



**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**July 19, 2022**  
**6:00 P.M.**

- **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 6:00pm by Supervisor Hutchings.
- **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- **Roll Call**  
The following Board Members were present: Treasurer Genung, Clerk Louis, Supervisor Hutchings and Trustees Sulka, Langshaw, Bekes and Harmon. No members absent. Also present was Attorney Thall via Zoom link. In person was Chief of Police Rugg, acting Deputy Clerk Snow and Planning Consultant Harvey.
- **Approval of Agenda:** Clerk Louis moved to amend Consent Agenda to include June 20<sup>th</sup> and June 21<sup>st</sup> 2022 Minutes and financial report that were previously distributed to the Board members. Trustee Bekes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Consent Agenda**
  - A. Draft Board Minutes**
  - B. Treasurer's Report**
  - C. Clerk's Report**
  - D. Ross Township Policing Stats**
  - E. Ross-Augusta Fire Department Update**
  - F. AGS MTD Invoice and Enforcement Service Updates**
- **Rebecca Harvey, Planner; Q&A on Master Plan Revisions:**  
Attorney Thall stated the future utility and scale of Solar Power as a concern to the Township Board and future of the Township. Nearby Townships are actively having thousands of acres dedicated to Commercial Solar Power. It was the Board's request to protect the Township's rural land by adding additional verbiage to the Master Plan as well as the addition of an Ordinance regarding Solar use and land use. He stated that

upon his arrival to the June 27, 2022 Planning Commission meeting the PC had already made changes to phrasing in the Master Plan *with Seth, his Law Partner and the topic was not discussed further as the Planning Commission was on to other topics. and had shut down Attorney Thall's conversation and suggested revisions.* Trustee Harmon said she was disappointed that the Planning Commission had not made the suggested changes and that it appears that in layman's terms that Ross wants to encourage Solar Industry rather than protect the rural areas and farm land. Harvey stated that the Planning Commission had replaced "industrial" to "designated areas" and that laid the foundation for zoning/ordinances. She also noted that they felt this change made a stronger impression.

Trustee Sulka moved that the Board direct Attorney Thall to assist the Planning with changing verbiage in the Draft Master Plan during the next Planning Commission meeting on July 25, 2022. Specifically, to remove "small and large solar farms" on Page VI-16 and to replace the word "designated" with "industrial" as well as ~~redact~~ *ignore all references Community Survey feedback by striking all references to the Community Survey from the entire Master Plan document. to the community survey completed in 2018 from the entire Master Plan document.* Along with required changes to the Master Plan verbiage, a supporting Ordinance regarding Residential and Industrial Solar Power shall be created by the Planning Commission and brought forth to the Township Board within sixty days of July 25, 2022. Trustee Harmon seconded. Roll call vote was held and the following members voted Aye: Genung, Harmon, Hutchings, Langshaw, Louis and Sulka. The following members voted nay: Bekes. Motion carried 6 to 1. *Trustee Sulka shared with the Board that everyone he talked to does not want solar farms. Trustee Bekes asked Trustee Sulka how many people he talked with to compare that number against the 59% approval rate on approximately 800 returned surveys and Trustee Sulka refused to give an answer.*

The Board agreed to schedule a special meeting on July 26, 2022 at 5:30pm to review and approve the Draft Master Plan with required changes. PC Harvey documented the changes for review with the Planning Commission.

- **Citizen Comment**

The floor was opened to public comment by Supervisor Hutchings at 7:13pm David Scott of Gull Lake spoke of the need for police and marine patrol by someone who has authority and the need for consequences for breaking the law.

Chief Rugg stated that the DNR is enforcing Marine Patrol at this time and Ross Township will once cleared by MCOLES. All calls should go through dispatch 911.

7:19pm Public Comment closed by Supervisor Hutchings.

- **Ross Augusta Fire Chief/LifeCare Comments**

Fire Chief Bogema updated the Board on his meeting with Insurance Service Organization and the outcome of their inspection was expected due to most of the Township not having city water access. The Department's Air Packs were all inspected and hoses were tested. He expects possible repairs need to be done on the 2200 Kenworth. The 4<sup>th</sup> Rose Run was held and the Department assisted as well as participated in the Parade. Ross also assisted with the Fireworks that evening and took

one call for Richland that was related to fireworks. The Department had 41 calls in June and a total of 196 calls from January through June 2022. 3 of the calls last month were assisting the VA, Comstock at Cooper's Landing, the State Park and Galesburg at the Greater Galesburg Day in June. Currently the Township has one siren down and maybe ARPA funds could be used to fix it. He is currently not pursuing maintenance at this time as the County of Kalamazoo is moving away from emergency sirens due to cell phone use. The new well may be started the end of September after the ARPA meeting. The department was currently working on a road cleanup project that evening.

- **Planning Commission Update**

Trustee Bekes provided the Board with PC's meeting minutes ahead of today's meeting.

- **Supervisor Update**

No Parking Ordinance in South Bay area was reviewed and walked with KCRC's Mark Worden and Johanna Johnson. KCRC removed no parking signs because MSP didn't issue the signs. Parking can be monitored as traffic control ordinance if vehicles are parked inside the driving lane.

Attorney Thall stated the Board would need to adopt a no parking ordinance and Kalamazoo County would need to post it. Ross would pay for the signs and the fines from the violations written would be payable to the Township directly. He further explained that as we do not have an ordinance in place the Chief of Police would make a recommendation on an Area for zoning/enforcement.

Supervisor Hutchings continued on to the re-written estimates from InfoSafe for records retention. Clerk Louis moved to accept the estimate and allow the records to be transferred to Info Safe's archive warehouse. Trustee Bekes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Marijuana Care Giver: no new news still with the PC for ordinance work.

Easement Request: Prein and Newhoff performed a search of Title work and the GAP Property was a Road and an Alley which were abandoned which in turn under current Statute, the abandoned property becomes the Township's property. It was also noted that the current landowners adjacent to the property all have deeded rights in the right of way of this Gap property. A detailed report was provided to the Board as part of the packet and agenda. Supervisor Hutchings stated that she would share the results with the homeowners and The Bluffs.

- **Clerk Update**

Brief on vandalism that was discovered on 7/17/22 at the Foyer of the Township Hall.

- **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **No Parking Ordinance in South Bay**-Supervisor's Report.
2. **Marijuana Caregiver Business in Res. Zoning**-Supervisor's Report.
3. **The Bluffs-Indemnification Agreement and Escrow Update**-Supervisor's Report.

- **NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Ross Twp. Master Plan**-addressed at the beginning of the meeting. Special Board Meeting is scheduled to review changes and approve Master Plan on July 26 2022 5:30pm.

**2. New vacancy in Planning Commission:**

Chairman Lauderdale submitted his retirement letter. Effective end of his Term. Supervisor Hutchings is working a way to show appreciation to Chairman Lauderdale for his years of commitment.

● **Trustee Updates-**

Chief Rugg updated the Board on the purchase of Camaras and Equipment for Body and Vehicle and the estimated expense of \$20,000.00 to cover the equipment and firearms needed. Trustee Harmon moved to approve \$20,000.00 from ARPA Funds to be allocated by Chief Rugg for the purchase of equipment and firearms needed. Trustee Sulka seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Trustee Bekes confirmed the date and time of the Board's Special Meeting on the Master Plan.

Trustee Langshaw discussed a blight ordinance and nuisance order.

● **Adjournment**

Clerk Louis moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:21pm. Trustee Sulka seconded. Approved unanimously meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carin Louis  
Township Clerk