

**Ross Township  
12086 M-89  
Richland, MI 49083  
269-731-4888**

**Regular Board Meeting  
April 19, 2022  
6:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Supervisor Hutchings.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Christina Hutchings Michael Bekes Syndee Genung  
Lynn Harmon Diana Langshaw Mike Sulka  
Carin Louis  
Absent: None  
Also Present: Attorney Rob Thall, 10-15 interested residents.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Trustee Langshaw moved to approve Agenda. Treasurer Genung seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Trustee Bekes moved to approve Consent Agenda without March 15, 2022 Draft Minutes. Treasurer Genung seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Trustee Sulka noted correction to March 15, 2022 Draft Minutes Page 2 : correcting total Law Enforcement Budget to \$100,000.00. Trustee Langshaw moved to approve March 15, 2022 Draft Minutes as amended. Trustee Sulka seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**CITIZEN COMMENT**

Supervisor Hutchings opened the floor to Public Comment at 6:06pm.

The following citizens spoke:

Phoebe Moreo of Gull Lake, Mike Boehme of Ross Township, Karen Levene of Gull Lake, Kim Sikkema of Ross Township and Dale Pominville of Ross Township.

Supervisor Hutchings closed Public Comment at 6:15pm.

### **FIRE CHIEF & LIFECARE UPDATES**

Fire Chief Bogema had the new extrication tools on display outside the Board Room. He explained that the new cordless, battery-operated tools will enable First Responders to work wirelessly (not connected to Fire Trucks) on scene. He also explained that there are a couple additional tools that are needed to complete the tool set but, they have a good start on the upgrade. All trucks are stocked with extrication tools at this time. The Ross Township Fire Board has a meeting on 4/21/22 and he expected to gain authorization to purchase a new Fire Truck. He observed the cost of a similar truck increase \$40,000.00 in the last 2 weeks. Due to the rate of inflation, he stated that this authorization to purchase is urgent. Chief is seeking to replace the current Water Tanker. The new truck will have an onboard pump and a safer tank set up. He stated that the Department may need to have a 6-month lease agreement. Lastly, ISO Insurance fire rating/inspections are scheduled for the Township and he explained that he didn't expect a drop in ratings as fire hydrants are not common in the rural areas.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATE**

Trustee Bekes confirmed the Board's receipt of the PC's most recent Draft Minutes. He explained PC granting a special land use permit for an out building. Draft Master Plan is pending Board approval at this time.

### **SUPERVISOR UPDATE**

Supervisor Hutchings explained that since she was appointed, she has made a priority of confirming current vendor contracts. It was recently realized that the Sherman Lake Weed Assessment Vendor Contracts were not executed by the previous Supervisor. Attorney Thall asked Board Members if they had copies of both agreements for review, all members responded yes. Supervisor Hutchings, is a part of the Special Assessment District she cannot sign these contracts and suggested that the Clerk receive Board authorization to execute the previously approved contracts. Trustee Harmon moved to authorize Clerk Louis to execute contracts with Restorative Lake Sciences and Lake Savers LLC retroactive to 2020 when the board approved the SAD vendors and budget. Trustee Sulka seconded. Motion carried Unanimously.

Supervisor Hutchings presented a brief history of the Ross Township Law Enforcement and proposed Mutual Aid contracts. Her presentation of the proposed Law Enforcement and Mutual Aid program was provided to the Board in their meeting packets as well as a Draft Job Posting and Description for the position of Ross Township Chief of Police. A police vehicle was on site as well for inspection.

### **CLERK UPDATE**

Clerk Louis introduced newly appointed Deputy Clerk, Sheridan Leatherman to the Board. Clerk Louis supplied a timeline to the Board regarding potential security concern posed by a Resident. She confirmed that she is under the approved \$6,000.00 budget for Interim Deputy Clerk Tim Snow. She will provide the Board with a new Chart of Accounts and vendor list for the 2022-2023 Budget year and any final budget adjustments for 2021-2022 Budget's year end at the May Board Meeting. Clerk Louis was granted a full Scholarship by the local chapter of the Michigan Township Association to attend the annual MTA Conference in Lansing this year. She is planning on the Public Accuracy Test being held on Thursday April 21<sup>st</sup> at 9am. Trustee Bekes asked Clerk Louis how things were going in relation to the upcoming May Elections. She stated there were no concerns, everything was going smoothly, one

previous test was completed with no issues and Ross Township was currently at approximately 60% return on Absentee Ballots.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Short Term Rental Ordinance-Passed in Senate.
2. No Parking Ordinance in South Bay-Pending.
3. Marijuana Caregiver Business in Residential Zoning-PC and Attorney Thall are working on updated language. Attorney Thall said that local ordinances can possibly limit and regulate registered caregivers through special land use permits. He will keep the Board posted on progression of the legislation.
4. Notice of Referendum-Discussion held regarding eligibility to become a Charter Township. Attorney Thall advised the Board that they have 3 options. Firstly, the Board adopts a Resolution to become a Charter Township or places on the Ballot for a citizen vote. Secondly, the Board can move remove it from the agenda and the subject can be re-visited at any time in the next ten years. Lastly, the Board can adopt a resolution to not become a Charter Township, which would disallow the Board from revisiting the topic until the next Census/qualification letter ten years from now. He explained that becoming a Charter Township provides protection from Annexation by a neighboring City or Village. The ability for the Board to levy up to a 5 Mills without the increase being on the ballot and any increase of 5-10 Mills must be placed on a ballot. He noted it is not uncommon for Charter Townships to place the later increase on the Ballot. Charter Townships require a Board to have 7 members and it allows the Supervisor more authority. Attorney Thall recommended that an information Campaign to the citizens take place prior to any Board action on the matter. Clerk Louis moved to remove Notice of Referendum from future Agendas and send out information to residents in writing form this Spring. Seconded by Trustee Harmon. Motion carried unanimously.
5. Siegfried Crandall PC-Township Audit scheduled May 16-18, 2022.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Ross Township Law Enforcement/Mutual Aid.  
Supervisor Hutchings led a discussion regarding what expenses can be covered with ARPA funds versus variable expenses from the Law Enforcement Budget. Trustee Harmon presented the Proposed Cost Matrix. The Board held a discussion regarding expenses and long-term funding for the department. Trustee Harmon moved to post Ross Township Police Chief Job opening for a two-week period, interviews to commence once applicants are received. Interviews will be conducted as a Public Meeting with a Board Quorum. Clerk Louis seconded. Motion carried Unanimously. Trustee Harmon moved to use ARPA Funds to purchase Police Vehicle in the amount of \$12,000.00,

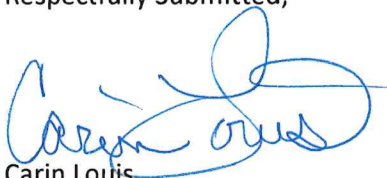
purchase equipment for the vehicle estimated at \$5,000.00 and to insure vehicle. Clerk Louis seconded. A Roll Call Vote was held. The following members voted Aye: Bekes, Genung, Harmon Hutchings Langshaw, Louis and Sulka. No Nay votes. Motion carried unanimously .

2. Ross Township Master Plan. Trustee Harmon moved to table discussion of Master Plan until May's meeting to allow for better preparation. Treasurer Genung seconded. A Roll Call Vote was held. The following members voted Aye: Sulka, Louis, Hutchings, Harmon Genung. The following members voted Nay: Langshaw and Bekes. Motion carried on a Roll Call 5 ayes to 2 Nays.
3. The Bluffs-Easement Request. The Board reviewed maps of The Bluff's easement request that routes foot traffic from the Gull Ridge Apartment site through a "alley" that connects to E D Ave. Trustee Harmon moved to not grant The Bluff's easement request at this time. Seconded by Trustee Langshaw. A Roll Call Vote was held. The following members voted Aye: Bekes, Sulka, Harmon, Genung, Louis, Langshaw and Hutchings. No Nay Votes. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **MEMBERS TIME**

Trustee Sulka moved to Adjourn meeting. Treasurer Genung seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned 8:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carin Louis  
Township Clerk