

**HOWELL TOWNSHIP REGULAR BOARD ELECTRONIC/ZOOM MEETING**

**MINUTES**

3525 Byron Road  
Howell, MI 48855  
October 12, 2020  
6:30 P.M.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mike Coddington      Supervisor  
Jean Graham            Clerk  
Jonathan Hohenstein    Treasurer  
Matthew Counts        Trustee  
Harold Melton          Trustee  
Evan Rudnicki          Trustee  
Jeff Smith               Trustee

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Supervisor Coddington called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The roll was called.

Due to the meeting being a Zoom Meeting, there was no Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

October 12, 2020

**MOTION** by Rudnicki, seconded by Melton, **“TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 12, 2020 AGENDA AS AMENDED: CORRECT THE NAME ON AGENDA ITEM 7D TO TIM BOAL.”** Discussion followed. Motion passes by unanimous consent.

**SEPTEMBER 14, 2020 MEETING MINUTES:**

A) REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**MOTION** by Hohenstein, seconded by Counts, **“TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 14, 2020 MEETING MINUTES AS CORRECTED: CHANGE THE WORDING, “MOTION PASSES WITH ONE NEGATIVE VOTE” ON ALL MOTIONS WITH THE EXCEPTION OF NEW BUSINESS A, EINSTEIN DOG TRAINING, SPECIAL USE AND BUILDING PERMIT REQUEST FOR EXTENSION.”** Discussion followed. Motion passes by unanimous consent. (See September 14, 2020 Regular Zoom Meeting Minutes.)

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

No additions and there were no questions.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

- Shane Fagan, 30 Santa Rosa Drive – wanted to address the Board for a better understanding on General Ordinances and their purpose, why do they apply, violations and how they apply and the number of ordinances. Supervisor Coddington suggested that Mr. Fagan call him the next day to discuss further.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

A. HOWELL TOWNSHIP FINANCIAL REPORT, 9-30-2020

Financial Director Kilpela gave a synopsis on the following:

- General Fund: Revenues and Expenditures – Explaining some items are paid monthly, yearly, some are paid as needed. Some things are only invoiced seasonally. Explained some of the expenses for things that were done to or for the Township Hall. This is what will be reinstated for the last half of the year unless the State revises their budget again. We are close to a \$100,000.00 surplus to the General Fund.

- Road Fund: Road Fund Millage is collected on the Winter Tax bill. Under expenditures the Township did the Byron Road Projects this summer which used up most of that fund. That fund balance will be refunded when the Winter Taxes are collected.
- Recreation Fund: The first quarter of the HAPRA membership was paid. It is proposed that the Township will be able to make a transfer of funds to the Recreation Fund Balance for future development.
- Sewer and Water Fund: Not much activity on the revenue side. The Special Assessments are collected on the Winter Taxes. Sewer Farmland Rental is collected in the spring. Under Utility Billing for Water User Fees, the Industrial and Commercial users have had large spikes in usage. At this time, it is not known if it is temporary. The Sewer Debt Fee has been discontinued. Under expenditures there was a large amount for the Biolac Basin repairs at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Postage for Utility Billing is paid twice a year. We have had more residents sign up for ACH to pay their Utility Bill. The Sewer Debt Fee shown will be the last that will be collected. Under WWTP Electricity Expense, after the Biolac Basin repair was done, the electricity bill has dropped significantly. WWTP bio solids removal expense is done annually. The fund as it stands in nearly \$350,000.00 surplus. Most of this will be used for the Grand River Pump Station update.
- Questions were taken from the Board. Discussion on the HAPRA and if the residents are utilizing the activities.
- Cash Flow Using Budgeted Revenue: Explained the Bond Payment Cash Flow, General Cash Flow, Road Fund Cash Flow, and Parks & Rec Fund Cash Flow.
- Bond Payment and General Fund Cash Flow using historical average was explained.
- Questions were taken from the Board. Discussion on the bond payments and revenue sharing. It is important to sell the Township owned properties.
- Overall, the Board's consensus was that it was a good report.

B. CONTRACT FOR SPECIAL ASSESSMENT LIEN

Treasurer Hohenstein stated that at the last Board Meeting it was discussed on setting up assessment liens. This is the contract. One connection fee is \$5,000.00 and the interest rate is 2.5%. It is too late to put on this Winter Tax Bill. Anything from September through December will not be rolled onto to this year's tax bill but will be rolled onto next year's tax bill. Anything after December will be rolled onto the following year's tax bill. There is a \$30.00 recording fee. This check will be made out to the Register of Deeds to go for the filing. A resolution is needed from the Board to approve this contract. This is item 7C.

C. RESOLUTION FOR SPECIAL ASSESSMENT LIEN

Resolution #10.20.477 - Treasurer Hohenstein explained that Exhibit A in the Resolution is the contract discussed in agenda item 7B. The resolution is what the Board needs to approve to have a contract with the resident.

- **MOTION** by Hohenstein, seconded by Graham, **"TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #10.20.477 HOWELL TOWNSHIP RESOLUTION APPROVING SPECIAL ASSESSMENT CONTRACT AND AMENDING SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT AND ROLL AS PRESENTED."** Discussion followed. A roll-call vote was taken: Melton – yes, Smith – yes, Counts – yes, Hohenstein – yes, Graham – yes, Coddington – yes, Rudnicki – yes. Motion passes 7 to 0.
- Treasurer Hohenstein added that in District 8 there are individual houses that are not considered in the district, so they never paid the Special Assessment. If their water or septic systems were to fail, they would then have to pay the Special Assessment Fees and the connect fees to get connected into District 8. He is asking the Board if they are okay with having the Special Assessment at the same rate as the Bond Rate for six years for sewer and then another Special Assessment for water. These would be separate liens on the property. Connection fees that are paid to MHOG would still have to be paid

before being connected. Discussion followed on interest rates. It was the consensus of the Board to bring this back to the next Board Meeting.

D. TIM BOAL 66 SANTA ROSA DRIVE

Mr. Boal's information was included in the Board Packet concerning a neighbor's trailer parked in the road. Mr. Boal did not have anything to add. He did inquire about the complaints he filed several months ago. (Tickets have been sent.) Questions were taken from the Board.

**REPORTS:**

A. SUPERVISOR:

(Supervisor Coddington reported on the following items)

- Dealing with many phone calls and emails dealing with election signs and roadways.

B. TREASURER:

(Treasurer Hohenstein reported on the following items)

- Gave an update on the Oakland Tactical lawsuit. The judge ruled in our favor and dismissed the lawsuit. Oakland Tactical is asking the judge to relook at some things. This request is still pending. There are still some other options that Oakland Tactical they can pursue.
- The Township property on Oak Grove Road. The corn was taken down. Mr. Mills acknowledge he did take the corn down and had mowed around the ponds. He has been notified that he is not to trespass on the property. Signs have also been posted for, "No Hunting".
- Looking into extending the Broad Band Internet access across the Township. Internet companies are only willing to extend where there is more heavy population. There are a lot of legislative hurdles to go through. Treasurer Hohenstein stated he will keep looking for ways to have an extension brought into the Township. It is getting more important with more people working from home and more students doing online classes.

C. CLERK:

(Clerk Graham reported on the following items)

- Asking the Board about going forward with the Business Licenses for 2021. Several businesses were lost or temporary closed this year. Business Licenses are \$30.00 a year. It was asked if there are any benefits anymore with cost of employee hours and the cost of mailing. It now goes hand in hand with Personal Property and requesting tenant information. We now get as much information if not more from there. It is time consuming in processing Business Licenses and keeping track of the reminder letters, who pays, sending late notices and then send violation notices. **MOTION** by Graham, seconded by Smith, **"GOING FORWARD STARTING IN 2021, TO DISCONTINUE HOWELL TOWNSHIP BUSINESS LICENSES."** Discussion followed. Motion passes by unanimous consent.
- Update on Elections. Currently we have 6179 registered voters. We have gained over 393 new voters since August 5<sup>th</sup>, the day after the last election. So far, we have sent out 2164 absentee ballots and fulfilling many new applications daily. Our return rate is at about 37%. We have a new person starting Monday that will help with recording returned absentee ballots.
- Human Resource Meeting topics included the pay raises that were agreed upon earlier with a 1% increase in October and another 1% increase in January. With COVID not effecting the Township budget and to help alleviate doing double the paperwork to allow a 2% pay raise starting with the October Payroll. Discussion. **MOTION** by Graham, seconded by Melton, **"TO GIVE THE EMPLOYEES THE 2% INCREASE COMING TO THEM IN TWO PARTS, TO GIVE IT THEM IN ONE PART STARTING WITH THE OCTOBER PAYROLL."** Discussion followed. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

- Another Human Resource topic was a new job title, Utility Director. There are many jobs that have been handled by the current Treasurer but without compensation. We have lost one person a couple of months ago that did do some of these duties. Treasurer Hohenstein has been handling several duties that are outside the Treasurer's duties. We are looking at 15 to 20 hours per pay. This new position will report to the Howell Township Board. Duties will include legal contracts for property and lawsuits, Waste Water Treatment Plant items, Township Road contracts and issues and assist with Zoning and General Township issues. Discussion followed. Treasurer Hohenstein is exceptionally good at reading and understanding legal contracts. **MOTION** by Graham, seconded by Melton with a friendly amendment by Coddington, **"TO ADD THE ADDITIONAL DUTIES OF UTILITY DIRECTOR TO THE CURRENT TREASURE WITH THE ADDED COMPENSATION OF \$25,000.00 PER YEAR."** Discussion followed. Motion passes by unanimous consent.

D. ZONING:

(See Zoning Administrator Daus's prepared written report)

E. ASSESSING:

(See Assessor Kilpela's prepared written report)

- Added that the Audit of Minimum Assessing Requirement (AMAR) went well. MTT's are starting to come in.

F. FIRE AUTHORITY:

(Supervisor Coddington reported on the following items)

- Approved the ladder and hose testing.
- Approved 2 resolutions to correct some banking paperwork with the retirement of the previous Chief.

G. MHOG:

(Trustee Counts reported on the following items)

- The 20- and 24-inch mains are currently waiting for approvals from the DNR.
- Had the highest demand for August in history with 92 million gallons. There was a 12% increase overall from last year.
- Lots of new development projects with 3 walk through for final inspections.
- Fall hydrant flushing is beginning.
- Had 3rd Asset Management Report.

H. PLANNING COMMISSION:

(Trustee Counts reported on the following items)

- Chestnut has asked for a rezoning earlier this year for a parcel in the Heavy Commercial District to be rezoned to Multi Family Residential. Then withdrew the application. Then decided not to withdraw the request. The major issue with the request is that it is surrounded by Heavy Industrial Commercial Zoning, soon to be Industrial Flex Zoning which is not suitable for Multi-Family Residential. There is no contiguous zoning available. This should really be reviewed at Planning during a Master Plan Session which is scheduled for next year. The Planning Commission agreed to postpone his request until next year. It is the consensus of the Planning Commission to not spot zone.

I. ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS (ZBA):

(Trustee Smith reported on the following items)

- Aaren Currie is proposing a 3,000 square foot building that has been approved by the Planning Commission subject to approval for a variance for the runoff for water. It is in the right of way of M-59. The ZBA approved the variance for the runoff.

J. WWTP:

(Treasurer Hohenstein reported on the following items)

- There was no meeting. See prepared written report from last month.).

K. HAPRA:

(Trustee Rudnicki reported on the following items)

- Continuing with some sport leagues with good participation. More virtual participation.
- New PTO policy that was put into place with small crew. Approved to allow rollover of accrued time.
- Looking into new software to allow more things remotely.
- Water has been installed at the Dog Park.
- Talk of Legend of Sleepy Howell going virtual.
- The Aquatic Center is still closed due to School Board decision.
- Discussion on Howell Township’s membership fee and the closing of the pool and not all programs available. There will not be a pool installed at the new Recreation Center.

L. PROPERTY COMMITTEE:

(Treasurer Hohenstein reported on the following items)

- Still working with Allen Edwin with the Oak Grove properties. It is too costly to go under the river and will take a long time, so we are looking into putting in a pump station. There could be another amendment to the contract.
- The Annex Group project is moving along.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

- Shane Fagan, 30 Santa Rosa Drive – Stated he has not been inconvenienced by any roadside parking. The unattended effects are delivery trucks slow down, safer for his children to ride their bikes. Also stated it has not hindered vehicles coming and going from Santa Rosa Drive.
- Had questions about funds for attorney fees.

Clerk Graham reminded the Board Members to read the information given concerning Industrial Flex Zone which will be on the agenda for next month.

**DISBURSEMENTS: REGULAR AND CHECK REGISTER:**

**MOTION** by Hohenstein, seconded by Rudnicki, **“TO APPROVE THE REGULAR DISBURSEMENTS AS OF OCTOBER 10, 2020 CHECK REGISTER AS PRESENTED, ALSO ANY CUSTOMARY AND NORMAL PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH.”** Discussion followed. Motion passes by unanimous consent.

**ADJOURNMENT: MOTION** by Rudnicki, seconded by Melton, **“TO ADJOURN.”** Motion passes by unanimous consent. The meeting adjourned 8:29 p.m.

As Presented: \_\_\_\_\_ X \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Howell Township Clerk

As Amended: \_\_\_\_\_

Jean Graham

Howell Twp. Board 10.12.2020

As Corrected: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Coddington  
Howell Township Supervisor

Dated: 11.09.2020

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Debby Johnson, Recording Secretary