



Posted: 6/14/23
3:45pm
Christina

12086 M-89
Richland, MI 49083
269-731-4888

ROSS TOWNSHIP BOARD - MEETING AGENDA
Tuesday, June 20, 2023 – 6:00 P.M. Ross Township Hall
12086 M 89 Richland, MI 49083

- Call to Order
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Attendance
- Approval of Agenda
- Consent Agenda:

{MOTION}

{MOTION}

All items under this section are routine and will be enacted by one motion with no discussion. If discussion is desired by a Board member, that member may request removal of an item from the Consent Agenda for discussion and independent approvals.

- a. DRAFT MINUTES: May 16, May 23, May 31
- b. Treasurer's Report
- c. Clerk's Report
- d. Ross Twp. 911 Stats
- e. R-A FD Stats
- f. AGS M-T-D Invoice & Permit / Enforcement Services
- g. Citizen written communications / FOIAs

- **CITIZEN COMMENT:**

Please state and spell your name for the record and limit your comments to 3 minutes. Please be advised Citizen Comment is designed for one-way commentary to address the Township Board. A response to comments should not be expected. If citizens are requesting a response, please contact Ross Township during business hours for further assistance or information.

- **VARIOUS COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- **NEW BUSINESS:**

- "Hindering & Opposing Ordinance"; "Ethics Ordinance" {MOTION/ROLL CALL}
- Clerk, Deputy Clerk: MSP Update, work from home, Deputy Clerk posting {MOTION/ROLL CALL}
- BASIC Payroll: Update, Direct Deposit, Pay Dates; Fire Dept. {MOTION}
- Job Posting: Grant Writer {MOTION/ROLL CALL}
- Ballot Drop Box (ARPA or State reimbursement?) {MOTION/ROLL CALL}
- Parking Lot repairs / striping for Township & Park (ARPA) {MOTION/ROLL CALL}
- Ventilation/air conditioner for Fire Department Training Room (ARPA) {MOTION/ROLL CALL}

- **OLD BUSINESS:**

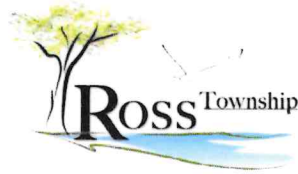
- Porta Potties in South Bay – ARPA eligibility (update)
- Technology for Conference Room (ARPA: ambo, projection screen) {MOTION/ROLL CALL}
- ARPA: Supplies for Ross Twp. Police Department; Fire Department; funding considerations for 2023-2024 {MOTION/ROLL CALL}
- View Shed Ordinance – *postponed*

- **SECOND CITIZEN COMMENT:** Limit your comments to the Ross Township Board to 1 minute please.

TRUSTEE UPDATES

ADJOURNMENT

{MOTION}



**Board Meeting
ROSS TOWNSHIP
KALAMAZOO COUNTY, MICHIGAN
June 20, 2023 @ 6:00pm**

Attendee Name	Title	Roll Call Status
Christina Hutchings	Supervisor	Present
Alexander Harris	Clerk	Present
Syndee Genung	Treasurer	Present
Diana Langshaw	Trustee	Present
Michael Bekes	Trustee	Absent
Lynn Harmon	Trustee	Present
Mike Sulka	Trustee	Present
Rob Thall	Attorney	Present

Attendance were about 20 interested people.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Agenda

Motion: to Amend the Agenda to add to Old Business: Closed Door Session at the end of this meeting to review the May 16th, May 23rd, May 31st Closed door minutes.

Moved By: Supervisor Hutchings Seconded by: Trustee Sulka

Vote: Ayes 5, Nay 1

Result: Carried

Motion: Approve the Agenda

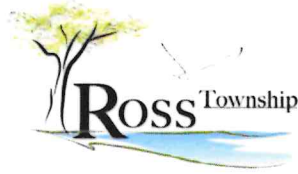
Moved By: Trustee Harmon Seconded by: Trustee Langshaw

Consent Agenda

Motion: Approve the consent agenda and pull out the May 16th minutes, minus the May 31st Minutes, minus the Clerk Report's.

Moved By: Trustee Harmon Seconded By: Treasurer Genung

Vote: Unanimous all Ayes Result: Carried



The Clerk Reports okayed

The Blue Cross Blue Shield(BCBS) \$3,000 credit from the Treasurer.

The BCBS Health Savings account for the Supervisor.

The incorrect billing from Wayland Police department \$4,210 should have been \$421.

Kalamazoo County Road Commission \$4,832.68 is billed as you go through the season.

Attorney Thall \$17,000 bill was asked for a definite cost to Clerk investigation, ~\$2,700

Motion: Amend the May 31st minutes with corrections for Trustee Sulka - grant writer.

Moved By: Trustee Sulka Seconded By: Trustee Langshaw

Vote: Unanimous all Ayes

Result: Carried

Motion: Amend the May 16th minutes with corrections for Supervisor Hutchings – MCOLES standards.

Moved by Lynn Harmon Seconded By: Treasurer Genung

Vote: Unanimous All Ayes

Result: Carried

Public Comment

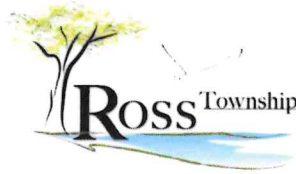
*Public Comment was heard 6:47pm.

Joanna Johnson – Road Commission Kalamazoo County – The public are our eyes on the roads. We track performance requests. Please call to correct errors and or thank you's. Annual Report available on the website. Sign up for RCKC Connect for email updates. Survey Safe street and roads.

Connie Lavender – *Praise of hardwork of Planning Commission.* Against development of high rise around the lake and would like to keep the rural character. ~~Oppose the Clerk the right to record.~~ *Concerned the Clerk may have ease drop recording.*

Tim Walters – Based on what's been made available – the lack of knowledge and abilities, you should reduce the Clerk's pay and he can decide if he wants to continue.

Gary Moore – Attorney Thall they asked you to investigate, for you not to know what you billed for that, ingenuine at best. That number you ought to be able to pull right now.



Dan Margules – I can feel the hostility, I think Clerk Harris has had this hostility, with the Police Officer confronting Alex within minutes of his swearing in. Still continues. Allowing a hostile work environment Attorney Thall. The Bogus worked up accusations have been dismissed by the County Prosecutor. 2024 is just around the corner. I feel ashamed for all of you.

Mary Carol Wilkins – As the Office manager/Deputy Supervisor – Oppose the Clerk coming in early to work. Has a file against the clerk, as he likes to be defiant on anything he does, he did this as Deputy Clerk as well, I could release this on social media. People are bashing the Township.

7:12pm Public Comment Closed

Various Committee Reports

Fire Chief Doug Bogema – Hose testing, Pump Testing, Air Pack testing, Getting the New Grass Truck in service, Physical's done, Ordered AED's, Participated Memorial Day Parade in Hickory Corners, Will Participate in the Rose Run on the 4th. Recommend using extreme Caution Fireworks, the Dry weather make sure and have a water source nearby.

Police Chief Martin Brown – Lake Patrols with the NO Wake Zone in the Sounth Bay, Noise Problem on the Sand Bar, have had to get out of the boat a few times and walk in the water to ask boats to turn it down. Not only are residents not happy with the noise but many other boats relaxing on the sand bar. DNR will be out this weekend. Be Safe out there.

New Business

Hindering & Opposing Ordinance

Motion: To approve The Police Chief request for Hindering and Opposing Ordinance.

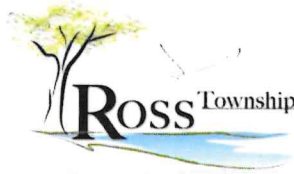
Moved by: Trustee Sulka Seconded by: Treasurer Genung

Roll Call: Langshaw Aye, Genung Aye, Hutchings Aye, Harmon Aye, Harris Aye, Sulka Aye.

Result: Carried

Ethics Ordinance

The Township Board decided to table the Ethics Ordinance due to the need to revise parts like have a 3rd party Law Firm investigate rather than the Township Board and to make the wording in a simpler format.



Michigan State Police

6/7/2023 D/Sgt Peters:

I received notification from the prosecutor's office this morning that they have declined any criminal charges in this incident. Citing: *"No reasonable likelihood of conviction. Unable to establish beyond a reasonable doubt that defendant had criminal intent to permanently deprive the township when he underpaid healthcare premium. It appears from the reports, def has made township whole for his error."* ~~The Township Board had told Clerk Harris he is entitled to be reimbursed for Attorney fee's in regard to this matter.~~ The MSP were also given the other 3 allegations, and D/Sgt Peters did not write up a report for those matters. So the Township Supervisor reported Deputy Matheison to Medicaid for review.

Payroll Reassignment

Motion: To reassign Payroll from the Supervisor to the Clerk, retroactive January 2023.

Moved By: Supervisor Hutchings Seconded by: Trustee Harmon

Vote: Ayes 5, Nay 1

Result: Carried

Deputy Clerk Job Posting

Motion: To lower the Deputy Clerk posting 30 hours per week to 8 hours per week, but within 9 days before an election 30 hours and 9 days after an election 30 hours.

Moved By: Trustee Langshaw Seconded by: Trustee Harmon

Vote: Ayes 5, Nay 1

Result: Carried

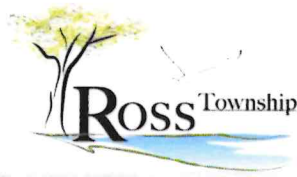
Audio & Video Office

Motion: Behind the office door, No audio or video recording. ~~Waive the right for "one party consent" law.~~

Moved By: Treasurer Genung Seconded: Supervisor Hutchings

Vote: Ayes - Langshaw, Genung, Hutchings, Harmon, Sulka. Nay – Harris

Result: Carried



Clerk Harris Proposal to De-escalate Office Hostility

Motion: Not to modify current work environment and maintain office protocol.

Moved By: Trustee Harmon Seconded by: Treasurer Genung

Vote: Aye 5, Nay 1

Result: Carried.

~~Trustee Langshaw Proposal to Restrict~~ Reinforced/Suggested Policy Office Protocol Building Access

(Excluding Elections and Tax Collecting requirements as stated by State law.)

The Board Makes the following policies for Ross Township Elected board members, deputies, Clerical Staff and any other Appointed or Volunteer board or committee member.

These policies can be added to at any time and additions or deletions will be recorded in succeeding minutes.

Office Hours 9:00 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday Closed Friday and Saturday.

NO ONE is allowed in the building between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Exception – election nights, and emergencies. (Same rules apply as listed below regarding number of individuals and who is allowed to be in the office.)

The office shall NOT open for business until at least 2 of the board members (Supervisor, treasurer, Clerk) or staff are present.

There are no individuals allowed in the building with elected officials, staff person, committee member, etc. alone, except another elected official, staff person, deputy, police officer or township attorney. This includes the detailed list in the Ethics Ordinance. Relatives, private citizens.....

No official documents (original copy) or township owned equipment can be taken out of the Township Hall. Exception election equipment for an election and election related items going to the county clerk's office AGS materials and Planning Consultant work.

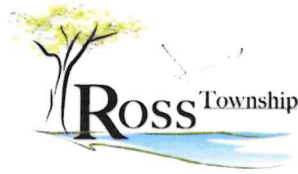
The Township's Legal council (attorney) shall have a copy of the official/approved minutes from all meetings and closed sessions.

When volunteers come to the office to help with stuffing envelopes, applying postage, etc the work area will be in the general meeting room. Exception: individual(s) helping with various jobs such as accounting.

The only animals allowed in the facility are Seeing Eye Dogs. No pets or companion animals.

Motion: To accept the proposed building restrictions. Exempting Elections and Taxes per state law.

Moved by: Trustee Langshaw **Seconded:** Trustee Harmon



Vote: Unanimous all Ayes

Result: Carried

Mandatory Direct Deposit

Motion: To require all employee's of Ross Township to Mandatorily sign up for Direct Deposit.

Moved by: Supervisor Hutchings Seconded by: Trustee Langshaw

Vote: Aye 5, Nay 1

Result: Carried

Ross Township Police ARPA Equipment

Motion: To approve the use of ARPA funds to purchase a Radar Unit, Breath Test, Orange Tazers.

Moved by: Trustee Harmon Seconded by: Trustee Sulka

Roll Call: Langshaw Aye, Genung Aye, Hutchings Aye, Harmon Aye, Harris Aye, Sulka Aye.

Result: Carried

Drop Box

The Township Board has discussed the need for two new drop boxes, with better security, the goal would be to renovate the building entryway to keep both inside. To separate Elections and Taxes.

Public Comment

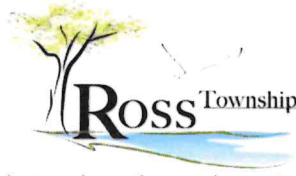
***Citizen comment was heard at 9:10pm**

Mary Jane Dumont – The Police Chief should have a bullet proof vest.

Tim Walters – Strive for transparency – balance the rules of the law – volunteer position ombudsman or create citizen advisory committee.

Doug Bogema – Fire Staff have gone from being paid 2 times per year, now they are paid quarterly, If we have to do it per month, that won't work. So this should go through the fireboard to make a decision.

Mary Stage – We misheard Trustee Langshaw the public in the back may have misheard you and I thought you may want to make a correction? It sounded as though you said it is a hostile work environment.



Dan Margules – Trustee Langshaw did admit a hostile work environment. Despite everyone denying Alex plea for a safe work place. His biggest sin is that he won the election for Clerk. You haven't wanted him from Day 1. Respecting the will of the people. Can we Commit to working together.

Mary Carol Wilkins – Now we hope the office will be intact tomorrow morning. Talk about transparency, he is not transparent. The first day, the Supervisor and I were dealing with a Vietnam Veteran who's taxes were incorrect. The man became upset and Alex had no business interacting. Alex had his entire family there, we got off on the wrong foot.

Closed Door Session

Motion: To go into closed door session, for Attorney Client Privilege to discuss minutes from Closed door sessions.

Moved by: Trustee Harmon Seconded by: Trustee Sulka

Vote: All ayes

Result: Carried

Opened back into Open Session

Motion: To accept May 16th, 23rd and 31st closed door Board Meeting Minutes.

Moved By: Trustee Harmon Seconded by: Trustee Sulka

Vote: Aye 5, Nay 1

Result: Carried

Adjournment

Moved by: Trustee Sulka Seconded by: Supervisor Hutchings

Vote: Unanimous All Ayes

Adjourned: 10:10pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Clerk, Alexander D Harris