

Blendon Township  
Board Meeting Minutes  
October 21, 2019

1. **The meeting was called to order** at 7:00 pm by Township Supervisor, Bill Vanden Berg.
2. **Invocation** was given by Trustee, Stan Taylor
3. **The Pledge of Allegiance** was recited by attendees.
4. **Roll Call: PRESENT:** Bill Vanden Berg, Supervisor  
Robin Overway, Clerk  
Greg Golembiewski, Treasurer  
Stan Taylor, Trustee  
Paul Blauwkamp, Trustee  
**ATTENDING:** Kurt Gernaat, Fire Chief  
Jim Scales, Mika Meyer, Township Attorney
5. **Motion to approve the agenda** was made by Paul Blauwkamp, support by Stan Taylor with the following amendments:
  - Addition of 'Public Comments on items not on the agenda' be added after item 7.
  - New Business: 12(i) Distribution Letter
  - New Business: 12(j) Delineation of Responsibility
  - New Business: 12(k) Township Website
  - New Business: 12(l) Newsletter

Motion Carried 5-0
6. **Motion to approve the September 16, 2019 meeting minutes** was made by Greg Golembiewski, support by Robin Overway.

Motion Carried 5-0

  - a) **Motion to approve the September 25, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes** was made by Stan Taylor, support by Robin Overway.

Motion Carried 5-0
  - b) **Motion to approve the October 1, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes** was made by Robin Overway, support by Greg Golembiewski.

Motion Carried 5-0
7. **Motion to approve the invoices** dated September 17, 2019 through October 21, 2019, was made by Greg Golembiewski, support by Robin Overway.

Motion Carried 5-0

a) **Public Comment for items not on the agenda:**

- 2 people spoke
  - Mary Vanden Berg: 6305 Port Sheldon
    - ✓ Appointment of Trustees
    - ✓ Deputy Supervisor
  - Bernadette Schafer: 5134 Fillmore St
    - ✓ Multiple questions for members of the Board

**8. Treasurer's Report submitted by Greg Golembiewski**

- As submitted.
- Investments
- Cash Fund Balances
- Highlighted multiple items on the submitted report

**9. Clerk's Report submitted by Robin Overway.**

- As submitted.
- Highlighted the items on the submitted report.

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

- As Submitted
- Highlighted items on the submitted report

**11. Monthly Reports:**

a. **Fire Department Activity Report:**

- As Submitted

b. **Police Activity Report:**

- As Submitted

c. **Assessor Report:**

- None Submitted

d. **Cemetery Sexton Report:**

- None Submitted

e. **Building Permit Report:**

- As Submitted

f. **Building and Grounds Report:**

- As Submitted

g. **Zoning Administration Report:**

- None Submitted

h. **Planning Commission Minutes:**

- As Submitted

i. **ZBA Minutes:**

- None submitted

## 12. New Business:

### a. Donald Hoezee Rezone Request: Ordinance 2019-10.01:

- **Motion to approve Ordinance 2019-10.01** was made by Bill Vanden Berg, support by Paul Blauwkamp.

#### ➤ Roll Call:

Yay: Vanden Berg, Overway, Golembiewski, Blauwkamp, Taylor  
Nay: None

Motion Carried 5-0

### b. Ottawa County Sheriff Contract:

- Supervisor Vanden Berg highlighted the existing contract
- Trustee Taylor said that Blendon currently has ½ FTE. Should this be increased?
- Treasurer Golembiewski stated he would check with the Sheriff on hour designations for the township.
- Additional discussion to be had in the future.

### c. Cemetery Paving:

- Head of Buildings and Grounds, Kurt Gernaat, presented the quotes from three different companies.
  - Highlighted the similarities and differences of each quote.
  - Recommended using Zeeland Blacktop
- Treasurer Golembiewski stated his agreement with the decision based on the following:
  - Reputable company
  - Support local companies first
  - Past working relationship with the township
- **Motion to approve Zeeland Blacktop estimate for \$23,300.00 for the repaving of the cemetery** was made by Paul Blauwkamp, support by Greg Golembiewski.

Motion Carried 5-0

### d. Trustee Memorial Garden:

- Presented by Fire Chief, Kurt Gernaat
  - Approached by the family of the late Board Trustee, Jim Vander Veen
  - Unique situation, two active board members passing away
  - Set up a memorial for recognition of anyone that passes away while actively serving on a Township Board or Commission.
  - Sub-committee to be created consisting of Trustee Taylor, Trustee Blauwkamp and (1) at large member (to be determined)
    - Decide location of memorial
    - What type of memorial
    - How will the memorial be paid for?
- **Motion to approve the creation of the Memorial Garden sub-committee and their responsibilities** was made by Greg Golembiewski, support by Robin Overway.

Motion Carried 5-0

- Trustee Taylor stated his dismay that no formal resolution or letter was ever given to the families of late trustees Vander Veen and DeLange.
  - Trustee Taylor will draft a resolution for each family in honor of the years of service provided by Trustee DeLange and Trustee Vander Veen.
  
- e. **Future Park:**
  - Treasurer Golembiewski spoke about the existing Charitable Contribution Fund and the money that was donated for the establishment of a park.
  - Project was driven by late Trustee Vander Veen
  - Treasurer Golembiewski recommended that the board discuss and decide if they are planning to pursue the creation of a park prior to the end of 2019
    - If Board decides not to pursue a park project, then money will be returned to the donor.
  
- f. **Fund Balance and Future Needs:**
  - Presented by Treasurer Golembiewski
    - Look at establishing an Emergency Fund Account
      - Set aside \$850k-\$1m from annual surplus of unrestricted net, so the township would be able to continue to operate for at least one year in the event of an emergency.
    - Look at establishing a Capital Fund Balance Account for future projects
      - Funds taken from the surplus of unrestricted net remaining, after the establishment of the Emergency Fund Account.
      - Example of allocation within the fund for projects:
        - ✓ 60% New Township Hall – Fire Station
        - ✓ 30% Roads
        - ✓ 10% Parks or Storage Buildings
    - Would like to see developed in early 2020
  
- g. **Paving of New Holland Street – 72<sup>nd</sup> to 64<sup>th</sup>:**
  - Presented by Supervisor Vanden Berg
  - Petition turned in, signed by residents, requesting paving
  - Divider street, split cost with Zeeland
  - Options for paying for paving:
    - Township pay if full
    - Road Millage
    - Property owners, with property on the stretch of road being paved, would pay through a special assessment
  - All options require the township to pay the bill in full at the time of the paving
  - Board stated that the township is not paving anymore roads at this time for the following reasons:
    - Township does not have the money to pay for this since repaving Tyler Street
    - Residents have historically voted down every road millage that they have been asked to support

h. **Staffing:**

- Organizational flow chart in packet
- Question on who the cemetery sexton reports to; Supervisor or Head of Human Resources?
  - Per organizational chart, the cemetery sexton reports to the Head of Human Resources and the Head of Human Resources reports to the Township Board.

i. **Letter from Private Citizens, Mailed to Residents:**

- Trustee, Paul Blauwkamp responded to a letter that was mailed to the residents of the township from private citizens, Jerry and Pam Hammond of 6061 Port Sheldon.
- Trustee Blauwkamp went through the letter point by point reading what was printed compared to the actual facts:
  - Hiring a Township Manager
    - Letter: Reassigning financial authority from the Board to an individual
    - Fact: Township Manager would have no financial authority and would answer directly to the Board.
  - Appointment of Deputy Supervisor:
    - Letter: Supervisor appointed Bernadette Schafer as Deputy Supervisor; Board denied Ms. Schafer the ability to have any pay, do any work or have any responsibilities.
    - Fact: The Board did not support the appointment of a Deputy Supervisor for the following reasons:
      - ✓ The Supervisor never approached to Board concerning the want or need for a Deputy Supervisor.
      - ✓ Without the Boards knowledge, the Supervisor and Ms. Schafer went directly to the county to have her sworn in as Deputy Supervisor.
      - ✓ The County told the Supervisor that the swearing in of the Deputy Supervisor needed to take place at the township level by the Clerk
      - ✓ The Supervisor and Ms. Schafer did not go to the Clerk, but instead came into the township office, when no one was there, and had the Administrative Assistant do the swearing in process.
      - ✓ Since the Supervisor felt the need to circumvent the Board in the whole process, the Board did not support the appointment of a Deputy Supervisor and therefore denied any pay, duties or responsibilities.
  - Zeeland Fire Chief Job:
    - Letter: Fire Chief Gernaat's pay was increased because of the supposed pay being offered in a position he was applying for in Zeeland. Chief Gernaat did not receive the position because he was not qualified.
    - Fact: There were 37 total applicants, 6 interviewed applicants and 2 final applicants for the Zeeland Chief position.
      - ✓ Chief Gernaat was one of the final 2 applicants



**14. Information / Correspondence:**

- a. Letter of resignation: Kay Poortenga
- b. Public notice of meeting date change for the Planning Commission November Meeting
- c. Michigan Township Participating Plan Flyer

**15. Public Comments for items that were on the agenda:**

- a. 4 people spoke
  - o Pam Hammond: 6061 Port Sheldon
    - Responded to Trustee Blauwkamp about the letter that they mailed to residents
  - o Bernadette Schafer: 5134 Fillmore St
    - Township wages vs. revenue
  - o Bruce Costen: 7407 Forest View
    - Timed public comments = 3 minutes
    - How does a resident get added to the private citizen mailing list?
  - o Kevin Peters: 5070 Port Sheldon
    - Township Law – what the board can and cannot do
    - Address of the resident that sent the letter is not the return address on the envelope.

**16. Upcoming Events:**

- a. Planning Commission Meeting – **November 12, 2019 @ 7:00 pm (date change)**
- b. Township Board Meeting – **November 18, 2019 @ 7:00 pm**

**17. Adjournment:**

- a. With no other business to be brought before the Board, a motion to adjourn at 9:35 pm was made by Paul Blauwkamp, support by Stan Taylor.

Motion Carried 5-0

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