

**WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
BOARD MEETING
Tuesday December 10, 2024
6:00 p.m.**

Supervisor Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Olson, Hollingsworth, Murphy, Baker, Green

Absent: none

Visitors: Ed Taylor

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Approve agenda & additional items: Agenda approved by consensus. All ayes.

Public comments: none

Approve minutes of regular meeting on November 12, 2024: **Hollingsworth made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Olson seconded. All ayes.**

Review correspondence not included below: none.

Thorne Swift Manager Report: Hammond gave his monthly report: Hammond stated he had a great first year, complimented his staff, noted traffic and donations down from previous years, but not a significant amount, discussed the big projects that were completed; managers residence Nature Center display, etc. Hammond discussed the HT Roofing quote for the Pavillion roof. The board asked for two more quotes. Discussed possibility of implementing Venmo next year for purchases and donations. The board congratulated Hammond on his successful first season.

Action Items:

- a. Consideration Committee/Board Representatives –
 - i. Glenn Remus was brought forward as Planning Commission replacement for Ed Murphy. **Green made the motion to appoint Glenn Remus to the Planning Commission replacing Ed Murphy. Hollingsworth seconded. Roll call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes, Murphy – yes. Five (5) ayes.**
 - ii. Stephanie Baker was brought forward as Recreation Committee Township Board Representative. **Murphy made the motion to appoint Baker as Township Board representative. Roll Call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes, Murphy – yes. Five (5) ayes.**

Proposed: December 10, 2024

Accepted: January 14, 2025

- iii. ZBA Appointments: Jim Bartlett brought forward replacing Sam DeCamp, Thomas Cook replacing Glenn Remus as ZBA representative and keep Ed Taylor as Alternate. **Hollingsworth made the motion to accept the appointments of Jim Bartlett, Thomas Cook, and Ed Taylor as Alternate. Baker – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes, Murphy – yes. Five (5) ayes.**
 - iv. Harbor Springs Fire Authority: Ed Murphy will become the Harbor Springs Fire Authority Representative for West Traverse Township. **Olson made the motion to appoint Ed Murphy as the West Traverse Township Board Representative to the Harbor Springs Fire Authority. Green seconded. Roll call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes, Murphy – yes. Five (5) ayes.**
 - v. Harbor Springs Airport Authority: Dave Green will continue to be the Harbor Springs Airport Representative for West Traverse Township. **Hollingsworth made the motion to appoint Dave Green as the West Traverse Township Board Representative to the Harbor Springs Airport Authority. Roll call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes, Murphy – yes. Five (5) ayes.**
 - vi. Pine Tree Trail/Forest Beach: The Associations appoint their own representatives. Ed Murphy will be the West Traverse Township Board Representative. **Olson made the motion to appoint Ed Murphy as the West Traverse Township Board Representative to the Pine Tree Trail/Forest Beach Association. Hollingsworth seconded. Roll Call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes, Murphy – yes. Five (5) ayes.**
 - vii. Board of Review: Murphy spoke with the members of the BOR. John Baker agreed to move up from Alternate to board member and Greg Voelker from board member to the Alternate. Jim Osetek and Liz Ahrens to keep their current positions. **Hollingsworth made the motion to appoint John Baker as board member, Greg Voelker as Alternate and to keep Jim Osetek & Liz Ahrens in their current positions. Olson seconded. Roll Call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes, Murphy – yes. Five (5) ayes.**
- b. Barn Property/Tree Maintenance – Murphy noted the tree limb that punctured a hole in the small barn roof along with the two dead limbs on the township property. Concerns were raised about the 5-6 dead trees that could potentially fall on the garage and the small barn causing further damage. It was decided to obtain three bids to have the hanging branches removed, take down the 5-6 dead trees and remove the limb from the roof of the small barn. Regarding the hole in the roof, the board decided to let it go until a decision can be made about the future of both the barns.
- Following Action Item “b,” the board discussed the draft ordinance concerning the keeping and raising of chickens in the township. ZA Lane provided a copy of

the letter that will be mailed out to the Township Associations informing them of the draft ordinance. Baker questioned if there would be an application process for those that do not live in an association and wish to keep/raise chickens. The board gave ZA Lane permission to send out the letter with a deadline date of December 31, 2025, giving the Associations time to hold their annual meetings and to amend their by-laws. **Green made the motion to send out the letters to the West Traverse Township Associations informing them of the new Chicken Ordinance that will become effective December 31, 2025. Hollingsworth seconded. Roll Call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes, Murphy – yes. Five (5) ayes.**

Reports and Updates:

- a. Clerk – Olson informed the board of a letter received from the Township Attorney, Joel Wurster, informing us of his hourly rate increase from \$220 to \$240 starting January 1, 2025. The board has been pleased with Wurster over the years and is willing to accept the rate change. **Hollingsworth made the motion authorizing the clerk or supervisor to contact Wurster and accept the hourly rate increase from \$220 to \$240. Roll Call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes, Murphy – yes. Five (5) ayes.** Olson questioned the board on the need to review a Conflict-of-Interest policy for the Township. It was decided it was not necessary. Olson updated the board on the recent Township domain change from .com to .gov. The transition has been made and the website has been updated to reflect the new emails ending with .gov. Murphy addressed the question about Township Trustees having their own email accounts. It was decided that there isn't a significant need for them. Olson also informed the board that the current email system, Round-Cube, will be unsupported at the end of this year facilitating the need to upgrade the township computer systems/programs. Discussion followed on updating to Microsoft 365 which uses the Outlook Mail program along with adding software such as Excel and Windows 11. Baker asked if the current computer system would support the upgrades which it will. Olson will explore the details such as cost, etc. and have a report for the January meeting.
- b. Treasurer – Winter 2024 tax bills were mailed on 11-30 along with the Sewer bills. Hollingsworth mentioned utilizing a check scanning system for taxes that the banks currently use. She will be looking into it further. She also noted that she will be in the office all day Friday December 27 to collect taxes for people who want to pay before the year end. Hollingsworth submitted the recent Investment Policy for the new board to re-approve. **Green made the motion to approve the Investment Policy. Murphy seconded. Roll Call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes, Murphy – yes. Five (5) ayes.**
- c. Planning Commission – Green informed the board that the Polo Field on Hughston Rd will be discussed at the Planning commission meeting.
- d. Zoning Administrator - included in packet.
- e. Recreation/Thorne Swift Committee – none

- f. Supervisor – Murphy updated the board on the recent HS Fire Authority Board and the possibility of the Fire Dept hiring a full time Chief.

Approve payables & payroll – **Green made the motion to approve the payables and payroll as presented. Hollingsworth seconded. All ayes.**

Public comments – Ed Taylor questioned if the keeping and raising of chickens in the township would be for commercial or residential use.

Board comments – Green asked if the board would consider visiting a township downstate to view their new township office as a potential building for a future new West Traverse Township Hall. There was discussion by the board members about a new hall and the future of the current building when a new one is built.

Next Regular Meeting – **Next meeting, January 14, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.**

Supervisor Murphy adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Jay Olson, Clerk

Transcribed by:
Amy Peters