



1401 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt, MI 48820
January 9, 2023 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

The Regular Meeting of the DeWitt Charter Township Board of Trustees was called to order by Supervisor Galardi at 7:00 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT Supervisor Rick Galardi, Clerk Adam Cramton, Treasurer Sandy Stump, and Trustees David Seeger, Brian Ross, David Fedewa, and Steven Smith.

MEMBERS ABSENT None.

ALSO PRESENT Manager Andrew Dymczyk, Police Chief Matt Merony, Fire Chief Dave DeKorte, Community Development Director Brett Wittenberg, and several citizens.

AGENDA **Ross moved, Seeger seconded, to approve the agenda as presented.**

AYES: Stump, Ross, Fedewa, Seeger, Cramton, Smith, Galardi.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA **Smith moved, Galardi seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda which included the following: Board of Trustees special meeting draft minutes, December 29, 2022; and General Vouchers 75131-75151 Tax Vouchers 9508-9517.**

AYES: Ross, Fedewa, Smith, Stump, Cramton, Seeger, Galardi.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT None.

PRESENTATION None.

PUBLIC HEARING None.

**COUNTY
COMMISSIONER
REPORT** None.

CORRESPONDENCE Correspondence included the following: DeWitt Township Police Department Activity Report – November 2022.

**UNFINISHED
BUSINESS**

Proposed Ordinance Amendment 22-1 - Home Occupations In April 2022, staff brought forth the topic of amending the Zoning Ordinance in order to help guide the Township in meeting the long-term goals and objectives described in the Comprehensive Development Plan. Two specific topics discussed at that meeting were to potentially allow Accessory Dwelling Units to be permitted within the Residential and

Agricultural Zoning Districts of the Township and to address Section 4.3 of the Zoning Ordinance which deals with Home Occupations. Based upon the conversations held at the meeting, staff prepared amended Ordinance language, and the Planning Commission did not have any questions or comments at their June meeting.

After additional discussions with legal counsel and other jurisdictions, staff recommended that further consideration of the Accessory Dwelling Units should be delayed until such time that the Township has the tools in place to ensure compliance with those proposed regulations. As such, the proposed amendment now only includes updates to the Home Occupation regulations.

As the world emerges into a post-COVID phase of reality, staff believes that the current Home Occupation regulations are quite antiquated and there exists a need to update this section as permanent or hybrid remote work becomes more common and these shifts may lead to more residents working or starting businesses from their homes. The intent is that these ordinance amendments have the potential to meet today's changing housing and working environments, and to permit residents additional means to use their properties as an income-generating source.

At the November 7, 2022 Planning Commission meeting, there was some general discussion regarding the proposed amendment.

At the November 28, 2022 Township Board meeting, the Board concurred with the Planning Commission's recommendation and approved on first reading.

Fedewa moved, Smith seconded, based on a unanimous recommendation from the Planning Commission at their meeting of November 7, 2022, and after finding that the proposed amendment has complied with the process for amending the Zoning Ordinance, approve the second reading of Zoning Ordinance Amendment 22-1, that updates and amends the DeWitt Charter Township Zoning Ordinance for the purposes of modifying the Home Occupation regulations.

AYES: Cramton, Smith, Seeger, Stump, Fedewa, Ross, Galardi.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Community
Development Director
Contract

The employment contract for Community Development Director Wittenberg expired at the end of 2022. Manger Dymczyk recommends approval of a contract extension and an additional one-time payment to address the brief period of 2023 that the Director was working at the 2022 position wage. Mr. Wittenberg, in his role as Community Development Director, has been a community asset and continues to address the development needs of our community in a professional manner.

Fedewa moved, Galardi seconded, to concur with the Manager's Office recommendation to extend and approve the employment agreement for the position of Community Development Director with Mr. Brett Wittenberg effective January 9, 2023 at Grade 9 Step 9 expiring December 31, 2025 and a one-time payment of \$69 to address the contract transition.

AYES: Fedewa, Seeger, Smith, Ross, Cramton, Stump, Galardi.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Treasurer's Office New Hire
Treasurer Stump and Manager Dymczyk conducted interviews on January 4, 2023. They recommend the hiring of Sue Spagnuolo for the position of part time Administrative Assistant II in the Treasurer's Office.

Stump moved, Galardi seconded, to approve the hiring of Sue Spagnuolo at Grade 4, Step 1 of the Classification and Wage Scale, for the position of part time Administrative Assistant II in the Treasurer's Office contingent upon the successful completion of the pre-employment physical.

AYES: Stump, Fedewa, Smith, Ross, Seeger, Cramton, Galardi.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Township's 2023
Poverty Exemption and
Guidelines

Pursuant to MCL.7u (e) of the Michigan Compiled Laws, which deals with the creation and implementation of poverty exemptions, the local governing body of the assessing unit determines and makes available to the public the Policy and Guidelines for the granting of poverty exemptions. The Township continues to comply with these requirements by establishing the Poverty Exemption Application and Policy and Guidelines, which are updated yearly.

Local governing bodies are required to adopt guidelines that set income levels for their poverty exemption guidelines and those income levels shall not be set lower by a city or township than the federal poverty guidelines updated annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is the recommendation of the Assessing Department that the Township adopt the attached poverty exemption guidelines, which are updated with the current Federal Poverty Guidelines income limits.

Cramton moved, Ross seconded, to adopt Resolution R2023-01-01 which amends the Township's Policy and Guidelines for Poverty Exemptions to include the federal poverty guidelines as established for 2023 and rescinds any prior Township Guidelines for Poverty Exemptions.

AYES: Stump, Ross, Seeger, Fedewa, Cramton, Smith, Galardi.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Land Rent Agreement with Robert O. Reese III For the several years, Robert Reese has been farming the vacant land east of Gunnisonville Cemetery. This is land that the Township purchased for future expansion of the Cemetery. Two acres are currently being withheld in preparation for a cemetery expansion, and Mr. Reese is, again, interested in farming the remaining four acres.

The proposed agreement is for \$95 an acre. This is the same per-acre price as last year.

Seeger moved, Stump seconded, to authorize the Clerk to execute the agreement with Robert O. Reese III to allow him to farm the four acres east of Gunnisonville Cemetery in 2023 for \$380/year.

AYES: Ross, Cramton, Stump, Seeger, Fedewa, Smith, Galardi.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Municipal Building South (MBS) Schematic Design The Municipal Building South (MBS) sub-committee continues to meet on a regular basis to consider all aspects of the MBS project. At this point in the process, the committee is ready to present and discuss the schematic design of the municipal building. The design phase incorporated the project assumptions of site footprint, target space analysis and cost estimate discussed at the September 26, 2022 regular board meeting.

If this project gains authorization to move forward, Manager Dymczyk recommends establishing a committee to explore options and required professional expertise associated with financing of the MBS, with a recommendation to be brought back before the Board.

Any committees and Manager Dymczyk will always provide a suggested action for the Board, and will continue to prepare for all possible directives. If additional deliberation and further discussion with vendors and staff is needed by the Board, accommodations can be exercised to minimally affect the project timeline.

Mark Bushhouse from Williams Architects was in attendance via ZOOM to address any questions from the Board.

Trustee Fedewa identified the need to replace the aging fire station on Weiland Rd., and is very satisfied with the team that has moved the new design to its current state. He is looking forward to additional input.

Clerk Cramton is looking forward to the financial discussion and hearing Board member's concerns with the scope of the project.

Treasure Stump expanded on the many resources utilized in the design thus far. She feels that the design will be a benefit to the Township and its residents for many years.

Chief DeKorte highlighted that the MBS design is more than a fire station, as it can and will be utilized by multiple departments of the Township. Supervisor Galardi asked if the training facilities, as designed, will fit the vision for firefighter attraction, training, and retention. Chief DeKorte feels the design will meet this need with classroom, training tower, and confined spaces below the tower.

Chief Merony is passionate about training, and feels the MBS design will serve as a venue to host trainings with Police, Fire, and regional partners.

Trustee Smith appreciates the feasibility and thought process that has gone into the design and determination of location.

Trustee Ross trusts the MBS committee's decision and appreciates the permanence of the design. He feels that this building has been needed for many years, and fits perfectly into the Townships commitment to public safety. He wonders if the facility is designed to be expandable.

Mark Bushhouse responded to the flexibility of the design, and that it is designed to be remodeled and expanded. He feels the project design is faithful to the goals outlined by the committee.

Trustee Fedewa is complimentary of Manager Dymczyk's project leadership and expertise thus far, and is confident that the financial component moving forward will be carefully considered.

Supervisor Galardi added that it is important that the Board take their time and act responsibly with tax payer funds. He feels that it is time that our public safety facility mirrors the dedication and commitment that first responders give to our residents.

Fedewa moved, Smith seconded, the following suggested actions:

- 1. Confirm the recommendations of the MBS sub-committee for the schematic design, and authorize the Manager's Office to explore financing considerations (i.e. Bond Counsel, Financial Advisor) associated with Municipal Building South, with a financing recommendation to be brought back before the Board.**
- 2. Establish an ad-hoc committee of Stump, Cramton, and Manager Dymczyk to explore financing considerations associated with the Municipal Building South**

AYES: Stump, Cramton, Fedewa, Seeger, Ross, Smith, Galardi.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

**EXTENDED PUBLIC,
STAFF, & BOARD
COMMENTS**

Deirdre Thompson, 11891 Schavey, appreciates the fiscal responsibility demonstrated by the Board, as well as the commitment to public safety. She inquired about how the recent increase in Police activity compares with the average of the last five years. Chief Merony replied that crime levels still have not risen above the pre-COVID levels. Supervisor Galardi stated that there is a dramatic increase in the amount of criminal aggressiveness.

Fire Chief Dave DeKorte informed the Board of recent department activity including an assist to Bath for a house fire, annual Shop with a Hero event at Meijer, and an assist for a fire in Hemlock in Saginaw County. The department finished the year with 1,884 runs.

Manager Dymczyk offered updates on the following:

- MMRMA insurance renewal

- Administrative Assistant interview with Treasurer Stump
- Corridor Improvement Authority goals setting and 2023 budget approval
- Clinton County Road Commission Snow Plowing community response and feedback
- Speed studies under way on Wood and State roads
- Rotary Club presentation with Chief Merony

Trustee Smith commented that today is national law enforcement appreciation day and thanked the Township's Police Department. He also complimented Chief Merony on his completion of a month-long stint of working night shift. Lastly, he congratulated Community Development Director Brett Wittenberg on the renewal of his employment contract.

Trustee Ross stated that he is confident that the useful life of the MBS project is far longer than the bonding period. He feels that this fact makes it a sensible decision for the Board to move forward.

Treasurer Stump thanked the Board for the Administrative Assistant hire in her office.

Clerk Cramton updated the Board on the status of the records digitization project being undertaken in his office, as well as the recent visit to the Township's only licensed marijuana grow operation. He also informed the Board about a future interdepartmental meeting with legal to review video redaction requirements for FOIA, and an upcoming wrap-up memo for the Town Country Motel license revocation.

Police Chief Matt Merony informed the Board that he has received community thanks for the Township's efforts in controlling activities in the defunct Rotunda Trailer Park. Full time Administrative Assistant Lisa Hicks-Betz has accepted a position at Clinton County Sheriff's Office and is leaving with everyone's best wishes. Officer Stump has completed his evaluation period and is now on solo road patrol. Officer Stump will also be honored with the Public Safety Officer/First Responder of the Year award by the Williamston Area Chamber of Commerce. Chief Merony reports that there were eight arrests on New Year's Eve, and the department was able to arrest a retail fraud suspect found to possess a knife, drugs, and have multiple outstanding warrants. The suspect, in his own words, broke his only rule – "to not come to Clinton County."

ADJOURNMENT

Seeger moved, Ross seconded, to adjourn 8:11 PM.

Motion voted and carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Adam Cramton, Clerk



Rick Galardi, Supervisor