

**Winterfield Township Board Meeting
January 9, 2024
Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Supervisor Dave Bondie at Winterfield Township Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll call was taken by Blackledge.

Members Present: Dave Bondie, Supervisor; Bonnie Blackledge, Clerk; Linda Peterson, Treasurer; Shelly Laughlin and Fred Prielipp, Trustees

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Todd Flint, Zoning Administrator; Ray Faulman, Cemetery Sexton; Brooke Judd, Deputy Clerk; Carl Traynor; Vance Edwards, Silent Observer; and Tom Kunse, State Representative.

Review of Agenda: Blackledge asked to add approval of Check #6059 to MTA to the list of checks for approval. **Laughlin moved to approve the Agenda with this change, second by Prielipp. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.**

Review Minutes November 14, 2023: Motion by Laughlin, second by Peterson, to approve the November 14 Meeting Minutes as written. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Public Comment: Tom Kunse, State Representative said he has been in office now for exactly one year. It is his goal to visit all the townships and municipalities in his district. He believes government should be small, local, and transparent. He discussed the ballot initiative that is earmarked for the November ballot. It is a reaction to the recent State legislation to shift Solar and Wind farm approval from local government to the State. Judd questioned his stance on home schools and he responded in support. He believes competition makes us better. Faulman asked about the solar panels in the Jackson area. Edwards asked about service organizations.

Presentation, Vance Edwards, Michigan Silent Observer: Edwards explained the structure of the Silent Observer program and distributed several handouts. This program was started in 1991, and over 5,000 tips have led to arrests. There is a membership program available (\$250 annual fee) as well as portable signs.

County Commissioner's Report, Dave Hoefling: Since Hoefling was ill, he did not attend the meeting. Bondie and Blackledge had received an email before the meeting started, but did not notice it until after the meeting was adjourned. It contained a report that was sent to the Board by email.

Zoning Officer's Report: Flint said he spoke to someone about opening a new business and told them they needed to submit an application to the Planning Commission. He would like a copy of the attorney's contract.

Treasurer's Report: Peterson distributed the report to the Board. She said she anticipates collecting \$137,368.67 for the Road Account and \$35,530 for the Transfer Station this year. To keep the rubbish fees from getting any higher, trash needs to be disposed of regularly. Recycling should be encouraged.

There is an issue with a property owner who does not want to pay the rubbish fee. She is stating that the parcel is vacant with no improvements, which would normally be exempt. After Board discussion, **Bondie moved that the rubbish fee for Parcel# 001-150-008-00 should be paid because the parcel does include improvements. Laughlin seconded. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried. Blackledge moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Laughlin seconded. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.**

Planning Commission Report: Laughlin said that our consultant, Adam Young, sent an email stating that the Zoning Ordinance will need revision based on the recent legislative action by the State of Michigan regarding zoning regulation of Wind and Solar Energy structures. Based on comments from State Representative Tom Kunse about the effort to put a proposal on the November 5th ballot, it was suggested that the Planning Commission wait to make any revisions until afterward. This item will be discussed at the November 12 Board Meeting. Laughlin said that the Planning Commission meets on December 10th, so that will be good timing to get started if they need to make the revisions.

Clerk's Report: Blackledge distributed copies of a Balance Sheet report and asked whether the Board found it to be valuable. She will continue to print these. Three credit card vouchers were approved and signed. IRS mileage rate is .67 per mile for 2024. She distributed copies of the Affidavit of Identity and Statement of Organization forms that will need to be completed if the Board members wish to file for the 2024 – 2028 term. These are due on April 23rd. Blackledge will send out more information as the deadline draws closer.

Trustees' Report: No comments

Supervisor's Report: Bondie attended the recent Marion Community Fire Board meeting.

Old Business:

Hazardous Spill Cost Recovery Ordinance – Bondie said that he contacted MTA for free legal advice on this ordinance and was told they are no longer offering that service. Jerry Becker has advised that we adopt an ordinance that includes Electric Vehicle provisions. Bondie believes this is a revised version that includes that language, but he wants to verify. He recommends adopting this ordinance, but suggested it be tabled until he finds out if it is truly the latest version.

Cemetery Projects – Blackledge met with Sexton Ray Faulman in order to work on records. Deputy Brooke Judd is working to make an electronic version of the existing records. She, Blackledge and Faulman plan to meet at the cemetery in the spring to check the sites for accuracy and marker placement. It was suggested that funds be allocated to replace the markers and remove dead trees. The wooden cemetery sign should also be replaced. Bondie mentioned some work that will need to be done in the new portion of the cemetery. He will arrange a meeting with vendors that are able to work on these projects.

Board of Review Training – The members of the Winterfield Board of Review are signed up for training on February 15 at Evergreen Resort in Cadillac. Blackledge was advised to order books for all members attending training.

New Business:

Appointment of new Deputy Clerk, Change in status for Deb Hammar: In December, Blackledge appointed Brooke Judd as her Deputy Clerk. Judd is working on converting the cemetery records to an electronic version that will be uploaded to the website when completed. Former Deputy, Deb Hammar, will be assuming the duties of Election Specialist. This will involve setting up and testing election equipment as well as acting as Chair in the three elections this year.

2024 Road Projects: Bondie will come up with a revised Road Plan based on what is projected for this year, how much money we have in the Road Account, and what contracts we have committed to for 2024. He distributed a Paser Rating handout that will be used for the Board to come up with a new road plan.

Hall Rental – Security Deposit & Other Changes

Blackledge held an informal survey of other clerks in Clare County. She discovered that our security fee of \$25 was lower than most other townships and suggested that it be raised to \$50. She is also concerned that the Everreadies are not required to complete the rental agreement and wondered if they should sign a yearly form and pay the security fee deposit. The Board discussed these issues, and then **Blackledge moved to increase the security deposit to \$50, and to have all hall renters sign the agreement. Bondie seconded. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.** It was also mentioned that if there are damages or the Township Hall is not left in the same condition as found, that the expenses for cleaning and/or damage repair will be deducted from the security deposit.

Board Appointment Information/Planning Commission Appointment: Blackledge prepared a memo summarizing the appointed members and their terms of the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Board of Review. Andrew Laughlin is due for reappointment as his term ended 12/31/23. **Bondie moved to reappoint Andrew Laughlin to the Planning Commission for the term 1/1/2024 – 12/31/2026. S. Laughlin seconded. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.** Blackledge will swear in Laughlin by the next Planning Commission meeting on February 13th.

Resolution 2024-1: 2024 Poverty Exemption: Peterson noticed a few typos such as the date in the title and the 2024 Federal Guideline amounts needed to be added.

Peterson moved to approve the Poverty Exemption Resolution 2024-1 with the corrections. Prielipp seconded. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Resolution approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

Budget Report for FY 2023-24 as of 1/9/2024: Blackledge distributed a budget report for the fiscal year 2023-2024, 7/1/2023 through 1/9/2024 for the General Fund, Transfer Station Fund and Road Fund. Blackledge noted there are no overspent categories.

Review Township Expenditures: Prielipp moved to approve General Fund checks 6026 through 6059, and Transfer Station checks 2226 through 2230 as shown on the reports. Second by Laughlin. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Adjournment: Prielipp moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 pm. Bondie seconded. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Blackledge, Winterfield Township Clerk