

BENZONIA TOWNSHIP BOARD

Approved as amended 9/10/25

REGULAR MEETING

August 13th, 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

Guests: 7

Supervisor led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Burns to approve the agenda as amended, Orr seconded.

Discussion had. All ayes, motion carried.

Motion by Burns to approve the minutes from the regular meeting July 9th, 2025, Rose second, discussion had, roll call vote taken, all ayes, motion carried. * see attached statement from Orr regarding her vote in July.

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

CLERKS'S REPORT: The Clerk presented the Profit and Loss statement for the General, Fire Department and new township hall funds along with a list of the payables for July 2025. After a discussion, Burns made a motion with Rose supporting to pay bills. Roll call vote taken. All ayes, motion carried.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT: Barnard asked Brent w/Spence Brothers to update us on the new building. There was an issue with the generator that runs the emergency lighting. The Fix is a couple weeks out which is required for COO. The big sign is about 5 weeks out otherwise, little fixes being tidied up. Jason presented an estimate from Anavon for media

equipment for the new boardroom. Discussion held, decided to table in order to search for more estimates. Orr to assist. **Orr made a motion to add audio recordings to the website. Motion failed for lack of a second.** Additional discussion regarding website progress and linking meeting recordings to you-tube. Question raised regarding who will do the uploads, Orr mentioned the website proposal for maintenance. Orr to write description of the process. Barnard updated the board on the Forerunner suit, answer expected Sept 3rd. He also stated the Sunkissed issue is an appeal not a lawsuit, a response to be filed by August 26th. Barnard asked Ross Liesman with Mika Meyers to come to the September meeting. A bid from Paul Emling of Advanced Turf solutions was submitted for 2025/2026. Discussion was had, Orr would like to see more estimates. Barnard stated he has tried. no motion presented at this time. Barnard stated that the Recreational Use ordinance needs to be readopted due to an omission of the effective date on the ordinance document. Ordinance has been updated with the appropriate effective date verbiage. **Rose made motion to adopt updated Recreational Use Ordinance, Burns second. Roll call vote taken. Orr-N, Burns-Y, Barnard-Y, Heller-Y, Rose-Y, motion passed.**

STAFF REPORTS:

1. FIRE CHIEF: Chief Adams stated there were 20 fire and 44 medical calls for a total of 64 for July. YTD calls are 385. Chief submitted agency renewal for MMR/AFR. Also confirmed an EMR/AFR course Sept 9th. Chief also working on a FF1&2 class with Manistee for end of Dec/beg of Jan, 2026. Chief will be on vacation August 20th-25th.
2. Commissioners Report: Nye stated that at the last meeting, the public had concerns over the drain commissioner's lack of reachability. It was decided that he would be invited to the next meeting and address how he will respond to his constituents. NWMCAA and CDBG will do home repairs for emergency projects. Under \$2500 is a grant, over \$2500 is a no interest loan (lien) repaid when home is sold. The administrator is advocating for putting a jail administrator back on the roster. Brooke Popp gave update on the Frankfort airport. They receive \$15,000 a year from 3 entities, which are: The city of Frankfort, Crystal Lake Twp and the county. Popp said they are moving to be self-sufficient. FAA wants more trees removed and residents are not happy about it.

Nye gave an Opioid funds update, there have been speakers in both schools as well as purchasing and delivering DeTerra bags for old medicines. The Point Betsie lighthouse estimate was reduced a little bit to \$8million but there is still a gap. At Tuesdays meeting the Cold Creek pond dredging was brought up. The costs started out at \$15,000, currently about 90k. Conversations need to be had with stakeholders of the lake whether the costs could be shared with other entities including the townships that abut the lake?

3. Zoning Administrator: Bob Halls 1st week started with 4 permits issued. He has created a new zoning application and Jim Zimmerman the building inspector at the County is on board with it. Bob plans to attend the kickoff meeting for the rewrite.

BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT: 3 county residents made public comments. **Nye** mentioned the county having a procurement policy. A discussion was had regarding one for the township.

COMMUNICATION: None

PENDING BUSINESS: Attorney Use Policy – Barnard presented the information on the amended policy. Discussion was held. **Rose made motion to adopt amended Attorney Use Policy, with Burns supporting.** Roll call vote taken, Orr-N, Burns-Y, Barnard-Y, Heller-Y, Rose-Y, motion carried. Burns discussed the items of the BS&A Icloud upgrade. The timeline for conversion is late fall. **Burns made motion to accept proposal, Rose seconded.** Roll call vote taken, Orr-N, Burns-Y, Barnard-Y, Heller-Y, Rose-Y, motion passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Cemetery: No report.
- Parks: Bathroom roofs done this week, dog park parking expansion complete, electric easement has stumps, awaiting estimate to have them removed.
- Building and Grounds: Showing on current building scheduled for Friday, the potential buyers have questions regarding septic, awaiting POS report. First right of refusal with the Benzie Conservation District is now ratified. Doug Taylor suggested a price

reduction. Orr made a motion to hire an appraisal not to exceed \$2700, Burns second, roll call vote taken, all ayes, motion passed.

- Fire Department: No report
- Township Roads: Supervisor still awaiting quote from the BCRC for Hanmer Rd.
- Community Activities: Cleanup day went well other than dumpsters arrived late.
- Finance: No report
- Personnel: No report
- Policy: No report?
- ZBA: No report
- Blight: Pitcher gave update on the 3 current cases; Platte Rd is awaiting a call with attorney on Sept 14th now that the Dangerous Building Ordinance is adopted. Narrow Guage Rd on July 15th a 30day extension granted but no more work is complete, looking into abatement and liens. Eldridge Road had a 30-day extension no more work done, looking at issuing an infraction.

NEW BUSINESS:

EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT: 2 public comments received.

Supervisor adjourned the meeting at 5:12 P.M.

Submitted by:

Diana L. Heller, Clerk

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

- ❖ Motion failed for adding audio to website.
- ❖ Motion passed to adopt Recreational Use Ordinance.

- ❖ Motion passed to adopt amended Attorney Use Policy.
- ❖ Motion to purchase BSA Icloud upgrade
- ❖ Motion passed to hire appraisal on current building not to exceed \$2700.

DRAFT