

Au Train Township Regular Board Meeting  
 September 12, 2022  
 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; and Tom Balmes, Trustee. Absent: Jake Miller, Trustee.

\*VISITORS PRESENT – Approximately 13 persons attended the meeting in person. 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 Clerk Johnson, second by Treasurer Cota, to approve the minutes of the August 8th, 2022 Regular Board Meeting, as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Treasurer Cota, second by Clerk Johnson, to approve the minutes of the August 31, 2022 Special Board Meeting, as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

\*BILLS AND CLAIMS

MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Supervisor Doucette, to accept this month’s bill list as presented and authorize that they be paid as funds are available. JOHNSON, YES; DOUCETTE, YES; COTA, YES; BALMES, YES; DOUCETTE, YES. MOTION CARRIED. (General Fund Checks Numbered #16780 through #16791; Fire Fund Checks Numbered #8830 through #8849; Garbage Fund Checks Numbered #2104).

\*BOARD MEMBER REPORTS -

- TREASURER’S REPORT - For the Month ending August 31, 2022

GENERAL FUND CHECKING	
Beginning Balance	\$313,691.51
Deposits	28,040.44
Interest	130.66
Disbursements	19,086.69
Total Checks Not Cleared	3,944.68
Ending Balance	\$ 318,831.24

FIRE FUND CHECKING	
Beginning Balance	\$ 561,547.09
Deposits	
Interest	236.72
Disbursements	6,951.27
Total Checks Not Cleared	
Ending Balance	\$ 554,832.54
Certificate of Deposit	\$ 51,491.10
GARBAGE FUND CHECKING	
Beginning Balance	\$ 258,552.04
Deposits	
Interest	107.95
Disbursements	13,440.96
Total Checks Not Cleared	
Ending Balance	\$ 245,219.03
ROAD FUND CHECKING	
Beginning Balance	\$ 384,981.37
Deposits	
Interest	163.48
Disbursements	
Total Checks Not Cleared	
Ending Balance	\$ 385,144.85

\*A Complete copy of the August 31, 2022 report is on file with Clerk Johnson.

Treasurer Cota noted that the Summer Tax payments are coming in steadily. Office Hours for the final day of collection without penalty, will be September 15<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

\*CLERK'S REPORT - Clerk Johnson provided an update to the Board on recent activities, which included emails, correspondence and FOIA's. In addition, The Zoning Ordinance Amendments were prepared for Publication with the Mining Journal at an estimated cost of \$2,400.00. The Summary of Amendments was published in the paper today, September 12, 2022, the Effective Date of the Zoning Ordinance Amendments and Map Adjustments.

After completing the August Election Primary, work has begun for the November General Election, held on November 8<sup>th</sup>. Ballots should be delivered by September 29<sup>th</sup>. The F65 Report was reviewed and submitted on behalf of the Township by Anderson, Tackman and Company for the audit. The report draft will be provided within a couple of weeks and final report will be provided to Board members at the October meeting.

The Election Commission will be meeting at 5:30 pm on October 10th, just prior to the Regular Board Meeting to finalize and approve details for the administration of the General Election.

\*TRUSTEE'S REPORT - Trustee Balmes noted the he has had many inquiries about zoning and short term vacation rentals. He attended the CPR Training and received his certification. Trustee Balmes also noted that he attended the September 7<sup>th</sup> Hearing for Cole vs. Au Train Township. Because Mr. Coles paperwork on submitting the Appeal was not completed properly, the Judge granted him 21 days to complete and submit it. Attorney Quinnell will keep the Board updated. The deadline will be September 28<sup>th</sup>. If the paperwork is not received by the Court, the Judge will dismiss.

\*SUPERVISOR'S REPORT - Supervisor Doucette updated the Board on recent activities, which include addressing several calls and emails, and investigating complaints about Semi truck noise on State Highway M94, Slowfoot Lake, and a washout on Ridge Road. The Alger County Road Commission was contacted about Ridge Road. Supervisor Doucette also noted that Tri Media provided a cost estimate for underground radar to locate graves within the old cemetery. Information was also received that the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians may assist with the cost. Supervisor Doucette will follow up with them via letter. The Crossover Road project is being finalized and North Shore Rd paving is still scheduled for later this month or early October, depending on the schedule of Bacco Construction. Additional information was provided regarding street signs, the Heritage Trail cabin, removal of the dock/kayak launch, and closure of the restrooms. Dumpster Keys are still being delivered for Old Plank Road residents. MDOT provided a 5 Year Plan Response, which includes additional upgrades at the intersection of State Highway M28/Arbutus/Au Train Forest Lake Road. Their plans include adding a turn lane to increase safety at that intersection. In addition, Supervisor Doucette noted she met with 906 Technologies and they provided cost estimates for security and sound improvements at the Au Train Township Hall. A total of 3 Blight Complaints were received in the past month.

\*SPECIAL PRESENTATION - Representatives from Munising Public Schools, Nicole Lasak, Mike Travis and Wes Tweedale presented information to the Board for the Kids Connection Playground Project and requested funding from the Township. The City of Munising and Munising Township have agreed to funding. Clerk Johnson noted that funds the Township received from the SLFRF program are for community and township needs and should be considered. There was no Board action but the Board did agree to discuss further as they plan for the allocation of the funds.

\*PUBLIC COMMENT - Public Comments were received from Ed and Cindy Hines, and Duane Newton via email, which was 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. The current Fiscal Year Budget needs to be reviewed for any necessary amendments. Clerk Johnson will prepare those recommendations for consideration at the October Regular Board Meeting.

*Zoning Administrator/Planning Commission/ZBA* - The Zoning Administrators report was provided and Zoning Administrator Kathleen Lindquist was present to answer any questions and provide additional details.

The Planning Commissions next Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2022. Their last meeting was August 18<sup>th</sup> where they finalized and approved a Resolution to send the Zoning Ordinance Amendments and Map Adjustments to the Township Board for consideration and approval. The Zoning Board of Appeals met on August 17<sup>th</sup> where they heard an Administrative Appeal.

*Assessor/Board of Review* - Assessor Fuess presented a report and it is on file with Clerk Johnson. He noted assessing is going well and that all Deeds, Property Transfer Affidavits and PRE Exemptions have been processed and entered into the database. The Beauchaine Tax Tribunal is still ongoing. Field work is also ongoing for new construction. Sales review from 2021 and calculations for ECF are beginning for the 2023 Tax Rolls.

*Maintenance Department Report/Comm Bldg./Promotions/Cemetery* - Ryan Walther was present and provided information to the Board regarding recent activities. He is hoping to get the cemetery gravel project completed before winter. In addition at least 10 of the trees on site will need to be replaced. The Heritage Trail dock/kayak launch will be removed by October 1<sup>st</sup>, as well as preparing the restrooms for winter closure. Preparations will begin for the winter season over the next month and completion of outdoor projects.

*Fire Department/First Responders* – The Fire Department report was received and is on file. There were 3 calls for month. Fire Chief Perry King has completed his police academy training for the Alger County Sheriff Department and is back on staff. He thanked Assistant Chief Justen Knuttila for his work during his training and noted he did an excellent job. Both pumpers passed pump testing and ladder testing is also complete. Hose testing is scheduled for September 13<sup>th</sup>. All new turnout gear has been received. The tires for the 16 Mile Lake Brush truck are in and will be scheduled for mounting.

MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Trustee Balmes to authorize \$1,125.00 for asbestos testing at a donated training burn site house (which is required). JOHNSON, YES; BALMES, YES; COTA, YES; DOUCETTE, YES. MOTION CARRIED. This donation will allow for search and rescue training as well.

OSHA requires that oil and gas cans and flammable materials be stored in Special Designated Cabinets. The cost for 3, one at each fire hall, would be \$5,000.00. MOTION by Supervisor Doucette, second by Treasurer Cota to authorize up to \$5,000.00 for purchase of the flammable materials cabinets from Midway Rental and Sales. DOUCETTE, YES; COTA, ES; JOHNSON, YES; BALMES, YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Fire Chief King requested that the Board consider keeping the Assistant Fire Chief Salary at \$750.00 per month moving forward. As previously noted, he feels that Justen is doing a good job and his responsibilities justify the increase be permanent. MOTION by Supervisor Doucette, second by Trustee Balmes to authorize the Assistant Fire Chief Salary at \$750.00 per month, effective immediately. MOTION CARRIED.

**\*UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Recreation Plan Survey - Supervisor Doucette noted the Recreation Survey went live on Survey Monkey, with a due date of October 1<sup>st</sup>. In addition, copies of the are available for those who want a paper copy to fill out and return in an Information Box located outside the Clerk/Treasurer's Office.

Moratorium on Vacation Rentals - After review and discussion, MOTION by Treasurer Cota, second by Clerk Johnson, that the Moratorium on Vacation Rentals Resolution No. 2020-004, dated December 14, 2020, be lifted as of September 12, 2022, despite not having a list of Short Terms Rentals in the Township, which was a requirement. The short term (vacation) rentals list will be compiled as a working document moving forward. COTA, YES; JOHNSON, YES; DOUCETTE, YES; BALMES, YES. MOTION CARRIED.

**\*NEW BUSINESS**

L 4029 Tax Rate Request - Clerk Johnson presented the L4029 Tax Rate Request from Alger County Equalization for the Winter 2022 Tax Collection. Amounts were determined during Budget Approval in March. All funds are subject to the Headlee Roll Back formula, except the recent approved millage rates for the Road and Garbage Fund Accounts. MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Treasurer Cota, to authorize Tax Rates for the following accounts be collected with the Winter 2022 Tax Collection: General Fund 0.6782; Fire Fund 2.8782; Road Fund 2.0000; Garbage Fund 3.0000. JOHNSON, YES; COTA, YES; BALMES, YES; DOUCETTE, YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Fall Cleanup - Supervisor Doucette noted she preliminary scheduled the Township Fall Cleanup date with GFL Wood Island Landfill for Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup>. MOTION by Treasurer Cota, second by Clerk Johnson to authorize and fund from the Garbage Fund Account, the Fall Cleanup with GFL Wood Island Landfill for October 1<sup>st</sup>, from 9:00-11:30. COTA, YES; JOHNSON, YES; DOUCETTE, YES; BALMES, YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Special Meeting Schedule - Clerk Johnson suggested that a Special Meeting be scheduled to review the policies and procedures as they relate to the administration of non-conforming Short Term (vacation) Rentals. September 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 was the preliminary date set, but confirmation with Trustee Miller will need to be made.

Michigan Municipal League Insurance Package - Clerk Johnson noted that the cost estimate for continuing coverage through the MML for Township Insurance needs was received. The policy proposal was forwarded to Board Members for review. The invoice total is \$19,440.00, not including the cost for Worker's Compensation coverage, which will be billed separately. MOTION by Supervisor Doucette, second by Treasurer Cota, to continue coverage with MML at a yearly cost of \$19,440.00, not including the Worker's Compensation coverage. DOUCETTE, YES; COTA, YES;; JOHNSON, YES; BALMES, YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Charter Spectrum - Supervisor Doucette presented the Franchise Agreement Renewal with Charter Spectrum. MOTION by Supervisor Doucette, second by Treasurer Cota, to continue and authorize a franchise within the Township to Charter Spectrum. MOTION CARRIED.

**\*PUBLIC COMMENT** - Public Comments were received from Donna Shields and Ed Hines.

*County Board of Commissioners Update* - County Board Chair Jerry Doucette arrived and was able to update the Board on recent activities of the Alger County Board. Commissioner Doucette noted that the building at the airport is nearing completion, a Sheriff Deputy has been assigned to work with the schools, and preliminary discussions about developing moderate income home sites, possibly within Au Train Township, to assist with the housing crisis in the County has begun.

**\*ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business, MOTION by Clerk Johnson, second by Treasurer Cota, to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED. MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:14 pm.

Submitted by: Mary Walther Johnson, Au Train Township Clerk