

Au Train Township Regular Board Meeting

January 9, 2023

6:00 o'clock p.m.

Pursuant to adjournment, the Au Train Township Board convened on the above date at 6:00 p.m. at the Au Train Township Hall, N7569 Spruce St., Au Train MI 49806

The Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Michelle Doucette, with the following members present: Mary Johnson, Clerk; Kristy Cota, Treasurer; Jake Miller, Trustee and Tom Balmes, Trustee.

*VISITORS PRESENT – Approximately 14 persons attended the meeting. A complete list is on file.

*APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Additions and Changes to the Agenda were made as necessary. MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Supervisor Doucette, to approve the Agenda as amended. MOTION CARRIED.

*MINUTES

MOTION by Supervisor Doucette, second by Clerk Johnson, to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2022 Regular Board Meeting. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Supervisor Doucette, to approve the minutes of the December 27, 2022 Special Board Meeting. MOTION CARRIED.

*BILLS AND CLAIMS

MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Treasurer Cota, to accept this month's bill list as presented and authorize that they be paid as funds are available. JOHNSON, YES; COTA, YES; DOUCETTE,, YES; BALMES, YES; MILLER, YES. MOTION CARRIED. (General Fund Checks Numbered #16852 through #16863; Fire Fund Checks Numbered #8914 through #8926; Garbage Fund Check Numbered #2109).

*BOARD MEMBER REPORTS -

- TREASURER'S REPORT - For the Month ending December 31, 2022

GENERAL FUND CHECKING	
Beginning Balance	\$ 293,710.12
Deposits	36,544.58
Interest	188.56
Disbursements	13,814.15
Total Checks Not Cleared	8,068.55
Ending Balance	\$ 308,560.56

FIRE FUND CHECKING	
Beginning Balance	\$ 484,042.54
Deposits	37,098.23
Interest	310.40
Disbursements	14,361.24
Total Checks Not Cleared	6,415.63
Ending Balance	\$ 500,674.30
Certificate of Deposit	\$ 51,555.30
GARBAGE FUND CHECKING	
Beginning Balance	\$ 204,962.15
Deposits	36,344.85
Interest	134.45
Disbursements	15,732.00
Total Checks Not Cleared	
Ending Balance	\$ 225,709.45
ROAD FUND CHECKING	
Beginning Balance	\$ 49,572.27
Deposits	24,229.57
Interest	38.05
Disbursements	
Total Checks Not Cleared	
Ending Balance	\$ 73,839.89

*A Complete copy of the December 31, 2022 Report is on file with Clerk Johnson. Treasurer Cota noted that Winter Tax Collection continues. There will be Saturday Yoga classes offered at the Community Building for anyone who wants to attend. It is by donation only and there will be no rental fee involved. There are no upcoming rentals.

*CLERK'S REPORT - Clerk Johnson noted that she is working on preparing W2's/1099's for mailing and will begin budget preparation for all funds. Additional information was provided on several FOIA's received over the past two weeks. Requests were related to zoning, the Planning Commission and ZBA.

*TRUSTEE'S REPORT - Trustee Balmes provided information on the Au Train River flooding and his communication on events with residents.

Trustee Miller provided information on scheduling upcoming CUPS with the Planning Commission and delays. He also noted that he received a lot of positive feedback from residents about installing an ice rink and hopefully a pavilion in the coming years.

*SUPERVISOR'S REPORT - Supervisor Doucette updated the Board on recent activities, which overwhelmingly included addressing the Au Train River flooding situation.

*SPECIAL PRESENTATION - None

*PUBLIC COMMENT - Public Comments were received from Duane Newton via email, read by Supervisor Doucette.

*COMMITTEE REPORTS

Financial Reports - Clerk Johnson presented monthly financial reports for all funds. All reports were emailed to Board members prior to the meeting for review. No Budget Amendments were necessary.

Zoning Administrator/Planning Commission/ZBA - The Zoning Administrators report was provided and is on file. Zoning Administrator Kathleen Lindquist was present and provided a brief update and answered any questions. Discussion about upcoming CUP Hearings was made, as there now 9 pending applications. Hearing dates will be scheduled with the Planning Commission at their upcoming meeting. The Planning Commission will elect their officers and decide on their 2023 Quarterly Meeting schedule at their January 12, 2023 meeting.

MOTION by Treasurer Cota, second by Trustee Miller, to reaffirm the following as members of the Planning Commission. Matt Lang, 3 Year Term; Bill Weisenger, 2 Year Term; Jason Cain, 3 Year Term; William Gramm, 2 Year Term; Jake Miller, Township Board Representative. MOTION CARRIED.

The Zoning Board of Appeals will need to schedule their 2023 Organizational Meeting. Clerk Johnson will contact Chair Kathy Reynolds and remind her of that. In addition, Van Stone's attorney, Michelle Halley, contacted Clerk Johnson and requested that the Zoning Board of Appeals consider their minutes from the August 12, 2022 Appeal Hearing rather than the Draft submitted. Clerk Johnson will relay that information to the members of the ZBA.

MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Treasurer Cota, to appoint John Carr as a member, and Julie Adams as an alternate, to the Zoning Board of Appeals, effective January 13, 2023. MOTION CARRIED.

Assessor/Board of Review - Assessor Fuess provided the Board with his monthly report and it is on file. KCI will be preparing the Assessment Change Notices. MOTION by Treasurer Cota, second by Supervisor Doucette, to contract with KCI for Assessment Notices, at an estimated cost of \$1,378.00. COTA, YES; DOUCETTE, YES; MILLER, YES; BALMES, YES; JOHNSON, YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Clerk Johnson noted that effective January 1, 2023, the Assessor Contract called for the annual increase, which will be at a rate of 4.1%. This would be \$27,456 Annually/\$2,288.00 Monthly.

Maintenance Department Report/Comm Bldg./Promotions/Cemetery - Ryan Walther was present provided an update for the Board on recent activities. Clerk Johnson asked that the power supply and lighting at the cemetery be checked to make sure it is off, as the UPPCO monthly bill indicates otherwise. The Vant Panels ordered for sound proofing have been installed. Discussion about the office updates and options was made. In addition, Ryan noted that the plow truck is due for service and will be scheduled with Christmas Auto. Most of the past month as been spent handling snow removal.

Fire Department/First Responders – The Fire Department report was received and is on file. Members of the Department were present to provided additional information to the Board. There was 1 call for the month. The side by side will now be sent to Swem for service, at a reduced cost. The speciality storage cabinets are ready for pickup from Midway Rentals. Pomasl indicated they now have the truck on site and anticipate delivery to the department by the end of the month. Clerk Johnson reminded the department that the Budget Workshop that will be reviewing the Fire Fund Account, will be on February 20, 2023 at 6:00 pm. A member of the Department is expected to attend.

*UNFINISHED BUSINESS -

Recreation Plan - Clerk Johnson noted that the Recreation Plan Public Hearing is scheduled for January 30, 2023 at 6:00 pm. The Draft Plan will be presented for public comments and then consideration for adoption by the Township Board. Becky Cain (USFS Recreation Grant Writer) has reviewed the document as well for the Township, and provided additional information which will be forward to Jason McCarthy for consideration in the Draft.

Au Train River Flooding - Supervisor Doucette presented a time line and update on the Au Train River Flooding event. Wyatt Seaberg, the excavation contractor, was also present and provided additional information. Supervisor Doucette wanted to thank Renewable World Energy Resources, Seaberg Contracting, Alger County Emergency Management, State of Michigan EGLE, MDOT, the American Red Cross and private citizens for their cooperation in resolving the flooding. The Board plans to schedule a Special Meeting yet this month with State Agencies and residents regarding the flooding and the Townships involvement moving forward. Trustee Balmes provided information to the Board and residents on how events were handled when he served as Supervisor. (Last event that required mitigation by the Township was 2015).

Cole vs Au Train Township Update - Clerk Johnson noted an update was received from Attorney Tim Quinnell regarding the Courts decision on the Corey Cole appeal. The Court overturned the actions by the Zoning Board of Appeals and ruled in favor of Mr. Cole.

***NEW BUSINESS -**

Township Attorney - Supervisor Doucette noted that she received emailed correspondence from Township Attorney Stephanie Quinnell indicating she would be leaving the firm and will no longer represent the Township, effective December 30, 2022. Firm Attorney Tim Quinnell, will take over Au Train Township matters in the meantime. The Board will discuss how to move forward and consider representation options at the February Regular Board Meeting.

Zoning Administrator Yearly Performance Review - Zoning Administrator Kathleen Lindquist requested a Closed Session, as authorized, for the Review. MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Supervisor Doucette, that the Township Board go into Closed Session with Zoning Administrator Kathleen Lindquist for her annual review, at 8:14 pm. MOTION CARRIED.

After the evaluation and review was completed, MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Trustee Cota, to return from Closed Session at 8:30 pm. MOTION CARRIED.

Clerk Johnson noted it was a favorable review and recommended the Board consider a Salary increase for the position. The Zoning Administrator's current monthly salary is \$900.00. After discussion, MOTION by Treasurer Cota, second by Trustee Miller, to increase the salary of Kathleen Lindquist, Zoning Administrator, to \$1,200.00 per month, effective February 1, 2023. COTA, YES; MILLER, YES; BALMES, YES; DOUCETTE, YES; JOHNSON, YES. MOTION CARRIED.

***PUBLIC COMMENT -** Comments were received from John Carr.

***ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business, MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Supervisor Doucette, to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED. MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:37 pm.

Submitted by: Mary Walther Johnson, Au Train Township Clerk