

**Ross Township Regular Board Meeting
Minutes
ROSS TOWNSHIP
KALAMAZOO COUNTY, MICHIGAN
February, 17, 2026**

| Attendee Name | Title | Roll Call Status |
|----------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Christina Hutchings | Supervisor | Present |
| Mary Stage | Clerk | Present |
| Amanda Wiersma | Treasurer | Present |
| Michael Bekes | Trustee | Present |
| Lynn Harmon | Trustee | Present |
| Diana Langshaw | Trustee | Present |
| Todd White | Trustee | Present |
| Rob Thall | Attorney | Present |

Call to Order:

Supervisor Hutchings called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm with all rising for the Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.

Approval of Agenda:

| Motion |
|---|
| Trustee Langshaw moved to accept the agenda, supported by Clerk Stage. The motion passed. |

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|---------------|--|
| Mover | Trustee Langshaw |
| Second | Clerk Stage |
| Result | Motion Adopted: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 0 Absent |

| Name | Vote | Name | Vote |
|----------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| Supervisor Hutchings | Aye | Trustee Bekes | Aye |
| Clerk Stage | Aye | Trustee Harmon | Aye |
| Treasurer Wiersma | Aye | Trustee Langshaw | Aye |
| | | Trustee White | Aye |

Consent Agenda:

| Motion |
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| Treasure Wiersma moved to accept the consent agenda, supported by Trustee Harmon. The motion passed. |

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| Mover | Treasurer Wiersma |
| Second | Trustee Harmon |
| Result | Motion Adopted: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 1 Abstained; 0 Absent |

| Name | Vote | Name | Vote |
|----------------------|------|------------------|-----------|
| Supervisor Hutchings | Aye | Trustee Bekes | Abstained |
| Clerk Stage | Aye | Trustee Harmon | Aye |
| Treasurer Wiersma | Aye | Trustee Langshaw | Aye |
| | | Trustee White | Aye |

Citizen Comment:

Was opened at 6:05 pm.

Sarah Joshi – City Manager, Parchment, please see attached email from the Mayor of the City of Galesburg.

Kerry Lynn Elieff – Concerns about the lawsuit with GLSWA and contract with City of Kalamazoo for waste management.

Closed at 6:11 pm

Various committee Updates (Police, Fire, Ambulance, Public Safety Committee)

Supervisor Hutchings made a statement concerning her compensations for serving on the GLSWA Board.

She also made a statement about concerns of water coming into Ross Township. The Board voted down bringing water into Ross back in November of 2024 and has no plans to bring water into Ross Township. See attached notes from Supervisor Hutchings.

Doug Bogema – Fire Department. 2025 was the department’s business year. In January the department responded to 37 calls. Training continues, with additional training on software so that more firefighters can help with data processing. The department has purchased road flares and is looking to partner with other departments to obtain a better price when purchasing radios. The discussion also included the development of a 5 (possible 10) year plan for the department and the leasing or purchase of a fire truck.

Martin Brown – Police Department. January was a busy month; the department is dealing with several mail fraud cases in Ross. Chief participated in the soap box derby at St. Ann’s church; he is working on his car for next year. The students at St Ann’s church honored Chief Brown by having a mass said in his honor, Clerk Stage was in attendance.

Lori Phillips and Ron Slagle – LifeCare Ambulance. All went well with the ambulance service in the month of January. They are trying to set a day for meeting with the fire department. The

Township was informed that due to the government shutdowns some of LifeCare's funding has been affected. Also, the ambulance service is dealing with an engine defeat which is affecting 50% of their fleet, they are working with Ford to solve the issue.

Clerk Stage – Spoke on her concerns with the latest GLSWA board packet for their Thursday, February 19th meeting. Highlighted the rate increase of 12%, employee wage increase of 5%, waiting to put an office in the pole building, purchase of 2 new trucks, and other items that do not seem necessary at this time.

Old Business:

Contract for Fire Service with Village of Augusta – Village Council to vote March 2, 2026.

New Business:

Precinct 2 Update – Clerk Stage discussed issues with having precinct 2 polling location at the Township Hall.

| Motion |
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| Clerk Stage moved to move the precinct 2 polling location from the Township Hall to Yorkville Church, supported by Trustee Bekes. The motion passed. |

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| Mover | Clerk Stage |
| Second | Trustee Bekes |
| Result | Motion Adopted: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 0 Absent |

| Name | Vote | Name | Vote |
|----------------------|------|------------------|------|
| Supervisor Hutchings | Aye | Trustee Bekes | Aye |
| Clerk Stage | Aye | Trustee Harmon | Aye |
| Treasurer Wiersma | Aye | Trustee Langshaw | Aye |
| | | Trustee White | Aye |

Police Service Agreement: Should be ready for review and confirmation at our budget meeting on March 17, 2026.

City of Kalamazoo Land Management Signage: The Board discussed adding the Township logo to the sign that would be placed on the City property on 37th St. A motion was made by Trustee Bekes, without support, the motion was pulled. Treasurer Wiersma was asked to seek mockup signage from the City of Kalamazoo.

Also suggested was to ask the City of Kalamazoo and the Road Commission of Kalamazoo to attend a meeting to discuss issues which arose from activities on the property, with the property itself, and for the roads in the area.

Household Hazardous Waste Recap/Agreement: Regarding an invoice from our packet from the Kalamazoo Treasurer concerning the Hazardous Material Response Agreement, which covers Ross Township if there is a hazardous waste incident within the Township that we require assistance in cleaning up. Chief Bogema, stated that this fee has always been paid through fire millage funds, and a proved that a the \$1600.00, for this year's contact, be paid from the fire millage.

| Motion | |
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| Trustee Bekes moved pay the \$1,600.00 out of the fire millage for hazardous waste cleanup assistance, supported by Trustee Harmon. The motion passed. | |

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| Mover | Trustee Bekes |
| Second | Trustee Harmon |
| Result | Motion Adopted: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 0 Absent |

| Name | Vote | Name | Vote |
|----------------------|------|------------------|------|
| Supervisor Hutchings | Aye | Trustee Bekes | Aye |
| Clerk Stage | Aye | Trustee Harmon | Aye |
| Treasurer Wiersma | Aye | Trustee Langshaw | Aye |
| | | Trustee White | Aye |

It was discussed during our budget meeting that the Township would commit \$7,434.00 to the Kalamazoo Hazardous Waste Drop of and Disposal Agreement for Township Residents.

| Motion | |
|---|--|
| Supervisor Hutchings moved to commit to \$7,434.00 for the Hazardous Waste agreement and Board approval to sign the agreement, supported by Trustee Bekes. The motion passed. | |

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| Mover | Supervisor Hutchings |
| Second | Trustee Bekes |
| Result | Motion Adopted: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 0 Absent |

| Name | Vote | Name | Vote |
|----------------------|------|------------------|------|
| Supervisor Hutchings | Aye | Trustee Bekes | Aye |
| Clerk Stage | Aye | Trustee Harmon | Aye |
| Treasurer Wiersma | Aye | Trustee Langshaw | Aye |
| | | Trustee White | Aye |

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) Meeting schedule 2026-2027:

| Resolution |
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| Trustee Harmon resolved to accept the ZBA's meeting schedule for 2026 - 2027, supported by Treasurer Wiersma. After a roll call vote, the resolution passed. |

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| Mover | Trustee Harmon |
| Second | Treasurer Wiersma |
| Result | Motion Adopted: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 0 Absent |

| Name | Vote | Name | Vote |
|----------------------|------|------------------|------|
| Supervisor Hutchings | Aye | Trustee Bekes | Aye |
| Clerk Stage | Aye | Trustee Harmon | Aye |
| Treasurer Wiersma | Aye | Trustee Langshaw | Aye |
| | | Trustee White | Aye |

Neighborhood Street Light Assessments: Treasurer Wiersma explained that we have not re-evaluated our street light districts since 2011. For that to happen we must have a public hearing, before the hearing our Assessor, Treasurer and Attorney will review the current districts and recommend changes to the Board. Their findings will be given to the Board in the next couple of months.

Second Citizen Comment:

Opened at 7:36 pm

Jim Corstange – expressed concern over the GLSWA budget.

Doug Bogema – Gave an explanation on when light poles are damaged who is responsible for paying for the damages.

Kerry Lynn Eleiff – shared her opinion on the 2024 vote of the Board to not allow water into Ross Township.

Closed at 7:45 pm

Trustee Update:

Clerk Stage – informed the Board she has a conversation with John Thomas concerning the Material Management Planning Committee he sits on in Kalamazoo County. The committee deals with recycling issues in our Township. He is putting together a plan for expanding the current recycling opportunities that currently exist in the Village; this recycling effort could include our whole Township and neighboring Townships. There may be a cost involved Clerk Stage asked that he put together his plan and present it to the Board to see if we would be interested in supporting such an effort.

| Motion |
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| Trustee Harmon moved to adjourn the meeting, supported by Trustee Langshaw. The motion passed. |

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|---------------|--|
| Mover | Trustee Harmon |
| Second | Trustee Langshaw |
| Result | Motion Adopted: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstained; 0 Absent |

| Name | Vote | Name | Vote |
|----------------------|------|------------------|------|
| Supervisor Hutchings | Aye | Trustee Bekes | Aye |
| Clerk Stage | Aye | Trustee Harmon | Aye |
| Treasurer Wiersma | Aye | Trustee Langshaw | Aye |
| | | Trustee White | Aye |

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 pm.

A video recording of this meeting is on YouTube.

Mary Stage
Clerk Stage

Wednesday, March 18, 2026
Date

Mary Stage

From: Christina Hutchings
Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2026 12:02 PM
To: Amanda Wiersma; Mary Stage; Lynn Harmon; Diana Langshaw; Todd White; Michael Bekes
Cc: thall@michigantownshiplaw.com; Christina Hutchings
Subject: FW: Sarah Joshi

Ross Township Board:

Please see attached communication from the Mayor of the City of Galesburg, Linda Marble.

Christina Hutchings

Ross Township Supervisor & Board Chair
12086 M 89
Richland, MI 49083
(269) 731.4888 office (269) 731.5551 fax
www.rosstownshipmi.gov

From: Linda Marble <lm Marble@galesburgcity.org>
Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2026 11:33 AM
To: Mary Carol Wilkins <office@rosstownshipmi.gov>
Subject: Sarah Joshi

Supervisor Hutchings,

I was alerted to the fact that Parchment City Manager Sarah Joshi spoke during community comments at your 2/17/26 Township meeting. I was able to watch your meeting which is why I am writing to you today. As you know, Sarah Joshi was the City of Galesburg's City Manager, and was terminated by City Council in April of 2023. The City of Galesburg Council terminated Gull Lake Sewer & Water Authority's contract February 3, 2025 largely due to harassment issues with an employee of GLSWA. The City had to contract with Michigan Rural Water Association to assist us with our water until our Superintendent, Josh Raney, received his water license in June 2025. As you can see Sarah Joshi was gone 2 years before the City made the decision to terminate GLSWA.

We feel that Sarah had no authority to come to the Ross Township meeting (and I understand she also attended the Richland Township meeting) and give out false information, and to be honest, we are quite upset about it. I would like both you and Bear Priest to share this memo with your Board members and have Sarah's comments regarding the termination between Galesburg and GLSWA redacted since the information she gave is false.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or comments regarding this issue.

Linda Marble

Mayor for the City of Galesburg
200 E. Michigan Avenue
Galesburg, MI 49053
(269) 665-7000

Mary Stage

From: Mark Rodgers <markerodgers@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 7:16 AM
To: Christina Hutchings
Cc: Mary Stage; Amanda Wiersma; Michael Bekes; Diana Langshaw; Lynn Harmon; Todd White; bpriest@richlandtpw.net
Subject: Re: Comments and Questions Regarding GLSWA Lawsuit (Case No. 26-0043-CK)

Supervisor Hutchings,

In response to your email, Article VII of the GLSWA Articles of Incorporation states that each Commissioner *may* receive reasonable compensation as fixed by the Commission. While this language permits compensation, it does not require it. As such, the decision to accept or decline payment is a matter of judgment and ethics, particularly given that attendance at GLSWA meetings is part of a township supervisor's official responsibilities and attendance is during the business hours at Ross Township.

Richland Township Supervisor Bear Priest informed me that he chose not to accept compensation for GLSWA meetings based on his ethical view that representing his township at those meetings is part of his elected role.

You and Supervisor Priest both voted against the motion to increase commissioner compensation from \$50 to \$150. Considering that vote, your continued acceptance of the increased payments raises questions regarding the consistency of your position. The fact that former supervisors accepted compensation does not justify the continuation of this practice.

You have stated that acceptance of this compensation "is not a secret." However, residents I have spoken with were not aware that the Ross Township Supervisor receives \$150 per GLSWA meeting. When informed, the reaction was surprise and concern, with most residents stating this practice is not right. If this were put out on social media, I doubt if the broader community would view this practice favorably especially given the current environment.

To ensure transparency, I suggest the topic of GLSWA payments to the Ross Township Supervisor be an agenda item in the upcoming board meeting. This would give the trustees an opportunity to weigh in on the practice, for you to explain your rationale for accepting the payments, and for residents to become aware of the practice. Personally, I believe the most appropriate course of action would be to follow Supervisor Priest's lead and decline the compensation.

Mark Rodgers

On Mon, Feb 2, 2026 at 10:16 AM Christina Hutchings <supervisor@rosstownshipmi.gov> wrote:

Mark,

They are not "personal checks". Compensation is provided on GLSWA business check stock, and yes, I am. This is not a secret. Pursuant to the Articles of Incorporation of GLSWA, signed in 1979, ALL Commissioners are to be compensated by GLSWA for meetings. Richland Township Supervisor Bear

Priest also confirmed this with you when you contacted him about GLSWA compensation. Every Supervisor in Ross Township has received compensation from GLSWA, and I am no different.

A link to the Articles of Incorporation are provided for your convenience: <https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/e250a77b-eff9-42af-96cc-9a5347b9ca9f/downloads/8dbfb584-3295-4145-90dc-9a77dea2ac49/Articles%20of%20Incorporation.pdf?ver=1769624438846>

Christina Hutchings

Ross Township Supervisor & Board Chair

12086 M 89

Richland, MI 49083

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www.rosstownshipmi.gov

From: Mark Rodgers <markerodgers@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, January 29, 2026 3:21 PM

To: Christina Hutchings <supervisor@rosstownshipmi.gov>

Cc: Mary Stage <clerk@rosstownshipmi.gov>; Amanda Wiersma <treasurer@rosstownshipmi.gov>; Michael Bekes <Bekes@rosstownshipmi.gov>; Diana Langshaw <langshaw@rosstownshipmi.gov>; Lynn Harmon <harmon@rosstownshipmi.gov>; Todd White <white@rosstownshipmi.gov>

Subject: Re: Comments and Questions Regarding GLSWA Lawsuit (Case No. 26-0043-CK)

I asked if you are recording personal checks for attending GLSWA Board meetings. That is not related to the lawsuit. Are you?

On Thu, Jan 29, 2026 at 9:47 AM Christina Hutchings <supervisor@rosstownshipmi.gov> wrote:

Hi Mark,

Thank you for your comments to the Ross Township Board.

The information you are requesting is part of the civil action against Gull Lake Sewer and Water Authority. Ross and Richland Township have joined together in a civil action filed in the Kalamazoo County 9th Circuit Court to address mismanagement and waste occurring at the Gull Lake Water and Sewer Authority and to protect our constituents from unfair rate hikes. Further questions can be directed to our counsel at Kreis Enderle Hudgins & Borsos.

Christina Hutchings

Ross Township Supervisor & Board Chair

[12086 M 89](tel:2694861208)

[Richland, MI 49083](tel:2694861208)

(269) 731.4888 office (269) 731.5551 fax

www.rosstownshipmi.gov

From: Mark Rodgers <markerodgers@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, January 28, 2026 3:48 PM

To: Christina Hutchings <supervisor@rosstownshipmi.gov>; Mary Stage <clerk@rosstownshipmi.gov>; Amanda Wiersma <treasurer@rosstownshipmi.gov>; Michael Bekes <Bekes@rosstownshipmi.gov>; Diana Langshaw <langshaw@rosstownshipmi.gov>; Lynn Harmon <harmon@rosstownshipmi.gov>; Todd White <white@rosstownshipmi.gov>

Subject: Comments and Questions Regarding GLSWA Lawsuit (Case No. 26-0043-CK)

Board Members,

I have reviewed the referenced lawsuit (Case No 26-0043-CK, 9th Circuit Court, Kalamazoo Country) and am writing to share my comments and to request clarification on a few matters.

I fully support removing the Gull Lake Sewer and Water Authority (GLSWA) from control of water and sewer services and transferring management to the City of Kalamazoo, for the reasons outlined in the

lawsuit. These include disproportionate representation, closed-door sessions in violation of the Open Meetings Act, excessive salaries, and gross mismanagement of funds resulting in repeated rate increases. These issues have been a concern for many years and have eroded public trust. The ongoing practices of GLSWA have reflected poorly on Ross Township and have contributed to frustration among residents who expect fair, transparent and accountable governance.

I respectfully request clarification on the following questions:

1. Sherman Lake Sewer Connection Overages

Director Crumb identified approximately \$287,000 in overages related to the Sherman Lake sewer connections and requested that these expenses be passed onto the residents. What is the current status of these overages? Were these expenses included in the GLSWA budget? I am aware that a forensic accounting of GLSWA finances has been requested. At present, it is unclear whether:

- the expenses were inaccurately reported,
- contractors withdrew the charges, or
- the expenses were reclassified and ultimately passed on to residents.

Please provide an update on how this matter was resolved.

2. Compensation for Supervisors Attending GLSWA Board Meetings

The lawsuit alleges that compensation for supervisors attending GLSWA board meetings was increased without approval from the Richland and Ross Township Supervisors. I have also been told that supervisors are personally paid \$150 to attend these meetings. I sincerely hope this information is incorrect. Attendance at GLSWA meetings is a duty of township supervisors, not something warranting additional personal compensation. Please confirm whether township supervisors receive any direct payment for attending GLSWA meetings.

Thank you for your time and attention to these matters. I appreciate your response.

Mark Rodgers

[12261 S Sherman Lake Dr](mailto:markerodgers@gmail.com)

[Augusta, MI 49012](mailto:markerodgers@gmail.com)

markerodgers@gmail.com

m 269-599-6696

Notes from Christina Hutchings, Supervisor

I would like to take a few minutes & address a couple questions that have been raised by Township residents. First, a resident has raised question regarding my receipt of compensation to serve on the Gull Lake Sewer & Water Authority Board. In this regard, as Ross Township's representative on Gull Lake Sewer & Water Authority's Board I receive compensation from the Authority as fixed by the Authority Board. For years and under all previous Ross Township Supervisors, the compensation was \$50 per meeting. Recently the Authority Board voted to increase the meeting compensation from \$50 to \$150. I voted against this increase in Commissioner compensation and so did Richland's representative. In this regard we were outvoted, and the Commissioner compensation was raised from \$50 to \$150 per meeting.

As discussed with our attorney, attendance at Gull Lake Sewer & Water Authority meetings is not part of my statutory duties as Township Supervisor. I am paid by the Township for performance of statutory duties. Any Board member could serve on the Authority, as this is not an official responsibility of my position as Supervisor. In no way do I receive compensation from Ross Township for attending the Authority Board meetings. Instead, the compensation comes from the Authority itself. The Authority Articles of Incorporation state that each Commissioner may receive reasonable compensation as fixed by the Authority. The Authority has determined to fix compensation over my objection at \$150 per meeting. This is the compensation for serving as a Commissioner. It is my understanding from our attorney that when serving on municipal commissions, a commission member may not refuse the compensation set by the Commission. Even if I did not accept the compensation, it would be treated as income to me as the compensation cannot be refused. I just wanted to clear the air with regard to this matter so that people understand that I am being paid compensation to be on the Authority Board, and that this is not part of my Supervisor duties.

The second matter that I wanted to address is a completely false rumor being spread around the Township that the Township Board is bringing public water into the Township. This issue has previously been addressed by the Township Board in 2024 and firmly established that this Board was not interested in bringing public water into Ross Township. The Township Board actually turned down a water project proposed by the City to bring water into the Township as part of a PFAS project. This should reassure residents that the City has no power in Ross Township. This rumor that the Township is going to be bringing public water into the Township and forcing people to connect to City water is completely false. I just wanted to clear this issue up. It is now recorded on YouTube for future reference, before further false rumors spread. I also want to thank residents for calling me and emailing the Township asking for the truth. You are greatly appreciated!