

Bear Creek Township Board Meeting
October 2, 2019

- I. Called to order at 7:05 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call**
 - a. Golding, Hoffman, Nowland, Keiser, Kendziorski
 - b. Others Present: Al Welsheimer, Joe Villemure, Mitch Brown, Jeff Haven, Karla Buckmaster, Jacob Schomak, Quinn Logee, Tate Wilder, Angelo Allen, Jackson Jonker, Blake Buchanan, Gavin Warsen
- III. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- IV. **Approval of Minutes**
 - a. Minutes from four meetings: Regular BCT Board Meeting on September 4, 2019, BCT Board Meeting Closed Session on September 4, 2019, BCT Special Meeting on September 30, 2019 and BCT Special Meeting Closed Session on September 30, 2019.
 - b. **Motion** by Hoffman to approve all sets of minutes, 2nd by Nowland. **Unanimous**
- V. **Request from the Floor/Discussion**
- VI. **Approval of the Agenda**
- VII. **Unfinished Business**
 - a. **Roads- Report by Keiser**
 - i. Atkins Rd is being reconstructed. The pavement is all off and they are hauling gravel. They finished compacting and will be ready to pave next week. There will be a few cost overruns due to a few curves which need to be balanced out for drainage purposes.
 - ii. In regards to Cedar Valley Rd (between Atkins and Greenwood), the original estimate was for \$125,000-\$135,000. We also got a suggestion that we go up Greenwood a bit and take the bump out of the hill. The road would need to be balanced on the hill, and the estimate came in there around \$292,000. Elmer's was the low-bidder for that project at \$190,000. Keiser suggested we re-bid it next year in February for 2020.
 - iii. There is some washout going on on Country Club Rd. Originally, the main gas line was buried in the bottom of the ditch and was recently washed out by the storm by Boyer Rd. Additionally, the ditch line is so high that the water can't run from the road into the ditch. Water run off on the side of the road is causing erosion on shoulder.
 - b. **Library Report- Report by Keiser**
 - i. Keiser reported that the library hired two new part-time staff members. The annual Friends of the Library dinner will be held Oct. 7th and Ann Lewis will be the new president this year. Jan Smith, a long time supporter of the library will not be able to be at the dinner this year due to health reasons. Val won a State Librarian Award. The wireless users are up and about 1/3 of the people coming to the library are using the self-check out. The library is also planning to go fine-free other than equipment, and is planning for a 2020 wage increase.
 - c. **Blight- Report by Villemure**
 - i. Villemure reported on five cases.
 - ii. Villemure is requesting a slight change in the Bear Creek Blight Ordinance. He requests that if a blight complaint letter from an Association has two Association board member's signatures, that letter would meet the two letter requirement.
 - 1. Keiser will speak to the township attorney regarding this matter.
 - d. **Memorial Policy**

- i. At Jones Landing, the new memorial bench that has been put in has a lip that raises it above the ground. The Board discussed bringing dirt around the front to level it to the ground.
 - 1. Villemure will follow up with this.
 - ii. In regards to the new Memorial Policy, Nowland would like to see something in the policy to ensure that if someone was planning to put in a memorial, they would have to run a plan by the Parks and Recreation Committee first before putting the memorial in place.
- e. **Cemetery Board Appointment**
- i. Dave Behling moved out of the township and retired from the cemetery board.
 - ii. Keiser reported that Rick Gillis is interested in serving as his replacement. His only concern is if it would be considered a conflict of interest in his occupation. The state clarified there is no conflict and has said that other morticians serve on cemetery boards, so the cemetery board is looking more into this.
 - iii. Susan Coveyou from Resort Township recommended someone from our township board sit on the cemetery board.

VIII. **New Business**

a. **Sewer Meter Reader**

- i. Bob Wonnacott would like to move on from his position as the sewer meter reader and has offered to help train a new person. Keiser would like to find someone who has a general idea of how these work in case a meter needs a slight fix.
- ii. Don Nowland has offered to work with Bob and learn the job. Bob will help train him and has offered to stay on until the last quarter (Dec) but he would like to move on after that.

b. **Workforce Housing**

- i. Keiser reported on some new possible developments in our area, which include:
 - 1. Flynn's pit near Intertown Rd (160 units)
 - 2. Meadows by Walmart (30 units)
 - 3. Petoskey East behind Schuill's farm (133 units)
 - 4. Pickerel Lake Rd at Manthei's Pit (125 units)
 - 5. Country Club Rd at the corner of Woodridge Dr (116 units)
 - 6. Flynn/Behan at the corner of US 31 and Shaw (200-300 units)
- ii. These would be multi-family developments and would have to overcome the obstacle of providing sewer/utilities.

c. **North Country Trail**

- i. Keiser reported that the North Country Trail workers were approved to go through Bear Creek Township property to cut a trail. However, they found that the ditch is deep at McDougal, and they would like the township to apply and sign for a permit for a culvert.

d. **Employee Handbook**

- i. The Board would like to clarify part of the Employee Policies and Guidelines Handbook to state that, "All employees represent the elected officials of the Township Board and should conduct themselves as such." Additionally, in the section titled "Conduct, which will result in disciplinary counseling", to add the following lines:
 - 1. "Failure to wear proper identification when performing field work or inspections"
 - 2. "Failure to identify themselves with a name, position and business card at a jobsite"

3. “Failure to report all incidents of a confrontation wither in the office or out of the office immediately to the township supervisor (or office staff if supervisor is unavailable)
- ii. Additionally, in the section on “Retirement Benefits”, the wording should be updated to say “Empower” rather than “John Hancock” and should represent a 3% match rather than a 2% match.
 1. Kendziorski suggested having a statement for all township employees to sign acknowledging that they have received a copy of the updated Employee Policies and Guidelines and agree to abide by these guidelines.
- iii. **Motion** by Kendziorski to adopt the revised Employee Policies and Guidelines by adding the following lines: “All employees represent the elected officials of the Township Board and should conduct themselves as such”, “Failure to wear proper identification when performing fieldwork or inspections”, “Failure to identify themselves with a name, position and business card at a jobsite”, and “Failure to report all incidents of a confrontation wither in the office or out of the office immediately to the township supervisor (Or office staff if supervisor is unavailable)”. Also to replace the words “John Hancock Institute” with “Empower” and “2%” with “3%” in the Retirement Benefits section. 2nd by Hoffman. **Passed**
- iv. **Motion** by Kendziorski that all employees, upon receiving the updated “Employee Policies and Guidelines” by October 7th at the latest, must return a signed acknowledgment stating that they received and accept the policies by October 11th at 3pm or they will be subject to disciplinary action. 2nd by Hoffman. **Passed**

IX. Planning/Zoning Report- Report by Kendziorski

- a. No Planning Commission meeting this month.
- b. The Township Board and Planning Commission are both invited to attend the Emmet County Planning Commission meeting on Thursday Oct 3rd at 7:30 to discuss workforce housing and the possible new developments coming in the area.
- c. Hoffman is concerned about the sewer if all the new developments go in.

X. Fire Department- Report by Welsheimer

- a. Haven asked about the new Marriott Hotel and if they receive our fire services or how that works since it is tribal land. Welsheimer clarified they have a contract with Resort Bear Creek Fire Dept.
- b. Welsheimer reported 8 EMS and 20 fire calls.
- c. Fire Prevention Week is next week! The Fire Dept has already visited Montessori schools.
- d. Welsheimer brought an example of the new address signs for people’s homes that are in. These signs would make it easier for emergency services to find residents in need.
 - i. The Board discussed whether we could make it part of the permitting process. It would be nice for all new homes to have one of these signs installed. When someone comes in for a permit, they could also receive information about these signs.
- e. Welsheimer clarified that we will just be selling just the sign (stake not included) for \$15. Additionally, the Fire Dept will offer to help individuals install the sign at their home if needed.

XI. Parks & Recreation Report- Report by Nowland

- a. No meeting this past month, but the committee is meeting next week. They are in the process of updating the recreation plan.
 - i. Keiser asked if we could have one joint meeting between the Parks and Recreation Committee and the Township Board to discuss this.

- b. Keiser reported that there has been a homeless man sleeping in the Spring Lake Park bathrooms. This has been a repeat offense and the police have been notified. Keiser changed the door locks on the bathroom from 11pm to 9pm.
- c. Keiser also reported that he fixed some railings at Spring Lake Park.

XII. Correspondence

- a. Letter from Charter
- b. Beth Ann Prince sent a thank-you letter in regards to the new bench that was put in at Jones Landing.
- c. MTA sent information regarding two upcoming workshops
- d. Reminder about the MTA Chapter Meeting on Oct 16th

XIII. Clerk's Business/Bills- Report by Kendziorski

- a. Kendziorski reported bills in the amount of \$464,030.77. This includes the Emmet County Road Commission bill that was approved at last month's meeting for \$208,940.92, as well as another bill to the Road Commission for \$169,887.30. These bills account for why the total bill amount may seem so high.
- b. In regards to the November election, the AV Applications have been mailed out, and roughly 750 have been returned. Kendziorski and Dufek sent out the AV ballots today.
- c. Kendziorski has been in communication with election inspectors and has found enough to cover the November 2019 election. Election inspectors need to be appointed by the election commission by October 15th.
- d. Kendziorski and Dufek are preparing to attend as many trainings as possible to prepare for the upcoming election.
- e. Kendziorski has been looking into the possibility of combining precinct 1 and 2 in the future (before 2020). It is a feasible project that would save the township money in the long run, but it would cost in the short term, as new voter registration cards would have to be sent to voters with their new precinct assignments.
- f. Lastly, with the passage of Proposal 18-3, anyone can now vote absentee. Kendziorski reported that there will be a large influx of people requesting to vote absentee next year, and it would be best to be proactive. She is hoping to send out postcards to all voters who are not permanent AV voters already inviting them to join the permanent AV list. This would help the Clerk's Office be more prepared for 2020 elections.
- g. **Motion** by Kendziorski to pay the bills in the amount of \$464,030.77. 2nd by Golding.

Unanimous

XIV. Treasurer's Report- Report by Golding

- a. The Treasurer's Report shows a balance of \$6,515,088.62 as of 10/2/19.

XV. Building Department Report- Report by Golding

- a. Golding gave a building department report as of September 30, 2019.

XVI. Sewer Business/Bills- Memo from Keiser

- a. Bills were reported for the amount of \$113,835.62.
 - i. **Motion** by Keiser to pay the sewer bills in the amount of \$113,835.62. 2nd by Golding.
Unanimous
 - ii. Keiser has been talking to the Harbor Springs Sewer Authority about renting more capacity. The original agreement was that when the plant got to 90% capacity, we would have to help build onto the plant. We currently rent 250,000 gallons from the member communities. We are at our 250,000 gallons currently, so Keiser has asked that we rent 150,000 more.
 - iii. City of Harbor may partner with us to help build the plant in the future, because they would like more capacity as well. Until the plant is at 90% capacity, there is no need to

build on. Until then, there are other townships who are not at full capacity that may rent some of their capacity to us.

XVII. Request from the Floor/Discussion

- a. Karla Buckmaster: Stated that she is coming to the Planning and Zoning meeting tomorrow night but has some questions to prepare herself for that meeting.
 - i. First of all, she would like a copy of the list of possible new developments.
 - ii. Secondly, she wanted to clarify that only people who are connected to the sewer are involved in paying for it- (INCLUDING these new developments). Keiser confirmed that this is correct.
 - iii. Buckmaster also asked which developers are coming to the meeting tomorrow? Keiser clarified that only Monthei is coming tomorrow evening.
 - iv. Buckmaster then asked what the township is responsible for in regards to housing?
 1. Keiser clarified that technically, Bear Creek Township is not responsible for anything, but because we are surrounded by city of Petoskey, we have the land and the infrastructure. Even though we aren't responsible, it will still fall in our lap because it will affect our township.
 - v. Buckmaster asked how exactly it will affect Bear Creek Township?
 1. Keiser clarified that new developments would benefit the township by bringing in more taxpayers and more people buying utilities, but it would also put pressure on the township in ways such as the fire department or clerk's office during elections. With growth comes pros and cons, however, growing means a demand for services.
 - vi. Buckmaster also asked how it would affect her, as a taxpayer?
 1. Keiser clarified that it would mainly affect taxpayers through the general fund. For example, if the fire department needed more money. He also specified that Bear Creek Township is not offering anything or advertising for these new developments at this time.
 - a. Keiser specified further that so far, no developers have asked for tax abatements, but that doesn't mean they won't.
 - vii. Buckmaster asked about the overall health of the township.
 1. The Board confirmed that Bear Creek Township is healthy right now. While there is a housing crisis, it is recognized that Bear Creek Township doesn't have to tackle it alone.
- b. Jackson Jonker: Asked if Emmet County were to become tribal land, how would that affect the township and zoning?
 - i. Keiser explained that it would affect zoning, for example, your neighborhood could have a business next to it. Taxation could also be affected.
- c. Angelo Allen: Asked if he could have a copy of the newly revised handbook.

XVIII. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Emma Kendziorski

Emma Kendziorski,
Bear Creek Township Clerk