

Essex Township

Clinton County, Michigan

Carla Wardin, Supervisor
Angela Bunn, Clerk
Kathleen George, Treasurer
Rex Ferguson, Trustee
James Gavenda, Trustee

6/15/2016 REGULAR MEETING Township Supervisor Carla Wardin called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Maple Rapids Community Center. She began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL Present: Supervisor Carla Wardin, Trustee James Gavenda, Trustee Rex Ferguson, Treasurer Kathleen George and Clerk Angi Bunn

VISITORS Township Assessor Beth Botke, County Commissioner Kam Washburn, Sara Morrison, Pam Walsh, Leslie Salemi, Peggy Pimonen, Christine Collom of Clinton County Central Dispatch

VISITOR CONCERNS AND STATEMENTS
Leslie Salemi Salemi addressed the Board to explain the need for adoption of the Briggs Library millage proposal on August ballot. She explained the history of the loss of revenue for the library and urged residents to vote yes on the ballot proposal.

Christine Collom
Central Dispatch Collom explained the August ballot proposal for an increase in phone line 9-1-1 surcharges. Collom described the current technology involved with Central Dispatch and the need for upgrades in the near future. She also described the responsibilities of Central Dispatch, call volume and future needs of the department. The current local surcharge for Clinton County residents is \$2.25 per month, per ~~device~~ **device** that is capable of reaching 9-1-1. The increase request would make the surcharge \$2.75 per month, per device. The average annual cost will increase from \$27 per device to \$33 per device.

County Commissioner
Kam Washburn Washburn concurred with Collom's description of Central Dispatch's needs and services. He added that one of the future needs, and one of Washburn's personal priorities, is improving communications in the northern part of Clinton County.

The Commissioners have approved the final equalized value of the County. The County's SEV is \$3.35 billion, and the County's taxable value is \$2.6 billion.

The County Commissioners have appointed Kevin Kirk to the County Planning Commission.

Washburn explained the Tri-County Hazardous Mitigation Plan. If the Township chooses to adopt the plan, it would be qualified for FEMA funds, if they should become available in the County.

Township Assessor
Beth Botke

Botke attended a tax tribunal conference in North Carolina, and reported she gained a lot of information while there.

The tax rolls are set and ready for summer taxes.

One small claims tribunal was filed for a residential property. Botke has filed the appropriate paperwork and is working through the tribunal process.

APPROVAL OF THE
4/20/2016 MINUTES

The reading of the 04/20/2016 regular meeting minutes was waived. George moved to approve the meeting minutes as amended. Supported by Ferguson. Motion passed and carried (MPC).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was reviewed. Added: Clerk – E. FOIA request; New Business – C. Reimburse taxes; D. Hazard Mitigation Plan; E. Audit; F. Tax bill resolution proposal

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Gavenda reported the Maple Rapids Fire and Rescue is planning to purchase a new Advanced Life Support unit in July. They now have 22 people on the Department, with several in training currently.

Ferguson reported construction on the cell tower to be built on Bengal Township's property has been postponed, and will begin construction in January 2017.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer reported the general fund balance is \$113,742.59. She reviewed income and expenditures, and the budget since the last meeting. George reported the tax database is balanced, and the County Treasurer has approved it. Summer tax bills are ready to be printed. George explained that many Townships have a resolution to address the collection of tax payments or refunds on taxes under/over \$5.00. Due to the time and postage required to bill or refund under/over payments up to \$5.00, George requests the Board

consider adopting a resolution addressing the matter. Bunn moved to accept the Treasurer's report as presented, supported by Ferguson. MPC.

CLERK'S REPORT

Bunn reviewed the general ledger for the fiscal year and reviewed checks #5631-5673.

Bunn purchased stickers for the cemetery trash barrels that read 'ORGANIC MATERIALS ONLY – Please take plastic and metal materials home with you'. She reports there have been six 50-gallon bags full of plastic materials since the stickers were applied. She explained the barrels are for composting materials only, and plastic flowers, etc. blow around the cemeteries and cause problems. She proposed the Township either investigate some type of trash removal service or removing the trash barrels from the cemeteries. There is a note in the summer newsletter, so the Board elected to table the matter to see if the problem would improve. Bunn also mentioned there are trees in the Lowe and Sowle Cemeteries that need to be trimmed in the near future.

Bunn has looked into contracting services with the Township Assessor. She discovered that some Townships employ an Assessor to prepare and sign the assessment, and contract services to prepare the tax roll. It may be something the Township would like to investigate further when Botke's contract is due for renegotiation in November.

Bunn is contacting Election Inspectors for their bi-annual training. There will be elections in August and November.

The Clerk was served with a Freedom of Information Act request for records. She thanked the Board for their quick action in the matter and reported she was able to serve the requester with 99 pages of documents within five days of the request.

George motioned to accept the Clerk's report, supported by Gavenda. MPC.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Wardin presented a contract with the Maple Rapids Public Library which would enable the library to receive the penal fines acquired within the Township until December 2018.

Burn permits

After a request from residents, Wardin spoke with Maple Rapids Department of Public Works Director Mike Townsend about issuing burning permits when there is 2-inches of snow on the

ground. Townsend says residents can get permits to burn 4-7 days ahead of the date they want to burn. Permits are entered into the County system. He is opposed to not requiring a permit due to snow, as it can be a subjective measurement and because the permits go into the County.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution to address the collection of payments or refunds on taxes

George motioned to adopt the resolution to address the collection of payments or refunds on taxes under/over \$5.00, which resolved the Township Treasurer will not request a secondary payment due to any tax amounts totaling \$5 or less, once the primary payment is received. The underpayments will be taken from the interest being earned. Overpayments will be handled in accordance with generally accepted regional tax collection practices. Motion supported by Gavenda. Roll call vote: Gavenda – yes; Ferguson – yes; Bunn – yes; Wardin – yes; George – yes. Resolution declared adopted.

MRPL contract

Wardin motioned to sign the contract with the Maple Rapids Public Library to allow them to collect penal fines acquired in the Township, supported by Ferguson. MPC.

Transfer of funds

George motioned to transfer \$100 from unallocated funds to the Reimbursement of Taxes line item, supported by Ferguson. MPC.

Tri-County Hazard Mitigation Plan

Bunn motioned to adopt the Tri-County Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, supported by Gavenda. Roll call vote: Wardin – yes; Ferguson – yes; Gavenda – yes; George – yes; Bunn – yes. Resolution declared adopted.

Audit

Bunn motioned to engage Abraham & Gaffney, P.C. to conduct the Township's audit. Supported by Gavenda. MPC.

Clerk resignation

Bunn submitted her letter of resignation to the Board. She will be moving out of the Township this summer. Her resignation is effective July 1, 2016. She spoke highly of Deputy Clerk Lori Conners, who has been working with Bunn since early January.

There being no further business before the Board, George motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm, supported by Gavenda. MPC. The next regular meeting of the Essex Township Board will be held August 17, 2016 at 7:00 pm in the Maple Rapids Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Angela Bunn
Essex Township Clerk