

WHITEFORD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

April 16, 2024

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance: Supervisor Walter Ruhl called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:30 pm in the Whiteford Township Office, 8000 Yankee Road, Suite 100, Ottawa Lake, MI 49267. Board members present were Donald Sahloff, Timothy Hill, Bernice Heidelberg, Christine Bischoff and Walter Ruhl. Attorney Alex Drescher was present. There were approximately 17 guests present. Zoom was available to view the meeting.

Approve Agenda: Supervisor Walter Ruhl received a phone call from a resident requesting item #14 be removed - *Motion to pass resolution number 2024-04-01 stating the township board is to pursue any reasonable grant available to the township.* Motion by Christine Bischoff second by Don Sahloff to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed with a voice vote.

Public Comment: Tom Wenzel, 8259 Sylvania Petersburg Road had concerns about the lack of notification from the township regarding the Pilot oil leak.

Supervisor Comments: Supervisor Walter Ruhl read the following comments:

Statement about the leak at Pilot

Will Bruck had an informational Town Hall meeting last Wednesday that included all the Agencies involved in the cleanup.

If you have questions that are not answered, and we cannot answer, please submit your questions in writing and we will try to get an answer.

1. First the time line as I know it: The problem was first reported to EGLE on Thursday March 21,2024, not the fire department. It appeared to EGLE to be minor at that time. It rained and the problem was reported again on Monday, March 25. This time they considered it a major leak and the process to find the source of the leak began.
2. Between the 25th and the 27th all elected officials were notified, except local officials. This included State Representatives, and Congressmen. The governor was also notified. Not the County Board or township.
3. On Wednesday March 27, they called me asking for drainage maps. I took the maps that I have to them but they wanted farm drainage maps rather than maps of county drains. There are no maps of farm drainage.
4. On March 28, I was told to get the word out to the residents, so I posted a notice on our website and Facebook. They didn't like my post and told me to take it down and only post official press releases. Since that time, we have only been told to repost Press Releases, but the media gets them before we do and post them to social media.
5. I have been told that cleanup will be a long process.
6. The township is no longer in the informational chain. We get our information from the EGLE website, just like everyone else.
7. We have participated in the distribution of water to the residents, we are cooperating in every way possible. The need for the water has eased and we will not be manning the distribution any longer, but water will be available at the Whiteford Center Fire Department. If anyone needs help or needs water delivered to their home, they should call our office.
8. The public water was not ever in question. The restaurants were never closed or asked not to serve the public water.
9. The school was told to not use water for drinking, because they have 2 wells and the Health Department had no idea how the wells were being utilized. Once the test came back negative the restrictions were removed.
10. We will continue to do everything we are asked to do, by all the agencies involved.

11. As of Friday April 5th, Representative Will Bruck has been working to coordinate the efforts and keep the public informed. A town hall meeting was held at noon and 5 with all the agencies involved. Almost 300 people were in attendance. Thank you Will, this was way beyond what the township officials can do.
12. We are not allowed to do anything on our own, not even take samples of well water.

General Comments:

- This township has been growing and changing forever.
- We have all our roads paved. We are the only township in the county, to have all paved roads.
- In 1948 we had no telephone service because of an ice storm. It took 2 years to repair.
- There were parts of the township that had no electric service into the early 50's.
- There was no natural gas.
- We have a cemetery with paved roads. You used to get stuck in the sand.
- We have some street lights
- We now have sewer lines to help stop some of the pollution of our aquifer.
- Parts of the township have really bad water and we were able to get a grant to help with the cost of the water and processing.
- The only park was in Ottawa Lake.
- Whiteford Stone Co. Park, today, has 8 ball fields and a soon to be completed Pickleball court, plus an 18-hole Disk Golf course. There are over 2 miles of walking paths, plus two large pavilions. There are seven small pavilions and numerous benches and picnic tables
- We are the only park in the area that has a charging station for EVs.
- This summer the Fall Festival Committee will be building a playground for Stone Co Park that will be safe for all.
- Whiteford Township, until about 60 years ago had no community school. The kids went to Blissfield, Bedford and some went to Sylvania.
- Today we have a school that is the envy of most of the other schools in the county.
- This board has always had the best of intentions, for the township. We, to a person, have volunteered for a lot of things, from 4H to Whiteford REC, to coaching and being volunteers on the fire department and many others. This community has always been progressive in trying to find a way to make this a better place for all our residents.
- We live in an area with a very fragile Aquifer and must do all we can to keep it from getting polluted. The EPA, EGLE, The Health Department and Emergency Management are all working very hard to correct the problem caused by a leak. We will work with them as they allow us to and get this problem resolved.
- Our books are in great shape and we have passed an independent audit every year.
- We cannot give out information that we don't have, and that seems to be a problem for some of our residents. This isn't a television program where everything is solved in an hour.

Approve Minutes: Motion by Christine Bischoff, second by Tim Hill to approve the March 19, 2024 minutes as presented. Motion passed with a voice vote.

Check Registers: Motion by Tim Hill, second by Bernice Heidelberg to approve the General Check Register as presented totaling \$230,804.60. Motion passed with a voice vote. Motion by Don Sahloff, second by Christine Bischoff to approve the Utility Check Register as presented totaling \$41,123.23. Motion passed with a voice vote.

Treasurer Report: Motion by Don Sahloff, second by Bernice Heidelberg to approve the Treasurer Report as presented. Motion passed with a voice vote.

Budge Adjustments: Motion by Tim Hill, second by Don Sahloff to increase the following accounts from their respective fund balances. Motion passed with a voice vote.

101-101-961.000	Membership Dues (Legislative)	\$ 2,170.00
101-228-854.000	Computer Service (Server/Software)	\$ 6,900.00
101-262-706.000	Salaries & Wages Part Time Hourly (Elections)	\$ 8,510.00
101-262-752.000	Office Supplies (Elections)	\$ 1,450.00
101-271-965.002	Insurance – Workmen’s Compensation	\$ 4,950.00
101-272-980.000	Office Equipment (General Admin)	\$ 7,850.00
212-330-706.000	Salaries & Wages – Liquor Inspector	\$ 2,000.00
212-330-711.000	Medicare (Liquor Inspector)	\$ 29.00
212-330-715.000	Social Security (Liquor Inspector)	\$ 124.00
206-966-995.401	Transfer Out – Capital Expenditure	\$ 116,770.00
401-901-985.000	Equipment	\$ 151,000.00

Motion by Tim Hill, second by Don Sahloff to increase the following budgets. Motion passed with a voice vote.

101-000-676.000	Reimbursement (Revenue)	\$ 60,000.00
101-344-930.000	Repairs & Maintenance (Fire)	\$ 60,000.00
401-931-699.206	Transfer In – Fire Fund (Revenue)	\$ 166,766.00
401-901-985.000	Equipment	\$ 166,766.00

Motion by Bernice Heidelberg, second by Don Sahloff to make the following transfers. Motion passed with a voice vote.

\$ 166,766.00	from the Fire Fund	to the Capital Outlay Fund
\$ 102,782.00	from the Road Fund	to the Debt Services Fund

Create accounts for capital recovery money: Motion by Tim Hill, second by Don Sahloff to create individual accounts for capital recovery money from Sewer I, Sewer II and Water I. Motion passed with a roll call vote: Sahloff – yes; Hill – yes; Heidelberg – yes; Bischoff – yes; Ruhl – yes.

Street Lights: Supervisor Walter Ruhl reported installation of street lights would cost \$100 per light if a new pole was not needed. He expects to receive an engineering estimate on each light soon. The cost to operate an LED street light would be approximately \$15 per month.

Resolution No. 2024-04-01 Directing the Board of Trustees to Pursue Grants That Are Reasonable and Deemed a Benefit to Whiteford Township: Motion by Don Sahloff, second by Christine Bischoff to approve Resolution No. 2024-04-01. Motion passed with a roll call vote: Sahloff – yes; Hill – yes; Heidelberg – yes; Bischoff – yes; Ruhl – yes.

Pallet Jack Purchase: Motion by Don Sahloff, second by Bernice Heidelberg to purchase a pallet jack not to exceed \$500. Pallet jack will be stored at the water plant but to be used anywhere in the township when needed. Motion passed with a roll call vote: Sahloff – yes; Hill – yes; Heidelberg – yes; Bischoff – yes; Ruhl – yes.

Substance Abuse Policy for the Whiteford Township Part and Full-Time Employees: Motion by Christine Bischoff, second by Bernice Heidelberg to approve the Substance Abuse Policy adding the effective date. Motion passed with a roll call vote: Sahloff – yes; Hill – yes; Heidelberg – yes; Bischoff – yes; Ruhl – yes.

Dan Kempa Sign: Dan Kempa was not present.

Fire Report: Discussion about adding the Whiteford Center Fire Station computer to the Township maintenance agreement with Perry Pro Tech. Shane Hillard has requested a township email for fire chief. All agreed this is appropriate and also to look into email addresses for the trustees.

Road Report: Supervisor Walter Ruhl reported Creque Road at US 223 is closed for culvert replacement. Work to be completed by the State of Michigan. It is not known when this will be done.

Park: Supervisor Walter Ruhl indicated the pickleball court at Whiteford Stoneco Park will be paved after April 18, 2024.

Motion by Don Sahloff, second by Bernice Heidelberg to approve purchase of an inground basketball hoop for the Ottawa Lake Park. Local residents have volunteered to install the hoop. Motion passed with a roll call vote: Sahloff – yes; Hill – yes; Heidelberg – yes; Bischoff – yes; Ruhl – yes.

Public Comment: Ned Birkey was present and spoke briefly on drainage wells.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm with the completion of the agenda.

Christine Bischoff, Clerk