

WALTON TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING
MINUTES

April 14th, 2026

Present: Trustee Heisler, Trustee Starkweather, Treasurer Heisler, Clerk Cummings, Supervisor Thering, Patti and John Ostrowski, Tim Starr, Jeff Wills, Jim Pion, John Conklin, Douglas Norton, Heather Aemmer, Josh Aemmer, Arthur Moore, Mike Kingsbury, Steve Bursley, Barb Platzer, Jennifer Harris, Dave Soblesky, Dave Moody, John and Nancy Holton, John and Michelle Collins, Charlie Sharp, Jim Pion, and Margo Aseltine

Absent:

Supervisor Thering called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Trustee Heisler moved to approve the April agenda, seconded by Trustee Starkweather. MOTION CARRIED.

Clerk Cummings presented the payables in written form, Treasurer Heisler moved to approve transferring \$106,500, seconded by Trustee Heisler.

Treasurer Heisler presented the Treasurer's report in written form. Trustee Starkweather moved to accept the Treasurer's report as written, seconded by Trustee Heisler. MOTION CARRIED.

CORRESPONDENCE:

CU-5-26-2 Kingsbury conditional use permit application for continued operation of an existing surface mine from his property located at 5726 Sherwood Highway, Sections 19 & 30 of Walton Township. Clerk Cummings moved to approve the conditional use permit, seconded by Trustee Heisler.

BA-5-26-1 Aemmer is requesting a variance from Zoning Ordinance Section 6.2.10 C. Accessory Dwelling Unit to allow her existing 3,486 sq. ft. structure to be used as an accessory dwelling unit. The variance amount requested is 2,286 sq. ft. The property is located at 4030 W. Bellevue Highway, Sec. 20 of Walton Township. The 1-acre parcel is zoned Limited Agricultural. Trustee Heisler moved to approve the variance, seconded by Trustee Starkweather.

NEW BUSINESS:

Simonanne Enterprises Service Contract for Cemetery and Hall Grounds-The Board agreed to not approve the contract, if issues arise, we will reach out to Simonanne at that time.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Trustee Starkweather moved to accept the Olivet Fire Agreement, seconded by Trustee Heisler. MOTION CARRIED.

Discussion took place on Charlotte Fire, Supervisor Thering met with Chief Fullerton today, the conversation went well, we will work on building a relationship over the next 3 years. Charlotte Fire's contract is \$40,000 less than in years past. Unfortunately the Board already completed negotiation's and had come to an agreement prior to the Charlotte Fire contract being offered. Concerns were raised about response time, Supervisor Thering disagreed that there would be a delay by Olivet Fire.

Olivet Fire Contract April 1, 2026 through March 31, 2029- Roll Call Vote, Passes 5-0

- Trustee Heisler-Yes
- Trustee Heisler-Yes
- Treasurer Heisler-Yes
- Supervisor Thering-Yes
- Clerk Cummings-Yes

Supervisor Thering gave a brief overview of the Joint Planning Commission, seven townships will be involved, costs will be split equally among them. The costs starting out will be between \$15,000 and \$25,000, the first year is expected to cost a little more. The cost breakdown is as follows: 20% between 7 townships, 35% based on number of parcels, 35% based on taxable value, and 10% land use matters. Changes can be made to the ordinance but all townships must agree. Supervisor Thering moved to approve the Joint Planning Commission Ordinance, seconded by Clerk Cummings. MOTION CARRIED. Joint Planning Commission Ordinance- Roll Call Vote, Passes 5-0

- Treasurer Heisler-Yes
- Supervisor Thering-Yes
- Trustee Heisler-Yes
- Trustee Starkweather-Yes
- Clerk Cummings-Yes

Clerk Cummings nominated Supervisor Thering to represent Walton Township on the Joint Planning Commission, Clerk Cummings moved to approve, seconded by Trustee Heisler.

Bellevue Township has agreed once all Townships have adopted the Joint Planning Commission Ordinance that they will publish notice on behalf of all seven townships. The costs will be split. Supervisor Thering moved to approve 1/7th of the cost to be paid to Bellevue Township, seconded by Trustee Heisler. MOTION CARRIED.

Reports:

Clerk- Nothing to report.

Supervisor-

Olivet Fire Chief- 11 total calls, 9 medicals and 2 fires for Walton Township. Still working with the local school on a safety committee, seemed to be getting some good direction. Will be attending the show in Indy next week, will be looking at mounts for the new truck and seafoam. Looking at a grass truck with Lee to help with the solar. New truck hopefully will be here the end of April/May. There will be a new mud event for the festival, looking at 75 out of state trucks.

Commissioner- Commissioner Mott gave an update on the ballot items: August primary will have renewals for 911 and the juvenile millage, November general election will be the Road and Eatran. The road millage will be for 10 years instead of 11. The jail and health and rehabilitation millages will be coming off from winter taxes, that is almost 1 mil.

Commissioner Mott has been speaking with Angela Witwer for a while concerning the drain code. Legislatures are working on changing the language for drain codes. Hoping things continue moving forward for this.

Road Commission Update-

Assessing- During board of review in March there were 8 appeals and 1 poverty was approved. Jennifer provided the Board with the State Tax assessment roll certification.

Public Comment-

John Holton asked if rural fire still existed, Supervisor Thering responded yes.

Jim Pion asked if there is a fire in Walton Township are you also getting billed for runs, Supervisor Thering explained we pay a contract, and pay for runs each month. He clarified that this is how it has always been. Man power hours are \$20.00 per hour and \$15.00 after. Charlotte is offering a lot less \$10,000, this is something we have to look at prior to negotiating with another Fire Department, did not want to undercut Olivet. Chief Collins stated they are looking at doing the billing down the road, this is a man power issue. There is a company in Springport, a counsel company working for us not the insurance companies. We won't get much but the only ones that gain are the insurance companies if we don't ask for it. Supervisor Thering stated these costs are not passed to the residents.

Tim Starr would like to comment on the drain bipartisan, we just went through a discussion with the Brown

Drain, there are so many fire walls you had with the old law. Once there is a petition you can't stop it within the 10 days. Really good they are looking into for new projects, spread the information around to a bigger group of people. These are financially overwhelming.

Douglas Norton would like to talk about the junk yard that has been brought in on Elm Rd, this is zoned agriculture prevention. Why is he being allowed to do this, no one is doing anything about it. Supervisor Thering said we as a Township can't do anything about it. This has to be handled through the County. Mr, Norton stated it is lowering his property value. He said Brandy will not do anything either. He has called EGLE and they will not do anything either. He asked if the Township will lower his taxes since the value of his property value as dropped. He asked why what the since of having this meeting is if we don't do anything, Supervisor Thering stated there are a lot of services you would no longer have.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:07p.m. Trustee Heisler moved to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Starkweather, MOTION CARRIED.