

Casco Township Board of Trustees
Minutes, Special Meeting to replace Regular Meeting due to inclement weather
Thursday, January 23, 2025 @ 7:00 PM

Call to Order: Overhiser called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM (due to delays caused by inclement weather) and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Overhiser, Ridley, Clevenger, Campbell & Fleming along with 3 residents.

Absent: None

Public Comment: Trustee Campbell reported that the driveway was not plowed last week on Thursday. She also mentioned that the Township Website has some outdated items that need addressed. Supervisor Overhiser mentioned that this is something we have been talking about and in the process of establishing a plan to bring that information to current.

SHAES: Supervisor Overhiser shared the Response Statistics from SHAES for the past four years. The total number of Casco Fire calls for 2024 was 170; Up from 2023, 135 calls. 2022, 124 calls. 2021, 157 calls. The total number of Casco EMS calls for 2024 was 258. Up from 2023, 239 calls. 2022, 218 calls. 2021, 233 calls. SHAES total number of calls for 2024 was 2699. In 2023, 2680 calls. In 2022, 2659 calls. In 2021, 2591 calls.

Police: No report.

County: Brad Lubbers was not able to attend but sent a report stating the following:

- At the previous meeting Gale Dugan was elected as Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners and Scott Beltman as Vice-Chair.
- Recently a test of the County's warning system was conducted and two were found to be nonfunctional.
- Jill Dunham received an award from The White House for her role in the County's Broadband Initiative.

Library: No Report.

Clerk: Ridley presented the meeting minutes from the December meeting to the Board for approval. Motion made by Fleming to approve, support from Campbell. All votes in favor. Ridley also presented budget amendments to increase the following accounts for the following amounts:

- Building Department: Clerical \$1000
- Website \$2,500
- Building Department: Office Equipment \$ 2,500
- Parks & Recreation \$37,000
- Airport Authority \$2500

A motion was made by Clevenger to approve, support from Fleming. All votes in favor. Clerk Ridley reported that her recently approved Notary has been approved with the stamp. We are currently just waiting on the stamp but is legal to issue notaries as of 1/22/25. An update was also given on the status of our transition to Envision Payroll. All accounting information has been submitted and is ready to go for the January payroll on 1/28/28. We are just missing around 3 Direct Deposit forms that Clerk Ridley will track down in the next few days to ensure uninterrupted payroll. Moving forward, Ridley mentioned that she is

flexible as we continue this transition so Township employees should feel free to speak up if they have ideas for making things work better for all of us in this process.

Treasurer: Clevenger presented the balances on all funds as of 12/31/24.

- 101 General Fund \$1,321,566.94
- 204 Road Fund \$642,731.87
- 206 Fire Fund \$369,868.34
- 207 Police Fund \$157,893.97
- 208 Parks & Rec. \$173,878.63
- 209 Cemetery \$99,984.15
- 290 Senior Serv. \$51,547.96
- 703 Current Tax Collection \$761,592.20

Clevenger made a motion to approve check #'s 29600-29715 in the amount of \$625,000.91. Support by Fleming, All votes in favor.

Clevenger reported that he and Supervisor Overhiser met with Representatives from Sturgis Bank this past month. One thing he is looking forward to bringing to the Treasurer's office is the Remote Capture Device which will be nice for scanning checks, creating images of those checks and helping us make deposits right from the office in real time with less room for error. Sturgis can also provide us with a Credit/Debit Card Processing Machine free of charge that would allow us the ability to take cards at no cost to the township. The Township's general fund will remain at Huntington Bank. We will be setting up two merchant accounts at Sturgis Bank: one for taxes and one for zoning permits, building permits, etc. Tax money will go to the tax account at Sturgis and the money from those Zoning permits, Building permits, etc. transactions will be transferred straight to the Huntington General Fund account. Along with these services, they will provide us with some of the more up to date conveniences like a personalized QR code for payments. There will be a 3% convenience fee from the credit card company to the taxpayer if choosing to pay by card. Sturgis also gives us the ability to make wire ACH payments from the tax collection account. Clevenger also brought more information regarding investment accounts like COD's that the Township can utilize in order to grow out investments. We will be receiving more information on these options in the very near future. Along with these investment accounts, we are discussing sweep accounts intended to protect township accounts by breaking up large amounts of money into different FDIC insured accounts for safekeeping. This is a recommended and common practice for municipalities. This ensures all township money is not all tied up in one place and further complies with our audit. Clevenger also reported to the Board that he is appreciative of the teamwork between himself and Clerk Ridley during this transition time of the Board and into the future.

Planning Commission: Work continues for the Master Plan with focus on Minimum Dwelling Size, Accessory Units & Road Frontage in the Ag district. Discussion took place regarding the issuance of a Liquor license for Daydreamer Domes and will continue into next month.

Parks & Recreation: Talk continues on fundraising opportunities for Casco Nature Preserve. Campbell reported that a Wetland Study will need to take place this Spring before any work can begin on attaining a pathway for access to the beach. This will delay the planned Open House until possibly May to ensure time to review the information from the Wetland Study and make plans for the upcoming project. Supervisor Overhiser pointed out that someone had reported concerns to EGLE regarding our new Bathroom project at the Preserve, prompting the recommendation of this Wetland Study going forward. Campbell requested a report from Clerk Ridley from BSA with details on the expenditures coming from the park to bring to the next Parks Meeting. Supervisor Overhiser made recommendation that we release \$30,000 to Davis Landscaping from the Casco Nature Preserve Project, leaving \$6,134.67 on retention for the completion of interpretive signs this Spring. Motion made by Overhiser, Support by Fleming. All votes in favor.

Senior Services: Linda Teeter reported that the Van Buren Senior Service transition began on 1/6/25 and it is going very smoothly. Mondays, Thursdays & Fridays are all exercise days. On Monday they also enjoy cards with coffee and dessert. On Thursdays, a nice lunch is provided and Seniors enjoy a craft or special activity. As a reminder, when South Haven Public Schools close, Van Buren Senior Services will close as well. We need to be mindful of letting the VBSS Team do their job with limited help and interruptions to their team so they can learn the complete process. Linda will have current statistics for Casco in the very near future. Trustee Campbell reported from the Allegan Commission on Aging meeting that they finalized their strategic initiatives for the coming year, and they are better integration with AAA of West Michigan & Outreach to other Senior groups within the County.

Appointment of Boards & Committees: The following people were re-appointed to the following Boards & Committees to ensure oaths are completed on time:

Board of Review: Matt Hamlin (2 years), Dave Campbell (2 years), Mary Tobin (2 years), & Alex Overhiser as an alternate (2 years.) Motion to approve by Overhiser, support by Fleming. All votes in favor.

SHAWSA: No Report from December.

ZBA: The Pellovins on Longfellow requested a variance of 9ft to enclose their patio into a screened in porch which was approved unanimously.

Granicus Renewal: Granicus is the service and software we use to manage our Short-Term Rentals. The proposal is for \$11,719.81 that will essentially be paid for out of the registration fees for residents who want to rent their property. Motion by Campbell to approve, support by Ridley. Discussion was had on Short Term rentals in the Township. All votes in favor.

2025 Poverty Resolution: We currently only have 1 person who utilizes this. This is something that is available to residents but not often utilized. Discussion was had on who might utilize this and how to go about offering this to residents in a respectful manner. Clevenger made a motion to continue at 100% exemption rates for 2025, Support by Campbell. Roll Call Vote: Overhiser, yes, Clevenger, yes, Fleming, yes. Ridley, yes. Campbell, yes. All votes in favor.

Board of Review Resolution for changing start date: This resolution would change the starting date for Board of Review to 3/12/25. Clevenger made motion to approve, support

by Fleming. Roll Call Vote: Overhiser, yes. Clevenger, yes. Fleming, yes. Ridley, yes. Campbell, yes. All votes in favor.

Mount Pleasant 100-year Celebration: Mount Pleasant subdivision contacted us to let us know about their upcoming 100th year Celebration on 7/4/25. Overhiser would like to bring a Resolution to the next meeting to acknowledge and celebrate their milestone achievement.

Road Budget: Balance going into 2025 is \$642,522. Tac collection will be \$792,912. County contribution is \$50,000 giving us total available funds of \$1,485,434. We do have ongoing commitments of dust layer \$44,000, mowing \$6,000 and the preparation and paving of 68th street, estimated at \$1,155,000 leaving the available balance of \$280,434. Supervisor Overhiser recommends banking those funds until next year, so we have a cushion for the year. The Road Committee will soon meet to discuss what the next project will be in 2027. Support by Clevenger. All votes in favor.

From the Allegan County Road Millage, we have learned that 66th St. from Baseline to 109th, along with 62nd St. from 109th to the Township line will all receive crack seal and fog seal. The next big project from the County Millage will be the milling and resurfacing of 109th, the full length of Casco and into downtown Pullman.

Earned Sick Time Act: Clerk Ridley reported that Michigan is in the process of implementing the Earned Sick Time Act for all employees except those who are appointed or elected. Effective 2/21/25, every employee will legally receive 1 hour of sick time for every 30 hours worked. We will need a way to track hours for these employees. Our new payroll service, Envision has plans in place for helping Employers with ESTA compliance and time keeping for that purpose. Timekeeping with Envision would cost \$10 per month base fee plus \$1 for every active employee. Esta Compliance if \$5 monthly. There is a one-time implementation fee for timekeeping, \$50. This means that with an estimated 15 employees or less that would need timekeeping, we would be looking at around \$30 per month. Clerk Ridley recommended we go with Envision for Timekeeping and ESTA Compliance going forward. Support by Clevenger. All votes in favor. The next step in this process will be for the Board to work on a sick time/leave policy for the Township to follow in terms of sick time.

Clerks Request for Training at MANC Clerk's Institute: Clerk Ridley requested approval to attend the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerk's Institute in Mount Pleasant in March 2025. This is 3-year program, 40 hours each year touching on everything a City, Township or County Clerk needs to be effective in the Clerk's position. The cost of one year at Institute will be \$775 plus lodging at a discounted rate for 5 nights \$543.90 totaling \$1,318.90 plus mileage. Support made by Clevenger, all votes in favor. Supervisor Overhiser made a motion to amend the Clerk's Training Budget to raise it \$1500. Support by Clevenger. All votes in favor.

South Haven School's Tax Collection: South Haven Public School has requested our confirmation on our intent to collect 100% of its 2025 taxes during the summer tax collection period. Motion by Clevenger to confirm, Support by Fleming. Rol Call Vote: Overhiser, yes. Clevenger, yes. Ridley, yes. Campbell, yes. Fleming, yes. All votes in favor.

Lastly, Supervisor Overhiser mentioned that there are free radon test kits available at all the libraries in Allegan County for Allegan County residents.

Supervisor Overhiser also mentioned that there is a new Revenue Sharing Act as of 1/21/24 that Allan has gone through and finished his reporting on. Previous revenue sharing was based strictly on population while this new act significantly relies on taxable value for a portion of it. Revenue sharing will be very similar to what it would have been.

Reminder, the Board of Review will begin on 3/12/25 and wrap up on 3/14/25 if anyone is interested in protesting their taxes.

Public Comment:

- Casco Resident, Julie Cowie spoke on the property at 880 Blue Star Highway and her concerns regarding the shipping containers and items not to code on the property. Supervisor Overhiser reported that he and Tasha Smalley, Zoning Administrator, have been working on this property issue and he will try and gain more clarity on this.
- Casco Resident and Senior Service Committee Advisor, Linda Teeter spoke and complimented Supervisor Overhiser on his patience and how he runs his Township meetings. She stated that she believes the public needs to be more mindful of speaking out of turn at these Board meetings to afford the new Board to work together and take care of business.
- Casco Resident and Board of Review Member, Dave Campbell commented that he believes the Rental hotline works very well and that anyone experiencing issues with rentals should start with the hotline.
- Casco Resident and Board Trustee Fleming spoke about the Township needing Clarity on things like art pieces using shells of vehicles, etc. verses those properties who have zoning issues because of these same types of things. Fleming also brought up the excessive funds in the building department fund and the possibility of using those funds to offset some of the high zoning fees that occur. Discussion was had on the economy and how the cushion of funds is nice in case things change for us in the future.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Clevenger, support by Ridley. All votes in favor.

Rachel Ridley
Casco Township Clerk