

**Ross Township Regular Board Meeting
Draft Minutes
ROSS TOWNSHIP
KALAMAZOO COUNTY, MICHIGAN
Tuesday October 15, 2024**

Attendee Name	Title	Roll Call Status
Christina Hutchings	Supervisor	Present
Mary Stage	Clerk	Present
Amanda Wiersma	Treasurer	Present
Diana Langshaw	Trustee	Present
Michael Bekes	Trustee	Present
Lynn Harmon	Trustee	Present
Mike Sulka	Trustee	Absent with Cause
Rob Thall	Attorney	Present

Also present were many residents.

Call to Order:

Supervisor Hutchings called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm with all rising for the Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.

Trustee Langshaw motioned to accept the Agenda, Clerk Stage asked to add review of an updated amendment to Ross's contract with TDS, to be placed in Committee Reports.

Approval of Agenda

Motion
Trustee Langshaw moved to accept the agenda with changes, supported by Trustee Bekes the motion passed unanimously.

Mover	Trustee Langshaw
Second	Trustee Bekes
Result	Resolution Adopted: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 1 Absent

Name	Vote	Name	Vote
Supervisor Hutchings	Aye	Trustee Bekes	Aye
Clerk Stage	Aye	Trustee Harmon	Aye
Treasurer Wiersma	Aye	Trustee Langshaw	Aye
		Trustee Sulka	Absent

Approval of Consent Agenda

Trustee Bekes motioned to approve the consent agenda, Clerk Stage asked to have the draft minutes pulled to explain changes made to the minutes. Clerk Stage explained changes made to the minutes concerning the Ordinances that were approved in September.

Motion
Trustee Bekes moved to accept the constant agenda with changes, supported by Trustee Langshaw the motion passed unanimously.

Mover	Trustee Bekes
Second	Trustee Langshaw
Result	Resolution Adopted: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 1 Absent

Name	Vote	Name	Vote
Supervisor Hutchings	Aye	Trustee Bekes	Aye
Clerk Stage	Aye	Trustee Harmon	Aye
Treasurer Wiersma	Aye	Trustee Langshaw	Aye
		Trustee Sulka	Absent

Citizen Comment:

Supervisor Hutchings opened Citizen Comment at 6:07 p.m.

Dan Vandermeulen – Thanked the Township for Chief Brown and his work on Gull Lake.

Catherine Williams – Had Kalamazoo water before and does not want it now.

Dena Dunn – Water tests show the City of Kalamazoo has PFAS, she does not want it. Also concerned about possible flooding of her property.

Sue Carter – No water from City of Kalamazoo.

Tammy Woodhams – No water from the City of Kalamazoo, water bills are over \$100.00.

Bill Brown – is concerned about a pumping station going in on 37th St. and Greer Rd. fears it will harm his well, would like more information.

Michelle Smith – No City of Kalamazoo water.

Helen Lang – Does not want public water, is concerned about it having PFAS and using it will spread the PFAS around and cause more harm. Also concerned about a pump station on 37th St. and Greer Rd., that it will damage the wetlands, Sherman Lake and harm residents' wells.

Rebecca O'Dell – No public water, shared a study from Mercola concerning risks with fluoride in drinking water. See attached study.

David Sutton – Does not want public water, shared that he knows individuals that are pay between \$87 - \$171.00 for water.

John Thomas – President of The Village of Augusta, because the Village has its own water supply, he asked that Ross excluded Village Residents from monies being spent on water in Ross Township.

Jim DeKruyter – Gull Lake Ministries would like to thank the Ross Township Fire and Police Departments for their outstanding service and we would like to present them with a check for \$1,000.00 each.

Doug Bogema – He live across from the PPP site, had to have a water tank in his yard for years, his is currently on public water, still uses bottle water.

Mark Rodgers – Question do we need city water. He asked the Board to base their decision and data and facts.

Amy O'boyle – Does not want City of Kalamazoo water; it may be free now but it will cost in the end. Using water with PFAS will contaminate our area, that may not have PFAS.

Jim Nason – Is it free, will there be mandatory hook up and what is the cost?

John Crumb – Presented to the Board several individuals who are behind on their payment for hook up to sewer, Attorney Thall told Mr. Crumb to send the information to Ross Township's Assessor.

Supervisor Hutchings closed Citizen Comment at 641 p.m.

James Baker, City of Kalamazoo: James gave his presentation, see attached material. He also explained that the project for Ross would be covered by a 20-million-dollar grant. This would cover installation of water lines and hook up to individuals in the project area for free until 2030. Ross Township Board would have to approve going forward with the project before the end of 2024. An agreement would have to be signed between City of Kalamazoo and Ross Township and design would then begin.

Supervisor Hutchings added that there will be a Town Hall Board meeting on November 12, at 5:30 p.m. the Health Department, ELGE and the City of Kalamazoo, James Baker, will be in attendance to answer residents' questions. At our regular Board Meeting on November 19, we will be voting on whether to join the project.

Board Members were given the chance to ask questions;

Trustee Bekes – PFAS Bloom that would be a question for ELGE.

How dangerous is PFAS compared to lead, if lead is 10, another question for ELGE or the Health Department.

If Ross decides not to go forward with the project will the grant money be held and saved until we are ready? No, the money will be use for another project in the 2025 project plan. Ross would have to start the grant process over again.

How will PFAS effect property value? Attorney Thall it would be speculation at this time could it effect the value yes, but how much we cannot say.

In your presentation you mention a well retention project how does that work? It must be approved by the Health Department. The City System and the current well system must be total separate. The well can be used for outside watering and the City System is used in the resident.

Trustee Harmon – Request that everyone that has questions for the Town Hall, please get them to Supervisor Hutchings so that the different departments coming to the Town Hall can have the data to answer those questions.

How long has the City of Kalamazoo owned the property on 37th St and Greer Rd? The City has owned the property since the 1990s, as a land asset of 200 acres.

What would have to happen for the city to put a pumping station there? A reliable peak high on the East side, where the city cannot meet demand, could start the development at 37th St and Greer Rd. However, the city would not develop that site for other 10 year or longer.

Why would someone have to hook up to public water? If the Health Department denied a well permit, because of health issues.

Clerk Stage – how much did phases 2 – 5 effect the scoring on the grant and loan just given? None, it was based on the area of phase 1.

Question for Rob, will Ross Township have to develop a Water Ordinance? Attorney Thall yes, we will have to develop an Ordinance.

Trustee Langshaw – who is paying the engineering cost? The project will.

Who decides if other phases are started? The Board would have to initiate the expansion.

Supervisor Hutchings – This water contract would be between the City of Kalamazoo; we would be buying direct.

Various Committee Reports:

Fire Department: Chief Bogema 36 calls last month still down from a year ago. There were three (3) fires, two (2) in Richland and one (1) in Galesburg. All involved were safe. Had pump training at Fort Custer. The haunted house will be Saturday, October 26th in the fire barn.

Police Department: Chief Brown the Gull Lake Ministries donated a Jet Ski to the Police Department. Will be at Sherman Lake YMCA for their Halloween gathering on Friday, October 18th and will be patrolling neighborhoods on Halloween night.

Fire Board: Diana Langshaw sent questionnaire to other Townships to assist in the development of the Fire Departments 5-year plan. Reworked the evaluations to be prepared for end of year evaluations.

Supervisor: Supervisor Hutchings reminded everyone about the Town Hall, November 12th.

Clerk: Clerk Stage presented the amendment to the contract with TDS, the original contract did not include a Fax line for the Ambulance Bay. The amendment takes care of that at a cost of \$49.98/month.

Motion
Clerk Stage moved to accept the amendment, supported by Trustee Bekes the motion passed unanimously.

Mover	Clerk Stage
Second	Trustee Bekes
Result	Resolution Adopted: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 1 Absent

Name	Vote	Name	Vote
Supervisor Hutchings	Aye	Trustee Bekes	Aye
Clerk Stage	Aye	Trustee Harmon	Aye
Treasurer Wiersma	Aye	Trustee Langshaw	Aye
		Trustee Sulka	Absent

Treasurer Wiersma noted that we have made \$58,692.00 in interest since April 2024.

Old Business:

Sherman Lake sewer Connection Leal Updates – Rob Thall still moving forward.

LifeCare Ambulance Contract – still with legal for review.

Re-adoption of the Viewshed Ordinance – Rob Thall nothing has changed, the date to but in paper got away from the Attorney’s office.

Motion
Trustee Bekes moved to re-adapt the Viewshed Ordinance, supported by Trustee Harmon the motion passed unanimously.

Mover	Trustee Bekes
Second	Trustee Harmon
Result	Resolution Adopted: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 1 Absent

Name	Vote	Name	Vote
Supervisor Hutchings	Aye	Trustee Bekes	Aye
Clerk Stage	Aye	Trustee Harmon	Aye
Treasurer Wiersma	Aye	Trustee Langshaw	Aye
		Trustee Sulka	Absent

Intergovernmental Agreement Ross Augusta Fire Department – Rob Thall has completed the revisions to the agreement and will distribute to both Boards by email tomorrow.

New Business:

Town Hall Meeting Date: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

Second Citizen Comment:

Helen Lang – The Kalamazoo Health Department was giving out free filters will that continue?

Bob Cook – I have been involved with this water issue for 4 years and John Crumb said he was not pushing water, and here we are discussing bring water into Ross, and I feel like this is being push down our throats.

David Sutton – Why not we have a public vote on bring water into Ross, on Tuesday, November 19th.

Tammy Woodhams – Do any of the Board members live in the area where the water will be installed, I like the public to vote on water in Ross.

Teve Turcotte – Nothing is free, the water will not be free.

Motion
Trustee Harmon moved that the board of Trustees convene in closed session under section 8(1)(h) of the Open Meeting Act, to consider material exempt from disclosure by state statute, section 13 (1)(g) of the Freedom of Information act, being a letter from its attorney dated October 15, 2024, for the reason that the letter is exempt from disclosure under State law due to the attorney-client privilege, supported by Trustee Langshaw the motion passed unanimously.

Mover	Trustee Harmon
Second	Trustee Langshaw
Result	Resolution Adopted: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 1 Absent

Name	Vote	Name	Vote
Supervisor Hutchings	Aye	Trustee Bekes	Aye
Clerk Stage	Aye	Trustee Harmon	Aye
Treasurer Wiersma	Aye	Trustee Langshaw	Aye
		Trustee Sulka	Absent

Motion

Supervisor Hutchings moved to come back into open session, supported by Trustee Harmon the motion passed unanimously.

Mover Supervisor Hutchings
Second Trustee Harmon
Result **Resolution Adopted: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 1 Absent**

Name	Vote	Name	Vote
Supervisor Hutchings	Aye	Trustee Bekes	Aye
Clerk Stage	Aye	Trustee Harmon	Aye
Treasurer Wiersma	Aye	Trustee Langshaw	Aye
		Trustee Sulka	Absent

Motion

Trustee Harmon moved on issue 1 that the Board follow Legal Counsel advise, supported by Clerk Stage the motion passed.

Mover Trustee Harmon
Second Clerk Stage
Result **Resolution Adopted: 5 Ayes; 1 Nays; 0 Abstained; 1 Absent**

Name	Vote	Name	Vote
Supervisor Hutchings	Aye	Trustee Bekes	Nay
Clerk Stage	Aye	Trustee Harmon	Aye
Treasurer Wiersma	Aye	Trustee Langshaw	Aye
		Trustee Sulka	Absent

Motion

Treasurer Wiersma moved on issue 2 that the Board follow Legal Counsel advise, supported by Supervisor Hutchings the motion passed.

Mover Treasure Wiersma
Second Supervisor Hutchings
Result **Resolution Adopted: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 1 Absent**

Name	Vote	Name	Vote
Supervisor Hutchings	Aye	Trustee Bekes	Aye
Clerk Stage	Aye	Trustee Harmon	Aye
Treasurer Wiersma	Aye	Trustee Langshaw	Aye
		Trustee Sulka	Absent

Trustee Bekes mentioned his recent email to the Board regarding increasing the Zoning Board of Appeals to five members and putting the Planning Commission Members on staggered terms. Bekes moved to approve those items. Trustee Harmon asked to postpone a decision until the November board meeting. Clerk Stage also asked to postpone until we can check when individuals were sworn in and when residents are present. Bekes pulled his motion with the expectation to bring it forward again at the November 19th board meeting.

Motion
Clerk Stage moved to adjourn, supported by Trustee Langshaw the motion passed.

Mover	Clerk Stage
Second	Trustee Langshaw
Result	Resolution Adopted: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 1 Absent

Name	Vote	Name	Vote
Supervisor Hutchings	Aye	Trustee Bekes	Aye
Clerk Stage	Aye	Trustee Harmon	Aye
Treasurer Wiersma	Aye	Trustee Langshaw	Aye
		Trustee Sulka	Absent

Supervisor Hutchings adjourned the meeting at 8:44 p.m.