

WALTON TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING
MINUTES

October 10, 2023

Present: Supervisor Bob Starkweather, Treasurer Jeanine Nowak, Clerk Erin Cummings, Trustee Tom Harmon, Trustee Richard Heisler, Dave Soblesky Brandy Miller, Chris Garrison, John Conklin, Stewart Conklin, Shelley Mann, Art Williams, Bob Judy, Donny Walters, Amy and Scott Byam, Greg Hetrick, Kathy Carpenter, Lori Norton, Ken McConnell, Joe Kita, Jim Pion, Connie O'Neill, Richard Boughner, Dianne Barmes, Rick and Barb Platzer, Charlie Sharp, Tami Briskie, Lori Norton, Eric Libersher, Dave Moody, Jacob Wildenhaus, Dale Barr, Nancy and John Holton, Terry Sedlar, Tami Briskie, Jerri Cartsinsu, Kathy Gardner, Hayes Martens, and Jim Mott

Absent:

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

Trustee Harmon moved to approve the October agenda. Seconded by Trustee Heisler MOTION CARRIED.

Clerk Cummings presented the payables in written form, Treasurer Nowak moved to transfer \$20,000.00, seconded by Clerk Cummings. MOTION CARRIED

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

CORRESPONDENCE:

The Charlotte Library is looking for all contracted areas to fully join the Library District. Clerk Cummings stated that she has reached out to the library to provide additional details.

NEW BUSINESS:

Master Plan-Brandy Miller presented documents for the update to the Eaton County master plan, the master plan is what drives zoning in Eaton County. Documents attached included 2023 future land use map, existing land use map and existing zoning map along with article 7 of the Eaton County Zoning Ordinance. Explanation. Brandy explained in further detail. Board members did not have any comments at this time. The planning commission will review and move forward with the proposed changes at the October 24th meeting.

Eaton County Early Voting Agreement-This will be a collaboration between 17 municipalities. There will be costs associated, approximately the cost will be \$12,720.00 per election for August and November, we would be required to pay approximately \$750.00 per election. The state has added some state requirements for publications. Clerk Cummings stated that these costs do not include the regular election day costs. The County Clerk is asking the Clerks to sign by next week. Carmel Township has agreed to host the 9 days of early voting. Lots of changes and not a lot of finalized information from the State. Election inspectors will be needed from each municipality. Clerk Cummings moved to approve the agreement and seconded by Treasurer Nowak. MOTION CARRIED.

Revised Cemetery Fees to include 2nd interment-Clerk Cummings explained to the board the reasoning for this change, we do not currently charge if additional cremains are added. We do not feel \$195.00 fee was necessary but we do feel a fee is necessary as the Sexton is still required to handle the paperwork. It was agreed upon that \$100.00 would be a fair price. Clerk Cummings stated she will send out the revised fee schedule to the Funeral Homes. Supervisor Starkweather stated that our cremation burials are cheaper than other townships. Clerk Cummings moved to approve the revised fees and seconded by Trustee Heisler. MOTION CARRIED.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Withdrawal of Open-Air Storage form the Conditional Use Permit CU-10-23-6

The reasoning behind the change is public disapproval and added costs. Supervisor Starkweather stated we still have a problem with the location of the current Transfer Station, he feels it still fits the criteria as well as the Attorney. Supervisor Starkweather stated that we still would like to continue with a new Township Hall as we do not have a lot of room, no storage, additional space needed for elections, it is a 10-year plan. If the conditional use permit gets approved Clerk Cummings will be able to use the house for now to help with additional space for elections. What has happened over the years is that Absentee election officials are required to stay in one room, they are only allowed to leave for restroom breaks. This is a disadvantage as we only have 2 rooms. The rest of the election inspectors do not have anywhere to go for breaks/meals. Clerk Cummings stated we are outgrowing our facility and with the added state requirements for elections it is making it more difficult. Trustee Heisler added that we did try to add on to our current building, due to the proximity of the property line and the parking being in the right of way, we were left with no other options. Clerk Cummings clarified at no time did this board discuss raising property taxes, of course there are yearly tax increases from the State. We have no control over drain assessments, the Township gets hit just as hard. If we do not have the money in the general fund, we are not going to do it. If additional monies were required that is a vote by the residents. Supervisor Starkweather stated that the Township is not required to get approval by the residents to proceed with a Township Hall. Supervisor Starkweather also mentioned having a couple of Public Hearings concerning the current Transfer Station and one prior to building a Township Hall. Supervisor Starkweather stated that we have a contract with Granger until February of 2025. Trustee Heisler stated he feels after the contract is up, we may have to close the Transfer Station, then we will really have people screaming. Clerk Cummings stated we need to deal with the issue at hand, we can talk about the transfer station at a later time. Clerk Cummings moved to approve the withdrawal of the Open-Air Storage from the Conditional Use Permit, seconded by Trustee Heisler. MOTION CARRIED.

Roll Call Vote-Motion Passed

Jeanine Nowak-Abstain
Supervisor Starweather-Yes
Trustee Harmon-Yes
Trustee Heisler-Yes
Clerk Cummings-Yes

Ambulance Service Agreement-A draft ambulance Agreement was shared with the board. Supervisor Starkweather also provided the board with a payment schedule. Supervisor Starkweather mentioned that the Charlotte Fire Department is looking at creating an Ambulance Service, it could take 18 months. Tabled until November, would like to see the comments from the Attorney.

Reports:

- Clerk- BSA Training will take place the Week of November 13th,
- Rural Fire- Meeting in November, no date currently.
- Supervisor-
- Sheriff-65 events
- Olivet Fire Chief-7 total calls for Walton in September.
- County Commissioner- The Governor has introduced the Carbon Neutral Biden which could include taking over zoning from the townships and counties. Jim strongly opposes this, he will be putting through a resolution before the Public Works subcommittee, if it passes there it will go to the full board next week. The county will receive 1.6 million dollars of Opioid settlement money, monies are restricted.
- Road Commissioner Update-
- Assessing-

Public Comment:

- Bob Judy requested the costs that the attorney charged for being at the meeting last week. He does not believe that there are no rodents at the current Transfer Station. The money spent on the Attorney could have bought gravel for Miller. The road is so bad, 2 pickup trucks hit mirrors needs to be widened and gravel added. Taxes pay for gravel through a road millage. Clerk Cummings

stated this is not a question-and-answer time but 2 months ago she spoke with Eaton County and requested they look at Miller Rd as part of the 2024 local road program for next year. The Township does not have a lot of say when it comes to roads.

- Greg Hetrick lives on McDonald Rd, just would like to help. You can use poplar trees to remove the toxins from the ground. This tree can be planted in 10 years in can be cut down and you have also removed the toxins. EPA would not be able to say anything and it would make the people happy.
- Dale Barr-Appreciate the fact that we listened to the people. 7240 Marshall Rd, blight concerns. Brandy is aware, it has been reported. Encourage people to call with their concerns as well.
- Charles Sharp-Thank you for listening to people for removing the Transfer Station. He would like the Township to look at a speaker system to allow people to hear what is going on.
- Art Williams-Art would like the townships help for No Parking Signs near the hill, very dangerous. Clerk Cummings stated she can reach out to the Road Commission but this is regulated by the State Police.
- Donny Walters-Is the Transfer Station profitable or a service. Stated it was a service by choice. Supervisor Starkweather stated we will be looking at ways to bring some costs down.
- Kathy Carpenter-She would like additional information on the new township hall (dimensions etc.) Would like to see a park, dog walk, sledding hills or even just walking paths. Would like to stay up to date on happenings.
- Jim Pion-Discussion about mutual aid.
- John Vanator-Appreciates the dump and has used it most of this life. Enjoys seeing people, would like to see it continue.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 7:52 p.m. Trustee Harmon moved to adjourn, seconded by Clerk Cummings MOTION CARRIED