



1401 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt, MI 48820  
January 10, 2022 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

The Special 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 Mike Gute, Fire Chief Dave DeKorte, Community Development Director Brett Wittenberg, and Chief Building Official Al Hoard.

**AGENDA** **Smith moved, Fedewa seconded, to approve the agenda.**

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

**NAYS: None.**

**ABSENT: None.**

**Motion carried.**

**CONSENT AGENDA** **Ross moved, Seeger seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda, Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Draft Minutes, December 29, 2021; and General Vouchers 73712-73812, Tax Vouchers 9345-9354.**

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

**NAYS: None.**

**ABSENT: None.**

**Motion carried.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT** None.

**PRESENTATION** Dick Peffley, Lansing Board of Water and Light (BWL) General Manager, led a presentation about the status of BWL streetlights within DeWitt Charter Township. BWL currently operates and maintains 343 lights within Township borders. Items covered included the improvement of outage reporting, how COVID has affected the ability to source repair components, and the conversion from High Pressure Sodium to LED lights.

**PUBLIC HEARING** To be eligible for Department of Natural Resources grants, a community must have a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Throughout 2021, Spicer Group has been working on a Parks and Recreation Master Plan for both the City of DeWitt and DeWitt Charter Township (DeWitt Area). This Master Plan has been available for review in Board packets, at the Township Hall, and on the Township website.

One requirement, for the State of Michigan to accept the Plan, is the holding of a public hearing for the purposes of discussing and receiving public comment on the 2022-2025 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

**The Public Hearing was called to order at 7:21 PM by Supervisor Galardi.**

Clerk Cramton presented that there were no comments received in the Clerk's Office.

**Seeger moved, Fedewa seconded, to close the Public Hearing at 7:22 PM.**

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

**NAYS: None.**

**ABSENT: None.**

**Motion carried.**

COUNTY  
COMMISSIONER  
REPORT

None.

CORRESPONDENCE 2021 Goal Performance Dashboard; 2022 Goal Performance Dashboard; Steven Church correspondence; and Settlement Agreement with Johnson and Johnson.

Steven Church, 1495 W. Solon Rd., was present to discuss his concerns with the speed of traffic on Solon Rd. Clerk Cramton, Trustee Fedewa, and Trustee Smith will review Mr. Church's concerns on-site.

UNFINISHED  
BUSINESS  
Rezoning 21-880001-  
Bear Teachworth

Bear Teachworth is requesting to rezone approximately 3.479 acres from BL, Local Business, to BC, Community Business. The subject property is located at 11530 S. US 27, DeWitt, MI 48820, on the west side of S. US 27, south of Round Lake Road, north of Howe Road, in the southeast ¼ of Section 4 of DeWitt Charter Township (Parcel #050-004-100-105-00).

The property is zoned BL, Local Business, and has been operating an unpermitted use of a construction contracting business that includes storage of materials and equipment and office uses. The current use of the property is not permitted within the BL, Local Business District. However, the nature of the use that typically serves the community at large rather than localized residential areas would be permitted under the BC, Community Business District. Currently, the property is in violation of the Township Zoning Ordinance. The applicant is requesting to rezone the property to BC, Community Business District, in an attempt to bring the property into compliance with the Zoning Ordinance. If approved, the applicant has to go through the subsequent review procedure to ensure compliance with the regulations of the current use. Moving forward with the development review procedure, the applicant needs to specify a category for the current use in accordance with Section 3.18 of the Zoning Ordinance.

The current use of the property could be permitted within the BC, Community Business District under a construction contracting business, provided no outdoor storage of material is permitted, subject to the regulations of Section 4.59 of the Zoning Ordinance, or an open-air business subject to the regulations of Section 4.60 of the Zoning Ordinance consistent with the permitted open-air business of SimTech Outdoor Solutions; permitted under Special Use Permit #00- 990007.

A public hearing was conducted on the proposed rezoning request on July 7, 2021 in which the Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval. There was no public comment received regarding the request and the Township Board approved first reading at their December 13, 2021 meeting.

**Galardi moved, Smith seconded, based on a unanimous recommendation from the Planning Commission, to approve the second reading of rezoning request 21-880001, from Bear Teachworth as legally described on the application materials and survey documents, from BL, Local Business to the BC, Community Business district based on the fact that the request is not in conflict with recommendations of the Comprehensive Development Plan and is consistent with the existing land use pattern in the immediate area.**

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

**NAYS: None.**

**ABSENT: None.**

**Motion carried.**

#### NEW BUSINESS

DeWitt Township 2022 Pursuant to MCL.7u (e) of the Michigan Compiled Laws, which deals with the creation Poverty Exemption and and implementation of poverty exemptions, the local governing body of the assessing Guidelines – unit determines and makes available to the public the Policy and Guidelines for the Resolution 2022-01-01 granting of poverty exemptions. The Township continues to comply with these requirements by establishing the Poverty Exemption Application and Policy, and Guidelines, which were initially approved September 13, 2004 in Resolution 040959. The Policy and Guidelines were revised February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 to comply with further changes in requirements, as determined by the State Tax Commission, in Resolution 080403.

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. While the Township has always followed the federal guidelines, these annually established limits or guidelines were not made an official part of the established Policy and Guidelines, as required by the State Tax Commission. They are now asking that the annual federal poverty guidelines be made a part of, and incorporated within, the local unit's policy.

**Stump moved, Galardi seconded, to adopt Resolution R2022-01-01 which amends the Township's Policy and Guidelines for Poverty Exemptions to include the federal poverty guidelines as established for 2022 and rescinds any prior Township Guidelines for Poverty Exemptions.**

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

**NAYS: None.**

**ABSENT: None.**

**Motion carried.**

Land Rent Agreement – For the several years, Robert Reese has been farming the vacant land east of Robert Reese III Gunnisonville Cemetery. This is land that the Township purchased for future expansion

of the Cemetery. Two (2) acres are currently being withheld in preparation for a cemetery expansion, and Mr. Reese is, again, interested in farming the remaining four (4) acres.

Clerk Cramton provided the agreement with Mr. Reese to allow him to farm four (4) acres of vacant Township property east of Gunnisonville Cemetery in 2022. The proposed agreement is for \$95 an acre. This is the same per-acre price as last year.

**Cramton moved, Seeger 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 2022 for \$380/year.**

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

**NAYS: None.**

**ABSENT: None.**

**Motion carried.**

DARA Professional Services Agreement

DeWitt Township provides financial services to the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority. This has been done since the creation of DARA. Because they are a small organization, it has not made sense that they contract privately to process accounts payable, payroll and other financial functions necessary for DARA operation.

Manager Dymczyk provided an updated agreement. The DARA Board will be reviewing the document at their January 6th meeting. The only major change to the agreement is the annual fee. In 2021 the fee was set at \$6,787. The new agreement increases this amount by about 2.5% a year as follows:

2022	\$6,957
2023	\$7,131
2024	\$7,309

**Stump moved, Cramton seconded, to authorize the Township Clerk to execute the attached Professional Services Agreement with DARA from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2024.**

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

**NAYS: None.**

**ABSENT: None.**

**Motion carried.**

ZBA Resignation – Andrew Richards

Andrew Richards has submitted his resignation from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

DeWitt Charter Township has the following Committee vacancies:

- Board of Review – 1 (alternate, ending 1/1/2023)
- Corridor Improvement Authority – 2 (ending 12/31/2025)
- Public Safety Committee – 2 (ending 12/31/2023, ending 12/31/2025)
- Salary Compensation Commission – 1 (ending 12/31/2023)
- Zoning Board of Appeals – 1 (ending 12/31/2023)

**Galardi moved, Smith seconded, to thank Andrew Richards for his service to the residents of DeWitt Charter Township as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, and to accept his resignation effective January 10, 2022.**

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

**NAYS: None.**

**ABSENT: None.**

**Motion carried.**

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

Del Jenkins, 1126 Ralph St., was present to express his concern about the length of time it has taken to clean up a neighboring property on Brook Rd. The property in question suffered a fire on August 4<sup>th</sup> and cleanup of the site has yet to occur. Mr. Jenkins distributed photographs of the site to Board membership. Chief Building Official Hoard and Manager Dymczyk responded that there are many extenuating circumstances that make a responsible party difficult to identify, and that they are still exploring all channels to affect clean up of the area as quickly as possible. Chief Building Official Hoard committed to remain in contact with Mr. Jenkins with any updates.

Fire Chief Dave DeKorte provided updates on the recent toy giveaway event and the annual shop-with-a-hero event. Lieutenant Bush retired from the department on January 5. Chief reported that 2021 saw 1,846 calls for service, representing a 15% increase over 2020. There are currently two firefighters in FF I/II training, and interviews were conducted resulting in offers to four new firefighters / emergency responders. In answer to a prior question from Trustee Seeger, Fire Chief DeKorte provided that there have been two accidents at the new roundabout at Clark and DeWitt Roads since its completion.

Police Chief Mike Gute offered that the Police Department now has a new patrol car in service, and two more will be in service soon. Chief Gute offered an update on a recent pursuit and the difficulties surrounding processing offenders once caught. On February 20, Sergeant Johnson will be leaving the Department. The Department recently completed training on the new radio system and the new facial recognition program.

Manager Andrew Dymczyk presented updates on the following:

- MTA conference
- COVID Guidelines update
- Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) grants to two businesses
- Manager's Meeting with MTA
  - Short Term Rental legislation
  - Sand and Gravel Mining legislation
- Water/Sewer Master Plan contract

Chief Building Official Al Hoard informed the Board that he has signed a new three-year contract with the Township. He introduced new Code Enforcement Officer, Mark Nicholson. Chief Hoard presented that development within the Township continues at a very high rate, and the Building department continues to employ best practices and process improvements.

Trustee Smith thanked all involved for the shop-with-a-hero event. He also thanked Lieutenant Bush and Sergeant Johnson for their service.

Trustee Fedewa informed the Board of a recent zoning applicant's appreciation for the Township's processes. He also commented on the continuing evolution of American Rescue Plan (ARPA) guidelines.

Trustee Seeger informed the Board that the Clinton County Township Officers Association meeting will be next Tuesday in Ovid, and they will be electing officers if a quorum can be achieved.

Treasurer Stump informed the Board the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority (DARA) will be hosting a Public Hearing for the 2022-2026 Parks and Recreation Master Plan at the Community Center at 6:00 PM tomorrow. Treasurer Stump, as well as Clerk Cramton, will be attending.

Clerk Cramton commented that the Clerk's Office is now accepting sign-ups for the AARP TaxAide free tax return preparation program. Additionally, he has initiated contact with representatives of Granger to reinstate the Clean Sweep program after a two-year hiatus.

Supervisor Galardi commented that there is a swell of support among many communities in the state to allow some type of remote attendance for membership in the Open Meetings Act (OMA). Currently, the only remote attendance allowable is for military deployment. Many of the state's legislators don't realize this and would benefit from local government input.

ADJOURNMENT

**Seeger moved, Ross seconded, to adjourn at 8:27 PM.**

**Motion voted and carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Cramton, Clerk

Rick Galardi, Supervisor