

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING MINUTES

IN PERSON MEETING

May 15, 2025

Held at Washington Township Hall 8989 S. Balwin Rd. Ashley, Michigan

- I. Meeting called to order by Supervisor Whaley at 7:00 PM, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call-Present Eric Whitford, Nancy Rogers, Tarry Stahl, Kevin Whaley, & Howard Whaley
- II. Motion to approve minutes of April 17, 2025 Board Meeting minutes made by Nancy Rogers, 2nd by Kevin Whaley, all in favor.
- III. Nancy suggested adding the Zoning report as a permanent addition to the agenda. Howard added it as letter m} under Open Issues/Visitors and made it a regular part of the agenda. Motion made by Nancy Rogers to approve with amendments, 2nd by Howard Whaley, Voice Vote, all in favor.
- IV. Motion to approve financial reports as presented by Treasurer upon reconciliation & balancing by Treasurer/Clerk made by Nancy Rogers, 2nd by Howard Whaley, Roll Call Vote-yeas, Eric Whitford, Nancy Rogers, Kevin Whaley, Tarry Stahl & Howard Whaley, nays, none
- V. Open Issues/Visitors: Kale DeMott asked about the possibility of getting Chloride put on gravel roads to cut down on dust to the higher traffic. Howard explained our agreement with the county to him for Chloride and Nancy explained the extra cost associated for extra treatments.
 - a) Howard brought up the need for a vote on PILT vs Ad Valorem. He and Nancy received a copy of the PILT agreement with Pine River Township from DTE as an example of our agreement. Eric Whitford made a motion to table the vote until everybody on the board can read a copy of an agreement from DTE specifically for Washington Township, 2nd by Kevin Whaley, Voice Vote-yeas, Eric Whitford, Nancy Rogers, Tarry Stahl, Kevin Whaley, nays, Howard Whaley
 - b) 127 "Sale Lot"- Howard stated there is no requirement from the County Drain Commission or MDOT for drainage, however an application to conduct business is required by the county for a Business Permit. He stated the Township focus should now be on rezoning as commercial. He also stated that he is waiting on paperwork from the lawyers to seek an injunction for the property due to the owner doing business on the property without a business permit. As Zoning Officer, he felt it was his responsibility to go before a judge and have access to the area chained shut for operating without a Business Permit.
 - c) Grants Update-Nancy is still waiting for the final payment for the Grants before she can fill out the paperwork to close the account. She got a response back for the grant request she submitted for tire removal, but it is still being reviewed for approval.

- d) Final Build Update/Funds - Nancy reported that the backfill around the building was finished and that Trevor said more wasn't necessary because landscaping around the building would raise it more. She also asked about whether or not a deck was being added before the sidewalk was added. The quote for sidewalk she had was for about 1/3 the cost of what she estimated was needed, and we would need to get on Trevor's list and get a new quote for sidewalk. The board members agreed for her to continue with the sidewalk and for Howard to contact Levi about adding a deck between the new kitchen door and the office door with a wheelchair ramp. According to Nancy, funds remaining are at zero until we get a check from the state which should add about \$30,000 to finish the project.
- e) .gov emails update-Tarry Reported that he is more comfortable with using the Microsoft Office 365 cloud and will start installing it on the rest of the Township computers. Will start with Nancy's laptop and more will be done after hers is finished.
- f) Suggestions for new auditor- Howard reviewed the three prices and information presented at the last board meeting by Keven and forwarded by email to each board after the meeting. Smith and Klackioewicz, PC had been highly recommended by current users. The proposal statement was not to exceed base fee, including out-of-pocket expenses for audit services for the years ending March 31, 2025, through 2029 is \$8,000 for the audit and \$600 for completion and submission of Form F-65. Nancy made a motion to accept the proposal from Smith and Klackioewicz, PC. Motion 2nd by Kevin, Roll Call Vote-yeas Eric Whitford, Nancy Rogers, Kevin Whaley, Tarry Stahl, Howard Whaley, nays, none. Kevin will contact Smith and Klackioewicz, PC. About a contract.
- g) Planning Commission-Suggestions for planning commission members – Nancy was contacted by Brian Wolfe who is interested in being on the planning commission. Other names were brought up from the last meeting, but none have responded with a positive desire to fill a position. Candidates to fill the two open positions need to be voted on at the June 19th Board Meeting.
- h) Cemetery Cleanup update- Nancy reported there were 20 volunteers, J. Ranck provided two skid loaders and a load of gravel for the drive, DTE provided grass seed and refreshments. Noted that a couple of headstones with cement bases are tipping and she has contacted MTA about how to fix them.
- i) The clerk has written a new Overage Policy Resolution. Howard read the Policy and Tarry suggested a lawyer be contacted before proceeding with a vote. Kevin suggested the statement "for taxes" be removed so that it applies to all payments to the Township. Howard made a motion to submit a copy for legal review of the Overage/Underage Payment Resolution with the suggested changes. Tarry will submit the proposal and have a response for the next meeting, 2nd by Nancy, Voice Vote, yeas, all, nays none

- j) Road Commission update- Howard reported that the Road Commission will start removing berms the first part of the week.
 - k) The common office area printer has arrived and can be connected wirelessly to laptops. Tarry can assist if needed.
 - l) Cemetery Ordinance- Nancy had made some changes updated for when to put out and remove flowers from around the headstones but has more changes to make to the ordinance before presenting it for a vote. Additional changes to the allowed width of headstones for a plot are required to prevent the poured base for the headstone from encroaching into another plot. Nancy asked permission from the board to contact Kyle about proceeding with the use of Hufford Historical Cemetery by a church for self-conducted burials. A survey will need to be conducted to move the easement for Hufford Cemetery to the North on the current landowner's property. The church indicated that they would pay for the survey. Motion made by Kevin for Nancy to contact the lawyers about the Hufford Cemetery Ordinance, 2nd by Howard, Roll Call vote, yeas, Kevin, Tarry, Howard, Nancy, Eric, nays, none
 - m) Zoning Report-Howard will be doing a report every month from now on. Howard stated that last week he sent out twelve certified letters regarding blight with a paragraph of the applicable Zoning Ordinance. To date only six have been signed for and returned. Letter was sent to Seth Wolfe, Rod Huss, Phil Patrick (2), McBride (3), Zammaron, Craig Cumberworth, Chris Patrick and Ben Orweller. Howard has received payment for a construction application from Trademark Construction and passed the fee on to Kevin.
- VI. Public Comment for old business/open issues - Discussion was started about load restrictions on roads being violated by various parties including big manure haulers damaging the roads with no resolution for prevention. Also had more discussion about drain requirements for Patrick's rezoning commercial area on US 127.
- VII. New Business:
- a) PA116 for Coleman-Howard presented the request from Karen Coleman to convert four parcels of farm property in Washington Township to PA116. They do meet the requirements, and Howard requested a motion for approval so the Clerk can sign and submit to the state. Kevin made the motion to approve, 2nd by Nancy, Voice Vote, yeas, all, nays none
 - b) Tarry suggested adding mail slots to the Clerk and Treasurers office doors so that sensitive material, such as checks, can be passed between them. Nancy stated all offices have the same issue and Eric suggested purchasing mailboxes that lock in the common area as an alternative to slots in the new doors. Howard asked Tarry to investigate the mailbox option.
 - c) Land Splits /Add to Fee Schedule? - Howard reviewed the land split resolution with the board. Nancy felt that CSZ should be able to do what was necessary in

a split to recover their cost without going through the Township, because a split is over and above the norm. She also didn't feel a contract revision was necessary until the renewal is due in 2026. It was decided that the revision be scrapped and the \$150 already received by the Township for a Split be paid to CSZ as soon as possible.

d) ARPA Account - Howard/Kevin - Check has not been deposited per Kevin.

e) Township Cleanup date- Nancy made a motion to make October 4, 2025 the Township cleanup day, 2nd by Tarry, Voice Vote, yeas, all, nays none.

Conversation resumed about getting the dumpsters and it was suggested we collect the metal and sell it for income for the Township.

f) Township Flag update/info gathering- Annette said a 2' x 3' two-sided flag cost is \$79.20 each. A question was raised about a discount for a multiple flag purchase. Annette will follow up.

g) Landscaping/Fencing/Playground- Barb has a basic plan, but Howard stated that Barb still needs to finalize the plans for the playground and pavilion. Also need to get landscaping finalized, decide who will do the landscaping and get quotes. Howard suggested that subsoil will need to be moved away from the building soon.

VIII. Letters/Correspondence: Howard asked Eric if there was a resolution with the State in regard to Proposal 2. Eric had no new information to report on. Howard read a letter from the Michigan Public Service Commission in regard to holding a public hearing concerning Consumer Energy's request to approve building a solar farm in Essexville. Since it isn't in our Township he moved on, but he said it's a concern because it displays how the state is taking control out of the local government for approval.

IX. Additional Public Comments - Howard asked a visitor sitting in the back to introduce herself. She stated her first name, walked to the table and told Howard she was serving him papers. Howard signed them and thanked her for waiting, and she left the meeting. Nancy asked if it was papers for the township and Howard answered that it was papers for him.

X. Howard adjourned the meeting at 8:53 PM

Respectfully submitted by Tarry Stahl, Township Clerk