

DRAFT
COVERT TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, November 10, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.
Covert Township Hall & Electronic Component

The Regular Meeting of the Covert Township Board was brought to order by Supervisor Palgen at 7:00 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Supervisor Palgen.

Members Present: K. Harrington (Via Zoom in Covert, MI, 49043), D. Cook (In Person), D. Palgen (In Person), W. Pritchard (In Person), L. Taylor (In Person)

Members Absent: None

Electronic and Telephonic Meeting Rules

Attorney Roxanne Seeber explained latest amendments to the Open Meeting Act allowing for virtual meetings with certain restrictions through the end of December 2020 or December 2021 with the adoption of a policy.

Public Comment

- Gail Patterson-Gladney, Van Buren County Commissioner District #1, shared the latest news from the County, including a \$200,000 grant and changes to the domain and website. A preserve owned by Van Buren County has been leased to the MDNR to be managed as part of the Van Buren State Park in South Haven.
- Ken Harrington, Covert Township Board Trustee, congratulated the new board members and thanked voters for allowing him to serve another four years.
- Barbara Norman, Covert Resident, made comments about the Covert Park Beach and Campground, including the net revenue and letting residents know that they have free access. Ms. Norman was displeased with the method to prove residency.
- Dennis Palgen, Covert Township Supervisor, thanked the Van Buren Road Commission for the sewer and drain repair on West Street and 34th Avenue and seal coating CR 376 east of M 140.

- (Late Arrival) Rev. W. C. Askew, Sr., Van Buren County Road Commission, shared that more road millage funds will be available for Covert. The office is open from 7AM – 3:30PM. They are still doing Zoom meetings and are getting trucks ready for winter weather.

Chief Updates

- Police Chief Allen shared that traffic enforcement has been increased due to recent tragedies, especially at stop signs on side roads. Citizens are asked to provide any information on activity in the southwest corner of the Township, as well as names of seniors and any special needs residents who may need a wellness check during an outage as we enter winter weather. The department has also been busy recovering stolen property and working with the State Police on a cold case homicide. Chief Allen thanked the board and public for their support during his recent personal tragedy. L. Taylor asked about the increase in complaints and D. Palgen asked about the plan if jails don't reopen soon.
- Fire Chief Myers shared that they have finished flushing over 300 hydrants and have been busy with several grass fires. Burn permits are free and do not leave fires unattended. Training of new hires is nearly complete.

Consent Agenda

- ***Draft*** Minutes of the October 13, 2020 Regular Board Meeting
- ***Draft*** Minutes of the October 20, 2020 Special Board Meeting
- Clerk's Invoice Register Report and Payroll Period Reports as presented
- Treasurer's Revenue Receipt Distribution, Banking, & Budget Report as presented
- Police Chief's Report as presented
- Fire Chief's Report as presented
- Public Work Report as presented

Motion by L. Taylor, seconded by W. Pritchard, to **approve** the Consent Agenda as presented, with changes to the October 13, 2020 Minutes as noted by Trustee Harrington.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: 5, No: 0, CARRIED

Meeting Minutes and Board Liaison Reports

- Minutes of the October 21, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting were presented by Lonzey Taylor.

- Minutes of the October 15, 2020 and October 29, 2020 Senior Advisory Meetings were presented by Dennis Palgen.
- Minutes of the October 15, 2020 Park Advisory Meeting was presented by Daywi Cook.
- Minutes of the September 16, 2020 and October 21, 2020 Airport Authority Meeting were presented.
- Minutes of the November 4, 2020 Health Insurance Committee Meeting were presented by Dennis Palgen.

Informational Updates

- An application to receive funds to maintain and repair Covert Township's waste water system has been accepted and we are awaiting an offer letter.
- A realtor who specializes in industrial buildings used for flocking has two interested buyers for a building for sale in Covert Township.
- Covert Township Attorney, Roxanne Seeber, presented information on the status of West Michigan Flocking and Assembly, LLC. The Township is aware that West Michigan Flocking & Assembly, LLC still has an Industrial Facilities Tax (IFT) Exemption Certificate in effect; the company has ceased operations and the building is up for sale. The Township Board is prepared to take action, if necessary, at the December 8, 2020 Regular Township Board Meeting.

Unfinished Business

Motion by D. Palgen, seconded by L. Taylor, **to table** the recommendation of the Senior Advisory Committee authorizing Covert Township to start the hiring process for a Part-Time Senior Service Administrator to manage the Senior Service Millage Chore Services and Home Repair Programs at \$12.00 per hour, and at no more than eight hours per week, pending more information.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: 5, No: 0, CARRIED

Motion by W. Pritchard, seconded by D. Cook, **to approve** the recommendation of the Park Advisory Board and accept the bid from Risky Business dated 10/03/2020 in the amount of \$7,065.00 to level the six sites and install a drain near the exterior shower as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: 3, No: 2, CARRIED

Motion by W. Pritchard, seconded by K. Harrington, **to approve** the request of Covert Park Beach and Campground Manager, Robin Abshire to approve the bid from Ron Westerfield Construction in the amount of \$950.00 to repair the east wall of the residence as estimated.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: 5, No: 0, CARRIED

Motion by D. Cook, seconded by W. Pritchard, **to approve** the renewal of the Blue Care Health Insurance Plan with the premium increase of 6.48% as projected.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: 5, No: 0, CARRIED

Motion by W. Pritchard, seconded by D. Cook, **to approve** the request of Chief Allen to attend the Annual MACP winter professional Development Conference in Grand Rapids at a cost of \$280.00, plus the cost of hotel and meal expenses as per the Expense Reimbursement Policy; and an additional \$116.00 for lodging reimbursement.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: 5, No: 0, CARRIED

Motion by K. Harrington, seconded by D. Palgen, **to table** the request of Chief Allen to increase Daywi Cook's pay from \$250.00 per month to \$16.00 per hour averaging 10-15 hours per week.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: 3, No: 1, Abstain: 1 CARRIED

Motion by D. Palgen, seconded by K. Harrington, **to approve** the recommendation of Chief Myers authorizing the Fire Department to purchase a set of Binder Lifts at a cost of \$2,87620.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: 5, No: 0, CARRIED

Motion by L. Taylor, seconded by W. Pritchard, **to approve** the request of the KEPS Technologies, Inc., dba ACD.net approving the Metro Act Right of Way Permit Extension Agreement to July 14, 2025; as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: 5, No: 0, CARRIED

Motion by L. Taylor, to adjourn at 9:34PM.

Next Regular Board Meeting - Tuesday, December 8, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by D. Cook, Township Clerk