

# BENZONIA TOWNSHIP BOARD

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Approved

## **REGULAR MEETING**

May 14th, 2025

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

Present: Barnard, Burns, Rose, Orr and Heller

Absent: None

Staff: Haase, Adams, Nye, Pitcher

Absent: Hahn, Wilkinson

Guests: 19

Supervisor led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Burns to approve the agenda as amended, Rose seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

Motion by Rose to approve the minutes from the regular meeting April 9th, 2025 as well as special budget meeting April 21st 2025 as presented. Burns supports. All ayes, motion carried.

TREASURERS REPORT: The treasurer presented the report for April 2025.

CLERKS'S REPORT: The Clerk presented the Profit and Loss statement for the General and Fire Department funds along with a list of the payables for April 2025. After a discussion, Burns made a motion to accept the report and pay the bills with the exception of the legal bills, holding them for 3 days for Orr to review. Orr supports, roll call vote taken, all ayes, motion carried.

### SUPERVISOR'S REPORT:

Barnard stated the traffic speed signs have been received and the first location intended is near Nichols, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> to be determined. They are fixed, not mobile and solar powered. There is training for Jason on programming and then locations can be confirmed for installation. BCRC looked at Richards Road off Case Rd and due to the Betsie Valley Trail paving, it has created a potential snow plowing issue. BCRC recommends paving Richards so the trail pavement isn't torn up by plowing. They will split 50/50 with the township, with \$9000 as township portion. Park will be open the week of May 20th. Cemetery is open but water is not on due to a backflow preventer issue. Rich Gottardo asked to redo the ball diamonds. He will provide labor if we pay

for materials. Material estimate is \$25,000. Discussion was held. **Motion by Burns to pay Rich Gottardo up to \$25,000 of excise funds for material for ball diamonds, he will provide labor. Heller 2<sup>nd</sup> motion, roll call vote taken, all ayes, motion carried.** Discussion regarding the water at the cemetery and the issues we are facing. The broken pipe is right at the lead from the village main. So, we can't turn on water until its fixed. Jason is looking into the fix.

STAFF REPORTS:

1. FIRE CHIEF: Chief Adams stated there were 14 fire and 38 medical calls for a total of 52 for April. YTD calls are 231. 5 squad passed state license inspection and is in service. The Scott air packs have been received and training has started, also fit test and physicals are upcoming.
2. Commissioners Report: Nye stated the Betsie Valley Trail has been paved from Beulah to Case Rd. The BCRC made the county aware that the portion of the trail that crosses Richards Rd would get clipped during plow season and drastically minimize its life. The county suggests paving it and would cost \$18,000 they will commit to pay half if the Township pays the other half. The Board of Commissioners met and started with 3 tributes. This week is police and corrections officer week and next week is EMS week. The meeting packet online has the county building departments quarterly update with the number of permits pulled. The airport authority is comprised of the county, the City of Frankfort and Crystal Lake Twp. They are still trying to get a memorandum of understanding in place and Crystal Lake Twp has not signed yet. David Davis was hired to fill commissioner Warsecki's spot. He will be required to be on the ballot in 2026 if wishes to continue. The county has decided to replace all the AEDS in the building and are deciding what to do with the old ones. They are expired but could be rehabbed. The EDC and the Parks and Recs depts both have job openings. The county EMS is accepting bids for adding on to the garage across from the Maples for sleeping quarters for the EMS station 3 workers. The Economic Development Corporation and the Chamber of Commerce are in prelim stages of a public/private merger and will meet Friday at 9am at the Gov't center. There will be a trail ribbon cutting June 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10am at the trailhead. Memorial Day ceremony at 1pm will be held at the Veterans Pavilion. Beulah sewer project update will be held June 4<sup>th</sup> at the Mill's community house at 7pm.
3. Zoning Administrator: 14 permits issued to date, several pending. The contract has signed with McKenna for the ordinance rewrite and a special planning commission meeting will be June 12<sup>th</sup> 2025, 6pm at the twp hall to start work. Pitcher presented a request for a 2% grant to be used toward the ordinance rewrite. **Orr made a motion to allow Mary Pitcher to submit the 2% grant application, Burns supported. Roll call taken, all ayes, motion passed.**

BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT: 5 county residents made public comments.

COMMUNICATION: None

PENDING BUSINESS: Barnard responded to a question in public comments regarding Lincoln Rd. The Lincoln Rd straightening project was approved some time ago. The BCRC was not able to complete it last year. The county will honor the price previously given. From the tree that was removed to the corner is what is affected. The traffic speed signs have been received.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Cemetery: Reviewing of the ordinance including discussing the types of headstones allowed.
- Parks: Roof was torn off one dugout from the high winds, Hahn to work on replacing. Drinking fountains need repaired or replaced. Dog park parking is muddy and a request was made to repair it. There is money in the development fund to cover the updates. Bleachers will need some major work; quotes will be requested soon. **Burns made a motion to upgrade the dog park parking lot not to exceed \$2200 using the development fund. Rose second. Roll call vote taken, all ayes motion passed.**
- Building and Grounds: Received market analysis from 2 different brokers for listing the existing buildings for sale. Both CMAs were close in price. Restated they are market analysis not appraisals. **Barnard made motion to hire Coldwell Banker Schmidt to list existing building. Rose second. Orr asked if we decided not to get an appraisal. Barnard confirmed correct. Roll call vote taken, Orr no, Heller yes, Barnard yes, Burns abstain, Rose yes. Motion passed 3:1.**
- Fire Department: No report
- Township Roads: **Burns made a motion to pay \$9000 to pave Richards Rd dependent on the outcome of the surveys. Rose second. Roll call taken, all ayes motion carried.**
- Community Activities: Spring clean-up day was May 3<sup>rd</sup>. It went well and plan to continue at the park and to use Northern Disposal. The next clean-up day is tentatively August 9<sup>th</sup> and hope to keep that date.
- Finance: Jan 8<sup>th</sup> Burns made a motion to have 1020 Michigan Ave appraised. The fee was \$3500 and 5-6 months for completion, **Burns made a motion to rescind her motion from Jan 8<sup>th</sup> 2025 to have the building appraised. Rose second, roll call vote, Orr No, Heller Yes, Barnard Yes, Burns Yes, Rose Yes. motion carried 4:1.** Bids for furniture for the new building received from Interphase Interiors. Working with them for months, includes assembly and trash removal, and a 10yr warranty. 4-6 weeks lead time. Tariffs at the end of the month are a concern for prices. **Burns made a motion to purchase the new furniture from Interphase Interiors as per quote from April 24th. Rose second. Roll call taken, all ayes, motion carried. Orr yes with stipulation we look at others.**
- Personnel: There have been a few inquiries regarding the ZA job posting. No committee formed yet the inquiry deadline is the 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Policy: No report
- ZBA: No report
- Blight: A letter was sent to a residence regarding a dumpster with no cover. Narrow Gauge nothing new, A motion of default is in process for the Bolton property.

NEW BUSINESS: None

EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT: 13 residents made comments.

Supervisor adjourned the meeting at 4:49 P.M.

Submitted by:

Diana L. Heller, Clerk

**MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:**

- ❖ Motion passed to pay up to \$25,000 for ball diamond upgrades.
- ❖ Motion passed to submit 2% grant for the zoning ordinance rewrite.
- ❖ Motion passed to upgrade the dog park parking lot not to exceed \$2200.
- ❖ Motion passed to hire Coldwell Banker Schmidt to list existing buildings.
- ❖ Motion passed to pay \$9000 to pave Richards Rd provided the outcome of the surveys.
- ❖ Motion passed to rescind Burns motion to have the building appraised.
- ❖ Motion passed to purchase the furniture for the new building.