

# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING MINUTES

IN PERSON MEETING                      December 19, 2024

Held at Washington Township Hall, 8989 S. Baldwin Rd. Ashley, MI 48806

- I. Meeting called to order by Supervisor Whaley at 7:00pm, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll call- Present: Howard Whaley, Barbara Hoffer, Kevin Whaley, Nancy Rogers, Eric Whitford.
- II. Motion to approve minutes from November 21<sup>st</sup> by Kevin, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Nancy, all in favor, motion carried. Motion to approve Special Meeting Minutes from December 4<sup>th</sup> by Kevin, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Howard, all in favor, motion carried.
- III. Motion to approve Agenda by Eric, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kevin, all in favor, motion carried.
- IV. Motion to approve financial reports (contingent on Clerk/Treasurer balancing) by Nancy, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Eric, roll call votes, yeas- Eric, Nancy, Howard, Barb, Kevin, nays- none, motion carried.
- V. Open Issues/Visitors: Theresa Hannath/DTE and her husband Jason, & County Commissioner Steve Sopocy were in attendance.
  - a) Solar update – Theresa provided handouts for discussion re: PILT vs Ad Valorum property tax
    - 1) Bulletin 17 of 2023 Solar Energy Facilities Tax
    - 2) What is SEFT/PILTA public hearing will be needed to include all entities affected by the choice to use a PILT or Ad Valorum taxes. PILT applications are due in February but doesn't lock us into that choice. \*Theresa will file the PILT application. The decision doesn't have to be made yet. Steve Sopocy suggested a 1x up front payment so the township can invest & collect interest as a possible option. PILT is for 20 yrs and at year 21 reverts to Ad Valorum at the depreciated value. \*A DTE representative will attend our January meeting with actual numbers. Eric asked for the Decommissioning Bond to be redone based on the dirt removal as required by the Drain Commission. \*Theresa checking on it. John Chvojka asked about the possible use of sheep within the solar farm to maintain vegetation growth. It would be a landowner/DTE agreement. Howard asked about rumors of landowner tax increases due to industrial solar. Theresa said DTE is covering the increase but details are still being worked out for future. Motion by Nancy to allow DTE to file the PILT application (but doesn't lock us into the tax decision), 2<sup>nd</sup> by Eric, Roll call vote: yeas – Eric, Nancy, Barb, Kevin, Howard, motion carried.
  - b) ARPA update – Kevin provided a letter from MTA explaining that the SLFRF report isn't due until April but our internal documentation on the obligation must be in place by the end of December.
  - c) Sale Lot on 127 – Howard reported that the Zoning Application Fees have been paid, barrier across driveway w/sign "closed for rezoning" is up, next step is Planning Commission.
  - d) Grants update – Nancy reported that the Energy Efficiency Grant approved replacing the 2 microwaves, not the dishwasher & if range hoods are required they will be covered. \*She will purchase microwaves. The Blight Grant was submitted but denied. The final Greater Gratiot Foundation Grant monies have been submitted and spent accordingly.

- e) Microsoft 365 / Website update – Barb reported that she has signed up for the Microsoft 365 gov 30 day trial so it is linked and ready with our DNS provider for our <position>@WashingtonTwpGraton.Gov emails when the website goes live (hopefully by the end of 2024) She demonstrated the ADA compliant website and all of it’s pages.
- f) BS&A GL#’s & Budget – Pam (Deputy Clerk) reported that there are still a few issues we are trying to get straightened out.
- g) Addition Construction update – Nancy reported that the drywall came in \$800 more than expected. Cabinet cost was \$392 less than expected. We were credited for the cement work that will not be completed until spring. The old furnace was purchased for \$100 by Annette Bontrager. Sherwin Williams “White Flower” paint was chosen for the office walls. The ceiling and trim will be a true white.
- h) Wind Turbine Sound Study – Howard reported that he has talked to Frank about a more in depth study needed.
- i) Pledge collections need to be completed

VI. Public Comment for old business/open issues: none

VII. New Business:


- a) BOR update – the BOR met on December 12<sup>th</sup> for clerical errors only.
- b) Office Furniture needed – looking into used furniture from CMU or MSU.
- c) Clerk vacancy – A couple of people we asked are thinking about it. Continue to actively seek candidates!
- d) Ribbon Cutting Ceremony – Howard suggested an open house on April 5<sup>th</sup> from 10am-2pm, to be discussed as it gets closer. Theresa said DTE would sponsor the refreshments.
- e) Invenergy Fund – We want to close the account. Can we absorb it into the General Fund or do we need to return it to Invenergy? We need confirmation from Invenergy.
- f) MTA Training – We purchased the MTA Premium Pass Subscription which includes the cost of webinar training & TGA (Township Governance Academy). All staff are encouraged to take training for their respective positions. Please sign up soon.

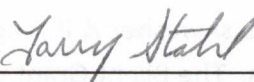
VIII. Letters/Correspondence:

- a) Letter received from Doreen Summer not accepting the clerk appointment following her being elected.
- b) FOIA request received from Allium Data re: Twp. Property & Casualty Insurance.
- a) Additional Public Comment: none

IX. Motion to adjourn by Howard, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kevin, all in favor. Adjourned at 9:10pm

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Hoffer, Township Clerk

Approved:  16 JAN 25  
Washington Township Supervisor / Date

 16 Jan 25  
Washington Township Clerk / Date