

Blendon Township
Board Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2019

1. **The meeting was called to order** at 7:00 pm by Township Supervisor, Bill Vanden Berg.
2. **Invocation** was given by Trustee, Phil DeLange.
3. **The Pledge of Allegiance** was recited by all in attendance.
4. **Roll Call: PRESENT:** Bill Vanden Berg, Supervisor
Robin Overway, Clerk
Greg Golembiewski, Treasurer
Jim Vander Veen, Trustee
Phil DeLange, Trustee
ATTENDING: Kurt Gernaat, Fire Chief
5. **Motion to approve the agenda** was made by Phil DeLange, with the addition of the following items:
 - a. 14c and 14d switch positions in the discussion under 'new business'
 - b. Add 14e – Resolution 2019-2.3
 - c. Add 14f – Water Study DiscussionSupport by Robin Overway.

Motion Carried
6. **Motion to approve the Board Meeting Minutes**, dated January 21, 2018, was made by Greg Golembiewski, support by Phil DeLange.

Motion Carried
7. **Motion to approve the invoices** dated January 22, 2019 through February 18, 2019, including the addendum, was made by Phil DeLange, support by Robin Overway.

Motion Carried
8. **Treasurer's Report submitted by Greg Golembiewski**
 - As submitted.
 - Presented information on the current balances in the township's accounts and CD's
 - Presented updated information on the Tyler Street Paving Project. One payment remains that will be paid in the spring.
 - Discussed giving the library access to the Blendon Township webpage in order to post and maintain library information.
 - Board felt that access would not be granted for security purposes. But Admin can add information and a link on our webpage for the library to update and maintain their events through the link.
 - Attended meeting at Hudsonville Public Schools concerning district growth and school expansion.
 - How is the township preparing for school growth?

9. Clerk's Report submitted by Robin Overway.

- As submitted.
- Upcoming Election May 7. All precincts voting at Township Hall.
- Trustee Vander Veen asked about the number of registered voters in the township. He asked the Clerk to look into Michigan Compiled Law (MCL) 14.70 which addresses the number of Trustees that need to serve on the Board related to voter base.
 - We are nearing or at the point where we need to possibly look at adding two more Trustees.

10. Supervisor's Report submitted by Bill Vanden Berg.

- As Submitted
- Supervisor Vanden Berg addressed the Board concerning the removal of street lights on Bauer Road, west of 48th Ave.
 - Resident called complaining about the assessment and felt that the lights were not needed.
 - Board said that for the safety of our residents, the lights were not being removed.

11. Opportunity for Public Comment that is not listed on the Agenda:

- a. Bruce Costen, of 7407 Forestview Dr, addressed the Board concerning the potential of water shortage and how that will be affected by the projected growth of Hudsonville Public Schools into Blendon Township.
 - Trustee Vander Veen spent some time addressing Mr. Costen's concerns with information that he obtained from the County in previous and continuing meetings.

12. Monthly Reports:

a. Fire Department Activity Report:

- As Submitted
 - Noted the Annual Pancake Breakfast is being held on April 20. Invited the Board to attend.
 - Stated we are currently in need of additional firefighters. Going to post information on the township website and on the signs in front of the fire stations.

b. Police Activity Report:

- As Submitted

c. Assessor Report:

- None

d. Cemetery Sexton Report:

- None

e. Building Permit Report:

- As Submitted

f. Building and Grounds Report:

- Verbal report by Chief Kurt Gernaat
 - Keycard reader was installed on the north door.
 - Employees and Committee heads will receive keycards
 - Reader tracks who enters the building.
 - Discussion was had on keycards verses physical front door keys.
 - Due to physical keys not being returned at the end of employment, front door lock should be re-keyed
 - Lockbox with key placed by door incase the keycard reader is not working.
 - Discussion had on adding a simple surveillance system to the building as a means of security for staff.
- *Motion made by Jim Vander Veen, supported by Greg Golembiewski, to look into the cost to rekey the front door and the cost of a simple security system that can record both inside and outside the building. Estimates for both to be presented at the March meeting.*
 - Security System: Greg Golembiewski
 - Re-key front door: Kurt Gernaat

Motion Carried

g. Zoning Administration Report:

- None

h. Planning Commission Minutes: Reviewed by Jim Vander Veen

- Highlighted the following items:
 - Sub-committee meeting with Farmhaus Cider to discuss amendments to the current SLU affecting events and operating hours.
 - Continued discussion on the conditions of approval for Rush Creek Phase III, more specifically Lot 51.

i. ZBA Minutes: None submitted

13. Tabled Business: None

14. New Business:

a. Resolution for Poverty Exemption 2019-2.2

- *Motion made by Bill Vander Berg, supported by Greg Golembiewski, to approve the Resolution for Poverty Exemption 2019-2.2.*

Ayes: Vanden Berg, Overway, Golembiewski, Vander Veen, DeLange
Nays: None

Approved

b. Marihuana Opt-out and Existing Zoning Ordinances:

- Trustee Vander Veen explained that the Planning Commission was looking for direction as to whether the Board would like the Commission to proceed in reviewing the township's current zoning ordinances to make sure there are no 'loopholes' that would allow for the retail sales of Marihuana.
- *Motion was made by Jim Vander Veen, supported by Phil DeLange, to have the Planning Commission review the current zoning ordinances for any loopholes affecting Marihuana Opt-out Ordinance no. 95.*

Motion Carried

c. 2019-2020 Budget:

- Draft of the budget was discussed.
- Numerous corrections were made.
- Trustee Vander Veen inquired as to where some of the information was taken from and how some of the figures were reached.
 - Trustee Vander Veen advised the officers on the following things:
 - Check into the increase in the County Allocation Rate and what the township needs to do to receive the increase which will translate into substantially more revenue for the township.
 - Make sure the numbers are correct. This is being made available to the public and there are numerous errors.
 - Find out the State Revenue Sharing; what has been received for 2018-19 and what is projected for 2019-20.
 - Special Board Meeting to be set before the March 18 meeting to add any information received from the Compensation Committee concerning officer wages and to finalize the budget, and make sure it is correct, before presenting it to the public.

d. Chief Gernaat; Job and Compensation

(Chief Gernaat excused himself for the remainder of the meeting.)

- Brief explanation was given about the job and interview process that Chief Gernaat is currently a part of for the Zeeland Fire Dept.
- Trustee DeLange gave a brief history on how Chief Gernaat's job came to be and the numerous roles he has held and currently holds at the township.
 - Trustee DeLange expressed, that he believes, Kurt is a valuable asset to the township with many years of service and experience. The wealth of knowledge that Kurt has about so many areas of township government will be hard to replace.
 - Concern was expressed over the management of the daily activities if Chief Gernaat leaves.
- Supervisor Vanden Berg asked the public if there is anyone who would had anything to say concerning Chief Gernaat:

- Stan Taylor addressed the Board about Kurt's many great qualities and why they are such an asset to the township.
 - Mr. Taylor stated, that in addition to his own opinion, he has spent some time asking around if people know Chief Gernaat and what do they think of him or the job that he does? These are the answers he kept hearing: Trustworthy, dedicated to the community, does far more than just act as the fire chief.
 - Mr. Taylor feels that Kurt basically already does many of the tasks of a township manager and is upset that he has not been given a pay increase in the last couple of years, at the very least to show appreciation and value.
- Paul Blauwkamp also addressed the Board.
 - Mr. Blauwkamp stated that based just on what he was witnessing himself at meetings, the township definitely needs to have a general manager to run things.
 - Kurt is the 'glue' that is holding everything together at the township.
 - The township is in need of structural changes in order to keep up with the fast pace changes that continually take place in local government.
 - Mr. Blauwkamp also stated that he thought it was a 'crime' the Kurt has not received a raise.
- Captain Sean Miller, fire department, Station 1 addressed the Board.
 - Captain Miller stated that Kurt is a great Chief that works very hard for the community, the fire department and at making sure his staff is adequately trained.
 - Captain Miller feels, regardless of what Chief Gernaat decides, Blendon needs to consider moving toward making the Chief position full-time. The fire industry is changing so quickly that a full-time person is needed to keep up with all of the changes, additions, meetings and training.
- Board discussion was had on potential salaries and job descriptions.
- *Motion by Jim Vander Veen, supported by Phil DeLange, to raise Kurt Gernaat's salary to \$90,000, to show him that we are intent on keeping him employed at Blendon Township. We are open to reassessing his position to Township Manager and propose a defined role for the future.*

Motion Carried

e. Property Transfer Affidavit Fines Resolution 2019-2.3

- *Motion made by Bill Vanden Berg, supported by Greg Golembiewski, to approve the Resolution for Property Transfer Affidavit Fines 2019-2.3.*
- Ayes: Vanden Berg, Overway, Golembiewski, Vander Veen, DeLange
- Nays: None

Approved

f. Ottawa County Water Study:

- Due to recent reports in the news the question was raised on what the Board would like to do going forward concerning this study:
 - Have the Planning Commission begin looking into and devising a plan on how the township should proceed with the potential of the Marshall Aquifer drying up?

- Wait for the County to come out with a recommendation based on all of the data that has been collected and studied.
- The Board decided unanimously to wait to hear what the reports and recommendations from the county stated.

15. Information/Correspondence:

- a. Bids for Bass Creek Drain:
 - Received information on multiple bids.
 - These bids are for informational purposes only, there was NOT an approval on any bid at this time.
- b. Mark Nettleton – Mika Meyers – Financing Township Utilities and other public improvements.
 - Received for informational purposes.

16. Public Comments:

- None

17. Upcoming Events:

- a. Planning Commission Meeting: March 5, 2019
- b. Township Board Meeting: March 18, 2019

18. Adjournment:

- a. With no other business to be brought before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:13 pm.

Recorded by Tina Vander Schuur
Submitted by Robin Overway, Township Clerk