

DECATUR TOWNSHIP

The regular meeting of the Decatur Township Board was called to order on Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Present: Supervisor Kevin Kusmack, Treasurer Katelin Makay, Clerk Katie Hartwell, and Trustees Matt Kusmack and Tom Stull. There were 13 guests present.

The Public Hearing on the Special Assessment Roll for Lake of the Woods Special Assessment District 14-01 preceded the meeting. No public comments.

Minutes from the July 8, 2021 regular meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve by M. Kusmack, second by Stull. Unanimous vote, motion carried.

Correspondence:

The Clerk received correspondence from the Van Buren County Historical Society that they have invited all elected officials to an ice cream social and tour the museum.

The Clerk reported that a petition was received for an initiation of municipal ordinance to provide for the regulation of and number of marijuana establishments allowed within a municipality. The petition was rejected by Clerk, under the advice of lawyers, because the ordinance attached to the petition offered regulations that could not be placed on a ballot. The Clerk submitted a listing of current bills. Motion to approve by Makay, second by K. Kusmack. Unanimous vote, motion carried.

The Treasurer submitted her July report, 25% of the Summer tax bills have been paid. Motion to accept as presented by Stull, second by Hartwell. Unanimous vote, motion carried.

Reports:

Supervisor – the Board of Review Corrections Meeting was held July 19, 2021 at 7:30am, there were no guests, 37 petitions were amended. The Supervisor attended the County Commissioner's meeting in which they discussed the Solar Farm plan with Southwest Michigan Solar Project. The Board is working with Hamilton Township to create a solar ordinance. The Fire Board will be hosting a fund raising breakfast September 4, 2021. The police department rewarded Scott Duncan for performing life saving measures for person experiencing a drug overdose, who was there to show his gratitude. Road projects continue, we are waiting on seal coating and dust control, but the Road Commission is completing a double seal coat on County Road 352 South.

The Supervisor made a motion to pay \$4093 to the Van Buren County Road Commission to trim the trees on Old Swamp Road to the county line. Second by Makay. Unanimous vote, motion carried.

County Commissioner Don Hanson – they are accepting applications for a Veteran Service Officer to help facilitate the needs for our Veterans. Public transportation is available for Veterans in need of transportation to the V.A. in Battle Creek Tuesdays and Thursdays. The County Commission is exploring the possibility of de-commissioning a power plant to help restore local economies.

Van Buren Sheriff Department – Dispatch report for June presented; the Neighborhood Watch will be at Lawrence Park September 8, 2021 at 7:00pm topic is internet safety.

There were no reports from the Zoning Administrator or Senior Activities.

The Cemetery Co-Sexton reported that there was a traffic accident that took out part of the fence in Lakeside Cemetery. Our insurance will not cover the repair but the drivers insurance will be billed.

There are trees in Lakeside and Harrison that will need to be removed and quotes are being obtained.

The flag pole at Harrison Cemetery needs to be replaced. We currently have an auction bid out for a 30ft pole.

Old Business:

Office Renovations – the board received quotes from Fleetwoods Mechanical Services and Field Plumbing and Heating. Makay made a motion to hire Fleetwoods to install a new Air Conditioning system to the existing furnace and an outdoor condenser for the quoted price of \$4295. Second by Hartwell. Unanimous vote, motion carried.

New Business:

Lake Weed Special Assessment. A motion was made by Makay to approve the Special Assessment for Lake Weed treatment the same as last year. Second by M. Kusmack. Roll call vote, all yes. The Clerk will submit the L-4029 and cover letter as well as the new check list for Truth in Taxation procedures to the County.

Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (CLFRF) – the Board applied for \$192,000 in relief funds from the Federal Government. The funds will be restricted but we will have until 2024 to decide how to utilize the funds.

Personnel Evaluation: Assessor - The Clerk presented complaints on behalf of the board in regards to the Assessor's performance, including lack of communication, 23 parcels that had their taxable value erased, mail not being picked up for months at a time, and complaints from tax payers on response time. The Assessor was present and stated that clerical errors happen and to forward on any taxpayer complaints. No further actions were taken at this time.

Public Comments:

Terry Newell - member of the Board of Review spoke in defense of the Assessor.

Tom Motyka expressed his frustration with the lack of new businesses in the Township and accused the Board of an unwillingness to allow for growth, particularly in regards to marihuana growth.

Mary Miller, Board of Education Member and Treasurer of the Chamber of Commerce spoke about the need for additional funding in our schools and her disappointment that the Board will not consider allowing marihuana growth as a means of increasing funding.

Tara Motyka spoke in support of financing a resource officer at Decatur Public Schools with the potential money from the growth of marihuana. She wants the Board to promote job growth and progress.

Officer Orr from the Sheriff's Department – said that the Village has to fund a resource officer and not the Township. The legalization of marihuana has increased the number of arrests for those driving under the influence of marihuana.

Shalice Northrup – cautioned against getting pushed into making a decision on marihuana and that the additional revenue for the township is restricted on what it can pay for.

Motion to adjourn by Makay, second by M. Kusmack. Unanimous vote, motion carried.

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43p.m.

Katie Hartwell, Township Clerk

