261,921.37
Deposits	85,079.68
Interest	32.53
Disbursements	13,921.86
Total Checks Not Cleared	3,362.19
Ending Balance	\$ 329,749.71
FIRE FUND CHECKING	
Beginning Balance	\$ 606,818.81
Deposits	21,820.13
Interest	73.55

Disbursements	61,921.86
Total Checks Not Cleared	4,063.39
Ending Balance	\$ 562,727.24
Certificate of Deposit	\$ 51,491.10
GARBAGE FUND CHECKING	
Beginning Balance	\$ 261,039.00
Deposits	21,820.13
Interest	33.80
Disbursements	
Total Checks Not Cleared	
Ending Balance	\$ 282,892.93
ROAD FUND CHECKING	
Beginning Balance	\$ 372,393.04
Deposits	32,055.36
Interest	48.14
Disbursements	
Total Checks Not Cleared	
Ending Balance	\$ 404,496.54

*A Complete copy of the June 30, 2022 report is on file with Clerk Johnson.

Treasurer Cota noted that the Summer Tax bills were sent and the option for online credit card payments remain. Upcoming hall rentals are on July 30th, August 5th, and August 6th, which is the DNR Au Train Lake Habitat Meeting.

*CLERK'S REPORT - Clerk Johnson provided an update to the Board on recent activities, which includes emails, correspondence and FOIA's. The Township Audit with Anderson, Tackman and Company began on June 27th - the process went well and they were pleased with how prepared the Township Clerk and Treasurer were. They will have additional documents for review and signatures. They will also continue to file the F65 and Clerk Johnson will also ask them to prepare any future reports relating to the SLFRF monies.

In preparation for the August 2nd State Primary Election, a mandatory State Election Administration Training was attended in June at the Munising Township Hall. There will be Election Inspector Training at the Au Train Township Hall on July 13th at 1:00, with additional opportunities available to receive the necessary two year certification at other Townships. 254 Absent Voter applications were sent to those on the permanent Absent Voter List and ballots are being sent out. Clerk Johnson also noted that with the upcoming postage rate increase, a decision to purchase additional postage was made for election administration and general postage needs of the Township. The Election Commission met just prior to this meeting to appoint inspectors.

*TRUSTEE'S REPORT - Trustee Miller noted the he has many inquiries about when the Zoning Ordinance Amendments will be completed.

Trustee Balmes noted that a citizen requested information about the DropBox at the Clerk/Treasurer's office and how often it was checked. Clerk Johnson responded that there is no set policy, but she shared the responsibility with Treasurer Cota and it is checked frequently and as needed, especially during tax collection.

Trustee Balmes also noted that he was asked about the gate closed at High Banks access along the river. This property is managed by the USFS and the gates were added to limit access and insure their no camping policy is upheld. Also questions about the garbage cart issuance policy and availability for camps.

*SUPERVISOR'S REPORT - Supervisor Doucette updated the Board on recent activities, which include addressing several calls and emails. The Emergency Action Plan from UP Hydro for the Forest Lake Dam was received. She continues to issue carts to residents who still needed one, but a distribution end date of August 1st has been established. After that date persons will need to contact GFL direct to obtain a cart. She assisted Clerk Johnson in providing information and texts on a FOIA request, secured a new area for the dumpster placement for the Old Plank Road area and asked Attorney Murphy to prepare an agreement.

Blight Complaint responses were sent to John Kroupa via Jill Denman and The Van Stones, via Certified Mail, and neither were delivered after several notification attempts.

*SPECIAL PRESENTATION - None. Melinda Van Stone, who requested to address the Board under Special Presentation was not present and did not respond to a text for confirmation.

*PUBLIC COMMENT - Public Comments were received from Donna Shields, Melinda Savola and Matt Lang.

*COMMITTEE REPORTS

Financial Reports - Clerk Johnson presented monthly financial reports for all funds. All reports were emailed to Board members prior to the meeting for review.

Zoning Administrator/Planning Commission/ZBA - The Zoning Administrators report was provided and Zoning Administrator Kathleen Lindquist was present to answer any questions and provide additional details. Discussion regarding Camp Group complaints and the parking of RV parks on vacant land was made.

The next meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for August 11, 2022.

The Zoning Board of Appeals will hear an Appeal regarding two Administrative Decisions on August 17th at 6:00 pm.

Discussion about expanding the Zoning Board of Appeals to five members and Planning Commission to seven members was made. The Board will consider that option if there are enough interested persons in serving and will place it on the August Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

Assessor/Board of Review - Assessor Fuess report has been received and is on file. Mr. Fuess was present to answer any questions and provide additional details. The July Board of Review meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 19th at 6:00 pm. Assessor Fuess noted that Tom Beauchaine has filed an appeal of his taxable value with the Tax Tribunal and that a new State Law, effective June 1, 2022, provides a change in the procedural filings for PRE Exemptions.

Maintenance Department Report/Comm Bldg./Promotions/Cemetery - Ryan Walther was not able to attend, but provided a quick update prior.

Supervisor Doucette noted that Jim LaChance has indicated he would like to increase the cost for a full burial to \$425.00. This would increase the total cost to \$450.00, including the \$25.00 administration fee.

MOTION by Supervisor Doucette, second by Trustee Miller to increase the cost of a full burial at the Cemetery to \$450.00, with \$425.00 to prepare the grave site and \$25.00 to the Township for Administration Fees, effective July 12, 2022. MOTION CARRIED.

Fire Department/First Responders – The Fire Department report was received and is on file. There were four calls for month. Information was provided about the cost to replace the tires on the brush truck. Two cost estimates were received. MOTION by Supervisor Doucette, second by Treasurer Cota, to authorize the purchase of tires from Christmas Auto for the brush truck at the cost of \$1,337.63. DOUCETTE, YES; COTA, YES; JOHNSON, YES; BALMES, YES; MILLER, YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Information was provided about an upcoming CPR classes on July 20th and August 31st at 6:00 pm if any Board Member would like to attend they should contact Assistant Fire Chief Justen Knuttila. Jon Pacl also indicated that the updated delivery date for the new fire truck is September/October.

County Board of Commissioners Update - County Board Chair Jerry Doucette was present to update the Board on recent activities of the Alger County Board. UPCAP Collaboration was approved. The Animal Shelter Lease was extended one month. There will be a Special Meeting on Tuesday, July 12, at 1:00 pm to gather input on how to spend the Covid Relief Funds received by the County. A total of \$1,700,000 were received, with \$800,000 allocated for loss of income, expenses and supplies. Supervisor Doucette will attend the meeting and request funds on behalf of the Township for our Old Cemetery and the survey costs related to identifying and locating old grave sites.

*OLD BUSINESS

Township Attorney Update - Supervisor Doucette noted that she and Clerk Johnson met with Attorney Stephanie Quinnell to discuss her representation of the Township. Both recommend proceeding with a Contract for Services.

Parcel Division Application Fee - Clerk Johnson noted that current cost of \$50.00 for a Parcel Division/Boundary Adjustment Application is not enough to cover the administrative costs, as all future reviews will need to be handled by the Township Attorney.

MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Supervisor Doucette to increase the Parcel Division Application/Boundary Adjustment Application Fee to \$200.00, effective August 1, 2022, to reflect actual Administrative Costs. JOHNSON, YES; DOUCETTE, YES; MILLER, YES; BALMES, YES; COTA, YES. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Supervisor Doucette, to contract with Attorney Stephanie Quinnell for Township Representation, effective August 1, 2022, and enter into a Contract for Services at a rate of \$200.00 per hour. JOHNSON, YES; DOUCETTE, YES; BALMES, YES; COTA, YES; MILLER, YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Blight Complaints - Supervisor Doucette presented information on the status of Blight Complaints and her review process. Discussed the possibility of a Blight Committee, Township Board initiation without complaint, and review of the Complaint Process. A recent notice sent via Certified Mail was not picked up by the Owner.

Recreation Plan Survey - Discussion regarding the process of the Recreation Plan Survey was made. Supervisor Doucette will prepare a list of questions for consideration at the August Meeting.

SLFRF Funds - Clerk Johnson noted that the second installment of the State and Local Fiscal Relief Funds has been received.

***NEW BUSINESS**

Correspondence - Clerk Johnson presented correspondence from the MBTN which included an invitation to become a Sponsor.

GFL Garbage Carts Update - Supervisor Doucette noted that she has been discussing the garbage tipper cart distribution with GFL. They indicated that they estimated the need for 650 to 700 carts, whereas there have been approximately 900 distributed. They also indicated they may want a contract adjustment to reflect that increase.

State Election Security Grant - Clerk Johnson indicated that the State Election Security Grant is automatically available to Townships in the amount of \$1,500.00. A reimbursement request would need to be submitted to eligible items. MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Treasurer Cota, to authorize the purchase of items reimbursable (laptop, dropbox, security camera) through the State of Michigan Election Security Grant up to \$1,500.00. JOHNSON, YES; COTA, YES; DOUCETTE, YES; BALMES, YES; MILLER, YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Fireworks/Ordinance - Supervisor Doucette noted that she received several complaints regarding fireworks around the 4th of July Holiday. There were large fireworks being set off in residential areas. The State law is very specific about the days they are allowed without permission or permit.

Zoning Ordinance Amendments and Map Adjustments - Discussion and review of the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments and Map Adjustments presented by the Planning Commission and the questions clarified by the Township Attorney, which then brought up additional concerns and questions. In light of that fact, a Special Board Meeting was scheduled for July 18, 2022 at 7:00 pm to continue it's review and possible Board approval.

*PUBLIC COMMENT - Public Comments were received from John Carr, Rick Nebel, and Jerry Doucette.

*ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Supervisor Doucette, to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED. MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:14 pm.

Submitted by: Mary Walther Johnson, Au Train Township Clerk