

Mecosta Township
19729 11 Mile rd., Big Rapids, MI 49307
May 11, 2021

1. Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Supervisor, Michele Graham.
2. Pledge to the flag
3. Roll call: Mary Quinlan, Michele Graham, John Johnson, James Cain. Absent: Lois Brennan.
4. Approval of the agenda: motion to approve agenda with the addition of 11E: Magistrate. Motion by Cain supported by Johnson. All ayes. Motion carried.

5. Approval of the minutes from April 13, 2021 with the correction of the word mention was left out and change Mecosta Township Ball filed to read, *Richard H. Evans Park* under B. Assessor/Supervisor's report. Approved with corrections by Johnson, supported by Cain. All ayes, motion carried.

6. Treasurers Report: Treasurer's report was accepted and entered into the official record.

7. Approval to pay bills in the amount of \$27,799.23 made by Johnson, supported by Cain. Roll Call: Johnson – Yes, Cain – Yes, Quinlan – Yes, Graham- Yes. Brennan – Absent. Motion approved.

8. Brief Public Comment:

Chelsea Hayward, 19946 Pierce Rd., Stanwood. Chelsea voiced her concerns about 200th avenue off 8 Mile which used to be paved. After it was returned to gravel, it has been graded and brined but still would be nice to have it paved to prevent wear and tear on vehicles. Chelsea gave Graham a petition of names who share her concerns.

Cindy Hayward, 10935 196th Ave., Big Rapids expressed her concerns about 200th Ave. and how bad the road is when she travels it to visit her daughter. She wondered how to contact our State Representative. Graham to give her contact information after the meeting.

Deputy Clerk, Jessica Routley. Clerk, Brennan is on vacation and left her Deputy, Routley to make mention of a few items in her absence. Routley said she intended to print reports, but the system was down, and she was not able to print them out. Routley wanted to relay a few comments from the clerk: The election went fine, and the millage did not pass - they had 231 absentee ballots and about 119 in person voters. No votes were rejected, and the process was completed by 10:00 p.m. Also mentionable was the EMC policy to be combined and Amy's (Dalman) title and the position of being zoning admin, fire department minutes from January to April were reviewed and no decision was made, and she is not opposed to amending the 2021-2022 wage increase what was previously discussed and she can back date payables – 1st Responders to January 1, 2021 and Fire Fighters to December 1, 2020. She wanted to talk about the constable and concrete pad outside the back door. Graham reassured Routley that all items mentioned are on the agenda and will be discussed by the trustees at tonight's meeting.

9. Reports:

- A. County Commissioner's Report – Commissioner, Tom O'Neil has a copy of last month's report from the county commissioners. He then questioned the township's board decision to help Big Rapids Township pay for the current road project on 12 Mile Road. He discussed his experience as a former Road Commission employee and his opinion where Mecosta Township Board's decision to go halves with Big Rapids Township to maintain 12-Mile Road which is a shared road. He feels that in the future we should reconsider how we pay for shared road maintenance. He recalled where each township maintained their South and East lines. Graham will investigate said agreements. Graham informed O'Neil about vicious dogs in our township and she has talked to Brian Miller, Sherriff about it. Originally, they said they can only enforce the leash law and then John Johnson found a state law about dangerous dogs. If a resident is to call and get Trent from Mecosta County Animal Control to come out, they generally say, "They don't look like a vicious dog." O'Neil said when Todd Purcell (previous Sherriff) was here he said they could not do anything about it and if it is a vicious dog Newaygo County needs to be called. Graham then questioned why do we pay for Animal Control out of county funds? O'Neil will bring it up at the next Sherriff's meeting. Cindy Hayward was allowed to speak about her dog being attacked recently on 196th Ave. A vicious dog came into their yard and attacked her dog. The incident lasted approximately twenty minutes and the Sheriff's department did come. Discussion on the law enforcement of Animal Control in Mecosta County. Quinlan asked O'Neil how we can enforce the leash law. O'Neil to bring before the next Sherriff's meeting and report back to the township. Graham to talk to the Newaygo County administrator.
- B. Assessor/Supervisor Report – Graham had retention visit with Ice Mountain and met the new plant manager. They want to get involved with the community. The plant manager is trying to bring more employees into the facility and retain them and the lack of housing is a problem. Economic Development has discussed how we can attract more people into the county. Graham has walked the Dragon trail .55 miles. She walks the trail every 2-3 days because of our stake in the grant. Our current trash complaint now has two dumpsters. He is organizing because he had a warehouse where he was selling goods before COVID and is actively working on cleaning up. He is asking for a two-week extension and Graham feels he is doing the best he can and did utilize our junk day. Johnson expressed he would support giving him until May 31, 2021 to continue to clean without further legal action from the Mecosta Township Board. Graham to keep an eye on his progress with pictures recorded. IT Right to work on server where passwords will be required to change every 90 days.
- C. Cemetery Water has not been turned on at the cemetery yet. Waiting for frost to pass.
- D. Budget – Graham noted that the line-item budget for GIS comes out of Assessing Department and is also used by Zoning and would prefer it to be split between the two departments.

- E. Planning Commission – During COVID we lost track of terms with board members. Howard Bowersox needs to be extended from January 1, 2021 thru January 1, 2024. Mike Obert as an alternate for ZBA for the same dates. Moved by Cain, supported by Johnson to extend these dates as discussed. All ayes, motion carried. Cain was not at the last Planning Commission meeting. Graham reported that the Planning Commission is getting into the Master Plan and is waiting for census data sometime around August or September that will help guide this process. Checking to see about zoning that could potentially be changed. Graham mentioned the absence of camping in R2 where it is difficult to explain to residents. Discussion ensued by board members where Graham requested the Planning Commission keep that in mind when discussing the Master Plan.

Unfinished Business:

- A. Fire Department – Fire and First Responder's Payroll was never agreed upon through a motion. Discussion ensued and a motion was made by Johnson, supported by Cain to retroactively change payroll to \$14.00 per hour for both departments. Fire Fighter's to begin December 1, 2020 and First Responder's January 1, 2021. Johnson - yes, Cain - yes, Quinlan - yes, Graham - yes, Brennan - absent. Motion Carried.

Chief Palmer reported that the new lights on the north west side of the station bay over the turnout gear racks are installed and work great. Masks must be worn when in the fire station and while driving apparatus by all employees at all times and when outside when 6' distancing cannot be maintained. No injuries were reported. A new 1.75" nozzle is needed as well as vinyl post covers that have been repainted multiple times for garage door corner protection. There are 12 needed at \$39.99 each for a total of \$479.88 plus shipping at approximately \$50.00. Motion by Johnson, support by Quinlan to spend up to \$1,600 for a new nozzle and corner posts. Roll Call: Johnson – Yes, Quinlan – Yes, Cain – Yes, Graham – Yes. Motion Carried.

Rope training to continue. Palmer e-mailed Ryan Coffey about access to GPS to rover to help with efficiency. Graham thanked Palmer for all his hard work. The last day for Assistant Chief Alan Brennan is June 1st, 2021. Palmer said retirement party is to be announced and he will keep the board informed.

- B. Roads – We have \$65,000 to spend on roads with many roads that need to be repaired. Multiple roads were discussed, and Graham suggested we wait for the clerk to return and directed to board members to make final choices by our June meeting. Graham to send out an e-mail to board members with suggestions to send by next week in order to secure bids for our June meeting
- C. Zoning Administrator – Discussion to make Amy Dalman Zoning administrator after 11 months of working in the building department and helping with zoning. Graham pointed out that the zoning administrator will need to take on the enforcement and she will no longer be accountable as the interim Zoning Administrator. Motion in the form of a

resolution 2021-006 by Quinlan, support by Johnson to make Amy Dalman Mecosta Township's Zoning Administrator effective May 15, 2021. Roll Call: Quinlan – Yes, Johnson – Yes, Cain – Yes, Graham – Yes, Brennan – Absent. Motion Carried.

- D. Ulrich Park. Graham brought a bid before the township board for surface prep, spread and grade the driveway at Ulrich Park for \$1,400. Motion made by Cain, Supported by Johnson. Roll Call: Cain- Yes, Johnson - Yes, Quinlan - Yes, Graham - Yes, Brennan - absent. Motion carried.

- E. DNR TF 19-0060 – The DNR wants us to have another resolution to appropriate all funds necessary to complete the project during the project period to provided \$410,800 to match the grant authorized by the department. Funds are only funneled through Mecosta Township, not funded by Mecosta Township. Graham called MTA who informed her that the supervisor can upload the grant. Motion in the form of a resolution 2021-004 by Cain, supported by Johnson to appropriate all funds necessary to complete the Dragon Project. Roll Call: Cain – Yes, Johnson – Yes, Quinlan – Yes, Graham – Yes, Brennan – Absent. Motion Carried.

New Business:

- A. SAM – U.S. Gov't System for Award Management- Potentially an opportunity to receive \$263,000. A resolution is needed to allow a board member to be administrator of the SAM Account. Motion in the form of a resolution 2021-005 by Cain, supported by Johnson to make Treasurer, Mary Quinlan the administrator of U.S. Government's System for Award Management (SAM) account. Roll Call: Cain – Yes, Johnson – Yes, Quinlan – Yes, Graham – Yes, Brennan – Absent. Motion Carried.

- B. EMC Insurance – Brennan would like to merge two accounts through EMC. Ken Lund from EMC was present and explained the process. We previously had two package policies and two work comp policies which could be one package policy and one work comp policy. Ken also brought the dilemma of building materials skyrocketing for some materials. We currently have a blanket policy on all property. If we had a total loss on our building, we would still have the pole barn to pull some value from to offset the cost to rebuild. Ken suggested that the board consider raising the replacement cost of our buildings. Our policy is renewed each fall. Motion to combine two work compensation policy into one and two EMC policies into one. Motion by Quinlan, support by Cain. All Ayes motioned carried.

- C. C. Website – Township website. IT Right is no longer our host for our website, but we pay \$500 for maintenance. Shumaker Group is now our website manager. ADA standards

are not mandated yet, but we should consider this. \$1,700 to revamp website. Graham suggested we consider this for the future. No action taken.

- D. Township Driveway and Concrete Sidewalks – The township driveway and concrete sidewalks need to be replaced and maintained. The Deputy Clerk fell at the side door where voters walk out of. The board discussed bidding out to township businesses. Graham to get information out to get bids.

- E. Magistrate – Discussion on enforcement if we hired a magistrate that would be familiar with our township. There is a need for enforcement, and we currently have residents who have expressed interest in working part time with enforcement. Graham called Jim Scales, attorney who said that townships should not get involved in county ordinances. Discussion continued about the process of enforcement and prosecution of dog attacks and leash laws. The consensus was to keep township residents safe and sidestep potential litigation by first expecting the county employees to do their job before we take on an ordinance of our own. No action was taken as the board will wait for O’Neill to get back with us. Ken Lund, insurance agent was still present and suggested that if we go before the Mecosta County Board of Commissioners, we need to state that we have talked to our township attorney and this is something we are very concerned about and would like this documented in meeting and the minutes. Making a statement to have the comments recorded in their minutes also helps put the onus on them.

Brief Public Comment – Ken Draves, 21486 8 Mile Road, Stanwood wanted clarification for term limits for planning commission members and clarification on the R2 Camping which is not clear. The township zoning ordinance contradicts itself as far as camping is concerned.

Adjournment 7. Motion to adjourn by John, supported by James. All ayes. Meeting adjourned.

Mary Quinlan,

Acting Secretary