

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING MINUTES

IN PERSON MEETING

April 17, 2025

Held at Washington Township Hall, 8989 S. Baldwin Rd. Ashley, MI 48806

- I. Meeting called to order by Howard Whaley at 7:04pm, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll call- All Present: Eric Whitford, Nancy Rogers, Kevin Whaley, Tarry Stahl, Howard Whaley.
- II. Motion to approve minutes from 3/20/2025 Board meeting by Kevin, 2nd by Nancy, all in favor, motion carried.
- III. Motion to approve Agenda as written, by Eric, 2nd Nancy, all in favor, motion carried.
- IV. In order to balance the fiscal year end, money needed to be added to the income line of the budget. A recent deposit of \$571.75 from other revenue and an additional \$100,000 from State Grants brought the total income to \$288,403.04. Income and spending were balanced. Motion to approve adjustment made to the 2024/2025 budget to balance the fiscal year end made by Howard, 2nd by Nancy, roll call votes, yeas-Kevin, Tarry, Nancy, Eric. Howard; motion carried. Motion to accept financial reports upon reconciliation (unable to reconcile & balanced at this time per Clerk) of account and with corrections to text & date by Nancy, 2nd by Howard, roll call votes, yeas-Tarry, Nancy, Eric, Kevin, Howard; motion carried.
- V. Open Issues/Visitors:
 - a) Grants update – Nancy sent the last of the Township offices grant information to Maddie, who has passed it on to be processed for the final reimbursement. A check is expected in two to three weeks, at which time the grant can be closed. Nancy has also submitted a grant request to DTE to pay for tire removal from the township constituents. If approved a dumpster will be dropped off at the hall for old tire collection on October 9th.
 - b) .gov emails–Tarry was able to get .gov email to work but struggles with 365 office not being on the desktop. He will continue to work with it and may suggest upgrading from Business Basic to Business Standard with Office on the desktop.
 - c) Suggestions for Auditor – Kevin showed two responses from auditors he has contacted. Tarry was asked to forward the attachments to the board members so they can study the responses before the next board meeting. It was recommended that an audit be conducted this year to prevent a financial audit at the same year and time as a major election.
 - d) Planning Commission Update – Eric Announced two openings on the Planning Commission and asked for suggestions for possible candidates to be submitted to the board.
 - e) PILT vs Ad Valorem – Howard gave a reminder presentation of the differences between PILT (payments in lieu of taxes) paid to the township by DTE for the solar

energy farm, and Ad Valorem (taxes paid to county by DTE based on depreciation of value), a percentage is paid by the county to the township. Howard requested a motion to accept PILT payments with additional benefit amount, or default to Ad Valorem payments on June 20th. Nancy made a motion to table the discussion until the next meeting in May. Eric requested Nancy amend the motion to Table until a **proposed agreement is received from DTE**. Nancy agreed and made the amended motion to table until a proposed agreement is received from DTE, 2nd by Eric, roll call vote, yeas-Kevin, Tarry, Nancy, Eric, nays-Howard; motion carried.

- f) Cemetery Cleanup-Nancy stated that May 10th is the scheduled day for cleanup at Collier cemetery on Ranger Road with May 17th as the backup date in case of rain. Requested attendees to bring their own hand tools to use during cleanup.
- g) Overage Payment Policy-Tarry is still working on a proposed overage policy.
- h) Phones for offices-Point Broadband moved their phone box and internet box from the old Clerks office into the General use area of the new office. More handsets for the old phone are not readily available to purchase, so a new phone system may need to be purchased if handsets for each office are desired by all.
- i) Bathroom/Closet (old office) renovations-Pam said planning is on hold until Barbara recovers from illness.
- j) Road Commission Update-Howard stated that a county driver will contact him when the planned roadwork proceeds. Spoils from pulling berms may be available to township residents if requested from Howard. Planned work includes:
 - 1. Baldwin Road from Ranger Road to M-57
 - 2. Ranger Road from Crapo Road to US-127
 - 3. South County Line Road from Baldwin Road to Wisner Road

VI. Public Comment for old business/open issues

Carl brought up the need for more gravel in the parking area. Howard responded that 30 yards will be delivered, the sod in the corner of the new lot will be removed, and the gravel will be spread out.

VII. New Business: ☐

- a. MAGNET Donation-Howard said a representative was requested to attend the April board meeting to make a presentation on what they do, but no one was available to attend. It was decided to invite a representative to the May board meeting.
- b. Cemetery-Nancy said she and her son-in-law picked up four garbage cans of sticks at the Collier cemetery from the last windstorm and piled them to be burned pending a permit. Nancy requested three changes to the cemetery ordinance by the Planning Commission. 1. Change the start date for placing flowers and decorations at gravesites from May 1st to May 15th. 2. Remove the 15" of available space on the back side of the headstone to allow mowing closer to the back side. 3. Change the removal date for

flowers and decorations to April 1st in preparation for spring cleaning. 4. Remove the word Sexton from the ordinance.

More discussion: An unspecified church has requested to be able to purchase burial sites to be used by them in the future to bury their deceased themselves. Our cemetery ordinance states that burials must be conducted by or under supervised of the Cemeterian and Nancy said it would not be allowed at the Collier Cemetery. Eric and Nancy suggested considering setting up the Hufford Historical Cemetery as an option for their self-conducted burials. An agreement would need to be drafted stating easement to the Hufford site and a requirement that records pertaining to the burial be provided to the Township Cemeterian to maintain permanent records at the Township. Nancy said they would need a burial certificate from a funeral home and a burial vault.

- c. APARA reports due end of April-Kevin state he did take a training course online and another one was available, He didn't believe he had access to the site to do the reports, but Barbara does, so he will connect with her to submit the reports.
 - d. Common area printer-Tarry stated he is working on printer options for purchase. Eric and Nancy expressed an urgent need due to in office time and no printer available. Howard stated a printer is in the budget and needs to be ordered as soon as possible. Tarry will proceed with a choice and purchase.
 - e. Battery Storage-Howard stated that Gratiot County still hasn't established an ordinance for battery storage for the county and suggested the township remains on hold for establishing our own ordinance until the county has moved forward.
- VIII. Letters/Correspondence: Kevin said he received a letter from KCI Company concerning printing and mailing of tax notices. They mail out notices individually for each parcel of land as opposed to one mailing for multiple parcels to a single individual. Expressed a lack of interest in pursuing their services.
- IX. Additional Public Comments: Theresa from DTE suggested that DTE may have information/recommendations for battery storage ordinances.
- X. Motion made to adjourn by Nancy, 2nd by Kevin, all in favor. Adjourned at 8:49pm

Respectfully submitted and posted by Tarry Stahl, Township Clerk

Approved: 

Washington Township Supervisor / Date

Tarry Stahl 5/15/25

Washington Township Clerk / Date