**Fredonia Township Board Regular Meeting**

**February 19, 2024 6:30 PM**

**Fredonia Township Hall**

**8803 17 Mile Rd, Marshall, MI 49068**

MINUTES

**BOARD MEMBERS** present: Doug Damon, Supervisor Cathy Combs, Clerk JC Skowron, Treasurer  Kyler Speaker, Trustee Terry Day, Trustee

**STAFF** present: Phil Damon, Fire Chief  Jacob Washburn, Deputy Supervisor/FD Training Officer Dan Livingston Sr., Calhoun County Planning Commission  George Crandall, Twp. Planning Committee

Terry Travis, Code Enforcement Officer

**PLEDGE OF ALLIGENCE:**

**AGENDA** – Additions/Deletions: Road funding and PA116 for Brian Dietz

**PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA:**

Diane Thompson/Commissioner shared that Calhoun County is now hosting podcasts. They are very informative and a good way to get to know your county representatives.

Kyler Speaker asked about Emmett passing a millage three years ago for road repair. Small townships are waiting a few years as it seems that larger townships are getting the millage match. In 2022, no work was done in Lee Township. Fredonia’s township has been approved for this year. The townships with more money are getting funds first. Diane encouraged Kyler to attend the county meetings to learn more. Diane is fighting for the roads but it’s a difficult situation. Kyler asked Diane to be his representative. The smaller townships cannot afford the road repairs. Diane shared that Bedford and Penfield will be rolling off which will allow for more townships to receive funding. George Crandall asked about when bonds go out for Emmett or Bedford, who’s responsible for paying that? It is Calhoun County or the road dept within Calhoun County. Diane will get more information and get back to George. May 14 @ 7pm is the next Road Commission Meeting.

Dave Gilbert/County Prosecutor – last week on February 13, 2024 three laws passed; changing the definition of felon, guns need to be locked up if you have kids in your home, guns in car needs to be empty and locked up, that there is no Gun Board and Clerk of the Court. Extreme Risk Protection Act – you can now get an order to take guns. Police Officer, HealthCare Workers, and domestic relationships must show proof before order to take guns away is awarded. Accused needs to be given time to come in (5 days).

Houston Cemetery has been seeing turtle and chicken heads cut off and wrapped in paper lying on the cemetery ground. Police have been called. It is believed that it is residents; not sure if it is tied to the marijuana business on C Drive South. Dave Gilbert suggested informing Human Society or PETA.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** N/A

**MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MONTH:** January 8, 2024

J. Skowron made a motion and K. Speaker supported to approve the minutes as printed. Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVED AS READ**

**FINANCIAL REPORT-**

JC shared that percentages are looking good. When looking at the new budget we need to look at areas that may have an increase for the following budget. Fiscal year if July to June. We will be having extra elections this year. JC will have final evaluation as compared to actual next month. George asked about the road fund showing a negative balance when it was planned and budgeted for. Doug Damon said the budget shows only the income collected vs. actual expenditures approved for that budget year. This will be corrected going forward.

**FILE FOR AUDIT**

**READING OF THE BILLS** by **Cathy Combs**

An invoice register report was presented and reviewed by board. Terry made a motion and Kyler supported the reading of the bills as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVED AS READ**

**REPORTS:**

**FIRE**: There were 11 fire runs and 14 medical runs for the month of January. Pediatric and medical considerations, SCBA search and rescue, Coldwater ice and rescue training with Marengo Twp., Marshall Twp. and Marshall City. Box alarm cards have been completed and turned in to the 911 dispatch for review. The annual golf outing will be held in June at the Marshall County Club. As of April 21, 2024, West Michigan Air Care will cease operation.

**AMBULANCE**: Calls were up 40 from last month, down a 142 from last fiscal year. 60 day billing cycle.

**CEMETERY**: One burial this past month at Lyon Lake. A few calls about foundations. Residents should contact Doug by April 1 to get it scheduled around Memorial Day. Brad Parker and Doug have been reviewing the lots and matching families. Plan to fill in potholes throughout the cemetery. Have a quote from QEI.

**ROADS**: G. Crandall – next meeting is May 14 at 7pm, will look at potential project for 2025. Township should receive invoice for 40% down for road repair. Chip and seal this year for A Drive from 12 mile to 13 ½. Picking back up from 14 to 15 ½ Mile Road from B Drive South to C Drive South.

**ZONING/ORDINANCE**: N/A

**CODE ENFORCEMENT**: T. Travis called in his report to C. Combs. T. Travis did speak with family on A Drive and 15 mile stating everything is in probate and that nothing can be removed from the property.

**PLANNING**: Still working through solar and the automotive repair and tie the two together.

**OLD BUSINESS**

\***ARPA Spreadsheet**: updated ARPA spreadsheet before we spend remaining $27K. C. Combs would like to speak with Ross our auditor and he has been reporting it out for us. Nothing has been spent on kitchen flooring yet. Flooring should only take one day to complete and is expected to be completed after election and before end of March.

Fire Dept garage door repair was $1200. FD would like option #1 on quote to replace. Will take into consideration before a final decision is made.

IT that was previously approved. Carl Damon has updated super administrator on email, is assigning licenses to office staff and Fire Dept then to additional laptops. Kyler mentioned cleaning up physical desks in order to remove hardware. After new computers are installed, the new email will be installed. Fire Dept will need new server access.

**\*BS&A Software Proposal** – can be hosted or cloud based. New IT person/Marshall based will be able to assist. K. Speaker made a motion to un-table the BS&A discussion and J. Skowron supported. K. Speaker mentioned other townships use servers and not the cloud. K. Speaker also recommended getting a VPN so that office staff could work remotely as needed. Original motion was to move BS&A to the cloud. The motion was voted No. K. Speaker made a motion and T. Day supported to get a new server and networking for approx. $2500 for the Fire Dept including a backup storage solution if advised by new IT company. The cost is an estimate. Motion carried unanimously.

\***Cemetery Rules** – changes were from back in November. Vases and vaults use to be 24 inches and now 18inches with p-stone. A pet can be a body in a grave. J. Washburn and D. Damon will come back with a list of changes.

\***Cemetery Budget** – B. Parker is computerizing cemetery lots and searching for families, etc. Cemetery expenses are budgeted for $8000 to include foundations, Sexton wages, etc. We are expecting $1500 income from lots being sold.

\***Short Term Rentals** – G. Crandall brought to board for approval at the January 8 meeting. Terry had questions that George answered. We now need a public meeting. It will not come to the board until after the public meeting.

\***Parks and Recreation** – J. Diver, D. Livingston and C. Combs are on the committee. Fredonia has no parks at the current time. We need to determine what to do with the money. Eckford is giving to Brooks Nature Trail which is owned by the city and volunteers keep it up. We need to give to adjoining city like Marshall or Tekonsha. We need to make a decision by tomorrow or we forfeit the money. K. Speaker made a motion to use fund for Saylor’s Landing as many of our residents use the launch for kayaking. T. Day supported the motion. It was suggested to split the funds 50/50 between Saylor’s Landing and Brooks Nature Trail. K. Speaker amended his motion, T. Day supported. Motion carried unanimously.

**Road funding** – we approved to go ahead and have 24 miles of local roads/nonprimary and 25 miles of primary roads to do a PASER rating if the cost of $12K or less. There could be legal costs if we go after the county. Leaning towards the more road miles you have the more you would be on for legal costs. Recommendation was to include local roads minus the project for this year; around $7K and we would have the remaining $5k to go towards legal costs. T. Day mentioned when this was originally discussed, legal costs were not discussed. There were only seven townships that agreed to be a part of it. Fredonia could be on for most of the legal fees if more townships don’t participate. Homer shared concerns about participating if the county could come back in the future and maybe bypass their project if they held a grudge. T. Day suggested the county come and speak to us about what their plan is. C.Combs was under the impression the pothole issue is separate. G. Crandall believes that it means both and holding the county accountable for pothole damages to vehicles and roads. D. Thompson mentioned earlier in the meeting this evening that the county does not have the money to fix the roads. J. Skowron made a motion and T. Day supported to abstain from what was passed due to new knowledge and waiting for additional information. Motion carried unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

\***Hose Testing** – P. Damon reported 10,500 feet of hose to be tested with one year contract, work is scheduled for June. Approximately the same price as 2023. C. Combs made a motion and K. Speaker supported to approve $5000 for work. Motion carried unanimously.

\***Mowing Contract 2024** – C. Combs will reach out to White Collar – they do a nice job. They charge $2400 each month they mow for all three cemeteries, two fire stations and township hall. We have $4500 left in the budget due to lack of need for snow removal this year. If there is no increase, we would like to stay with them. K. Speaker made a motion and C. Combs supported to remain with White Collar as long as no increase in contract. Motion carried unanimously.

\***Road Millage Renewal** – This will be up for renewal this year and will extend for seven years. We will need approval to place on the August ballot. T. Day made a motion and J. Skowron supported to put the road millage renewal on the August ballot. Motion carried unanimously.

\***Poverty Exemption** – D. Damon reported only one person is applying; we have not raised the poverty level. $13,800/single person. We need to update the scale and send to the state for next year. Doug will bring more information.

\***Fire Department Doors** – already discussed.

**PA116 for Brian Dietz** – Mr. Dietz has a cash crop of 80 acres, 47 tillable, 33 swap or woods and no structures. Mr. Dietz is asking for an 80-year renewal. Fredonia needs to review and then it gets moved to the county. T. Day made a motion and C. Combs supported to accept the request No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Damon shared that there will be four new commissioner seats open out of seven. Diane is not running again. Matt Saxton will be running for our area. Tommy Miller is running for Drain Commissioner.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** (for any new issues) –

\*A thank you to everyone for the raid on C Drive. It took three years but it got done. A special thanks to D. Damon for many calls made to various departments.

If you have any drainage ditch questions, please direct them to Ron Smith.

Also, loud music at Lyon Lake – 236 and 237 Lakeside and transportation truck with porta johns at midnight. How long before ordinance will be assembled and implemented along with enforcement?

**BOARD COMMENT (TIME LIMIT-3 MINUTES PER ISSUE PER PERSON**) – C. Combs shared that early nine-day voting is at the county building and happening now, otherwise everyone can vote at the township on election day February 27, 2024 from 7a-8p. D. Damon shared that new tax assessments will be mailed out soon. D. Damon will begin 2024-2025 budget review soon. Also, he will be going to propose an increase their local fire department contract with Eckford. D. Damon has been acting Sexton for the last few years and would like to be considered as permanent vs. temporary.

**ADJOURNMENT**: **Supervisor Doug Damon adjourned the meeting at 8:36 PM**

Minutes prepared by Deputy Laura Miller and Clerk Cathy Combs

**Cathy Combs, Township Clerk \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: February 19, 2024**

**Doug Damon, Township Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:**