

BENZONIA TOWNSHIP BOARD

Approved:

PUBLIC HEARING: Opened by Supervisor Barnard. Present: Burns, Gardner, Heller, Rose and Barnard at 2:45pm on September 11, 2024. The Clerk read the purpose of the public hearing: the 2024 Truth and Taxation Rate. The Supervisor and Treasurer explained the Headlee Amendment. Discussion. Public present, no comments received, the public hearing was closed at 2:56pm

REGULAR MEETING

September 11th, 2024

Meeting called to order by Supervisor Barnard at 3:00 PM.

Present: Barnard, Burns, Gardner, Rose and Heller

Absent: None

Staff: Haase, Nye, Pitcher, Adams

Absent: Hahn, Wilkinson

Guests: 17

Supervisor led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of agenda: Gardner brought up changing the order of presenting the payables on the agenda. Suggested a separate line for the new building so we can have more discussion before approval. Discussion. Motion by Gardner to approve the agenda as amended, Burns seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

Motion by Burns to approve the minutes from the regular meeting August 14th, 2024 along with special meetings of August 9th and 23rd, 2024 as presented. Supported by Gardner. All ayes, motion carried.

TREASURERS REPORT: Report submitted by Burns. Tax payments are coming in nicely. The interest and bond account for new building is still paying good interest. Michigan Class is currently paying just over 5%. Gardner made a motion to accept the report with Burns supporting. All ayes, motion carried.

CLERKS'S REPORT: The Clerk presented a Profit and Loss statement for the General and Fire Funds along with a list of the payables. New building fund will be presented later. Motion by Gardner to pay the August bills. Rose supported. Roll call taken, all ayes, motion carried.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT:

Barnard introduced Chris and Tom with Benzie County EMS, they gave quick presentation on the millage request. Barnard researched some speed signs with mobile units approx. \$11k, stationary approx. \$3500. More research on which types suitable for the locations in which we are thinking of using them. The second brining completed for the year. Paving of the walking trail almost completed. AJ has to finish shoulder work after Molon is done.

STAFF REPORTS:

1. FIRE CHIEF: In August we had 18 Fire and 47 Med calls for a total of 65. YTD is 339, 2023 was 372. Officer appointments for the leadership team was presented by Chief Adams. **Barnard made motion to accept the leadership team as presented, Gardner seconded.** Roll call vote taken. Gardner Yes, Burns Yes, Barnard Yes, Heller Yes, Rose Abstain, motion passed. Chief presented estimates for 1 phone and 2 tablets for the trucks. **Heller made motion to have the Chief purchase a phone/tablet system not to exceed \$5000.00, leaving the carrier up to the Chief. Gardner seconded.** Roll call taken, Gardner Yes, Burns Yes, Barnard Yes, Heller Yes, Rose Abstain, motion passed.
2. COMMISSIONERS REPORT: Nye stated that the Village of Beulah used their sound system for the first time and it made a huge difference and at a cost of about \$1200, she thought it would be beneficial for us to look into. The county commissioners passed a 2024/2025 budget. The NMC initiative is off the ballot for November however it may be on a future ballot. Elmers will soon be starting the repaving project by the Sheriff's department. The public safety tower is under construction. Frankfort will retain ownership of the property but the county will own the tower. Opioid fund balance is approx. \$200,000. Still looking for projects or organizations to support. Nye briefly went over position changes due to the August Jail milage increase not passing. Could be more if the Nov. renewal doesn't pass. She thanked the township for the paving of the trail. Nye is an avid user and has seen an increase in users since paving. Katie Zeits elaborated on the jail makeup and the statutory requirements and minimum services that have to be provided.
3. ZONING ADMINISTRATOR: 61 permits to date. Planning commission meeting Oct 10th 2024, which will include a public hearing for the CLWOD amendment. The planning commission will then make a recommendation to the township. Pitcher states she has had a hard time getting response from the township attorney regarding a couple of properties, so there is no forward movement at this time. Gardner asked if this is the property where we could have gotten a grant. AJ's Excavating gave a drive-by estimate of \$18,000 to demo. Less if no foundation, more if asbestos. The Nahnsen's cancelled their ZBA, Pitcher wondered if a partial refund is warranted? A discussion followed but no decision was made. The storage building removal on Crystal Dr. may have backing from Road Commission per talks with their attorney, more to come.

BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT: A parishioner from St Andrews Presbyterian Church spoke regarding the request from the church about having Lincoln Rd paved between US 31 and Eden Hill. Says a request had been made several times over the years with no response. Now the church has an official request in front of the board.

COMMUNICATION: None

PENDING BUSINESS: Website updates – in progress, Barnard should have estimates in Nov.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Cemetery: DMB asked if the next contract would be signed this fall in order for them to do the fall cleanup, which will aid in the spring cleanup. Suggested since contract renewal time to put out for bids.
- Parks: Discussion on opening and closing times. **Gardner made motion to have park open from 5am until 11pm unless permission granted otherwise.** Roll call vote taken, all ayes, motion passed. Signs will be ordered.
- Building and Grounds: No report
- Fire Department: No report
- Township Roads: The county road commission suggested a partial paving of Love Road on East side of the hill due to crowning, with the Township's portion to be approx. \$30,000. **Rose made motion to approve the paving, Gardner supported, roll call taken all ayes, motion passed.**
- Community Activities: No report
- Finance: Burns presented budget amendments. **Burns made a motion to approve the budget amendments as presented.** Heller supported, roll call vote taken, all ayes, motion passed. **Burns made a motion to implement the maximum tax allowed as presented in the Truth in Taxation public hearing.** Heller supported, roll call vote taken, all ayes, motion passed. **Burns made a motion to approve the resolution to adopt the milage rate. Gardner supported.** Roll call vote taken, all ayes, motion passed. Gardner presented questions and concerns regarding lien waivers for the Fire Barn and payments to Spence Brothers. Discussion. **Barnard made motion to pay Spence Bothers once lien waivers received and reviewed.** Burns supported. Roll call vote taken, Gardner No, Burns yes, Barnard yes, Heller yes, Rose yes. Motion passed. **Barnard made motion to pay Jim Clark as presented.** Gardner supported, roll call vote all ayes, motion carried. **Gardner made a motion to make all construction docs, pay apps and financial docs provided by Spence Brothers publicly available.** Burns supported, roll call vote taken, all ayes, motion carried. **Gardner made motion to have Fire Barn committee meetings public.** Barnard seconded, roll call vote taken. Gardner yes, Burns no, Barnard no, Heller no, Rose no, motion failed. It was noticed that the plans called for red doors,

there was an upcharge for the color red. **Gardner made a motion to have the fire barn door color be tan, Barnard seconded**, roll call vote, all ayes, motion carried.

- Personnel: Burns mentioned the committee has been talking about the need for a maintenance person for the cemetery. Ei: washed out roads, fallen branches, undeveloped roads need opened, there are similar needs for the park that don't fall under regular duties. Lastly the ZA position was supposed to be a temporary position, even with the Assistance ZA position filled its time to post for the Zoning Administrator position. taken, all ayes, motion carried.
- Policy: No report
- ZBA: see zoning report section.
- Blight: See supervisor report section.

NEW BUSINESS: None

EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT: Resident added more info to the request for Lincoln Rd paving. A resident thanked the board for the FOIA information and continued that the Fire Barn committee meetings should be public. It was asked as to how someone got on the committee in a volunteer capacity. Another resident was happy to see the progress on the fire barn and another resident stated they are happy to see changes coming together.

Motion to adjourn made by Burns, Supported by Rose.

Clerk adjourned the meeting at 5:24 P.M.

Submitted by:

Diana L. Heller, Clerk

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

- ❖ Motion passed to accept the Fire Dept leadership team as presented
- ❖ Motion passed to allow the purchase of phone system for the Fire Dept but not to exceed \$5000.00.
- ❖ Motion passed to have park open from 5am until 11pm.
- ❖ Motion passed to have the BCRC pave the East side of Love Rd hill.
- ❖ Motion passed to approve budget amendments.
- ❖ Motion passed to implement tax increase as presented in the Truth in Taxation public hearing.
- ❖ Motion passed to adopt the resolution for the Truth in Taxation.
- ❖ Motion passed to release Spence Brothers payment once lien waivers received and reviewed.
- ❖ Motion passed to pay Jim Clark as presented.
- ❖ Motion passed to make all fire building construction and financial documents publicly available.
- ❖ Motion failed regarding fire barn committee meetings being public.
- ❖ Motion passed to have all doors on new fire barn be tan.