

DECATUR TOWNSHIP

The regular meeting of the Decatur Township Board was called to order on Thursday, March 10, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. Present: Supervisor Kevin Kusmack, Treasurer Katelin Makay and Clerk Katie Hartwell and Trustees Matt Kusmack and Tom Stull. There were 15 guests present.

Correspondence:

IMP Public Hearing via teleconference will be held Wednesday March 23rd at 9:00am.

Village of Decatur has changed that water bill rates and we will see an increase in pricing to cover the cost of maintenance and repairs. This will go into effect April 1, 2022.

Public Comment:

Paul Lamoreaux asked for the townships assistance in getting fiber optic internet on CR 669. County Commissioner Don Hanson explained that the county currently has designated \$7million dollars of its' ARPA money to extend internet throughout the county. This spring they will assess where internet service is the most needed, but they will not know anything until July. Clerk Hartwell said that the Webster Memorial Library has hotspots that can be checked out for two weeks at a time for those who do not currently have internet access.

Mark Visel came seeking a Veteran's exemption for his tax bill. He was invited to the Board of Review meeting and that the drain tax is not a part of the veteran's tax exemption.

Reports:

The Clerk submitted a listing of current bills. Motion to approve by Makay, second by M. Kusmack. Unanimous vote, motion carried.

The Treasurer submitted her monthly report and tax collection has not yet been settled with the county. Motion to accept as presented by K. Kusmack, second by Stull. Unanimous vote, motion carried.

The Supervisor reported that the Organizational Meeting of the Board of Review was held Tuesday, March 8, 2022. Terry Newell was elected chair, and Jackson will be secretary in absences of Secretary K. Kusmack.

Residents on 39th was given until the end of the month to vacate the premises and correct the blight issue. Other blight issues were discussed on 78th and CR 352.

Supervisor Kusmack went on a tour with the Road Commission and reviewed the Burgess Road project and final estimated cost of \$327,860. We will receive and estimate to fix the low-lying area on 96th. Other road projects on Old Swamp Road and 352 were discussed. CR 669 is the next big road project. Alternative ways to invest in roads were discussed, including the potential to borrow money from the state to avoid increasing construction costs.

Quick Response is looking into buying two smaller vehicles.

The Fire Board has approved training and has updated their insurance policy to insure the new fire truck.

There was no report from the Zoning Administrator.

County Commissioner Don Hanson presented his report from the County Commissioners. He began his elected service in 1968, he served as a County Trustee, Hamilton Township Treasurer and County Commissioner. He will not be running for re-election this fall.

Van Buren Sheriff Department – Dispatch report for December was submitted.

The Sextons reported that data entry has been completed and we will begin the mapping procedure soon.

Old Business:

Ordinance 2022-1 allows for Agricultural Districts to be used for solar energy. The Ordinance was approved by the Decatur Township Planning Commission and the Van Buren County Planning Commission. A motion was made to adopt Ordinance 2022-1 made by Hartwell, second by K. Kusmack. Unanimous roll call vote, motion carried.

New Business:

Senior Activities report was provided by Jim Abshagen. Senior Services is entering a new phase of growth and now has sites in South Haven, Paw Paw, and 5 remote sites throughout Van Buren County. They help to provide rides for seniors going to medical appointments, handicap ramps to make homes accessible, commodities, and food trucks from Feeding America. They have built the new facility in South Haven through private donations and will continue to keep it self-sufficient by renting out space for a pharmacy, spa, and special events. They hope to build another new facility in Paw Paw that will also be built without taxpayer dollars. This year 142 Decatur seniors were serviced, and 173 utilized in home care, and a total of 3,212 senior citizens from Decatur were served. Previously Senior Services had 2 millages that were .25 each. Senior Services asked the Townships' support in placing 1 millage on the ballot in August. Motion to approve by M. Kusmack, second by Stull. Roll call unanimous vote, motion carried.

Re-Zoning Request 76867 39th Street from Agricultural to Light Industrial. The Township Planning Commission denied the application. The Van Buren County Planning Commission suggested a conditional zoning of the property. The property was formerly owned by MPI and they constructed commercial buildings despite it being zoned as agricultural land, according to Tom Motycka, property owner. The board expressed concern about spot zoning. After a brief discussion a motion was made to deny the rezoning request, second by K. Kusmack. Roll Call vote: Stull, Makay, Hartwell, and K. Kusmack yes; M. Kusmack no. Motion carried.

The Township does not have a policy in regard to how it will invest its money. The Treasurer submitted a policy that created guidelines for the types of investments the Township can utilize, including bonds, securities, mutual funds etc. with limitations to protect the Township's interest. A motion to adopt the Investment Policy and add it to the Policy and Procedures book was made by Makay, second by K. Kusmack. Unanimous vote, motion carried.

Resolution #2022-5 – Investment Locations clarified the institutions with which the Township will invest. The financial institutions the Township would use are First State Bank of Decatur, Honor Credit Union, and Michigan CLASS. A motion to approve by K. Kusmack, second by M. Kusmack. Unanimous vote, motion carried.

Public Comment:

Paul Lamoureux expressed concern that the new construction on his property was not represented on his taxes. He does not want to incur back taxes. The Township has not received new building permits for 2021. Supervisor Kusmack will follow-up.

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

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:26pm.

Katie Hartwell, Township Clerk