



1401 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt, MI 48820
October 11, 2021 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 Police Chief Mike Gute, Fire Chief Dave DeKorte, Manager Andrew Dymczyk, Assessor Chris Coucke, Community Development Director Brett Wittenberg, Planning Commission Chair Bruce Keilen, Public Safety Committee Chair Steve Musselman, Clinton County Drain Commissioner Phil Hanses, Clinton County Commissioner Robert Showers, and several citizens.

AGENDA **Seeger moved, Smith seconded, to approve the Agenda.**

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA **Ross moved, Fedewa seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda, which included the following: Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Draft Minutes, September 27, 2021; and General Vouchers 73445-73486, Tax Vouchers 9292-9300.**

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT None.

PUBLIC HEARING

Remy Chandler Assessment Roll and Resolution 2021-10-64 At the September 13th Board meeting, the Township approved the creation of a special assessment roll for the Remy Chandler Inter-County drain and established a public hearing for October 11th. Manager Dymczyk has prepared a presentation that will provide the public with the details of the special assessment.

Clerk Cramton presented the Board with the following statistics:

- The owners of 1872 parcels were notified of the proposed assessment and public hearing by first class mail.
- The 10 highest-assessed owners were contacted by phone prior to receiving their notice.
- Two notices were published in the DeWitt Bath Review and Lansing State Journal.
- 5 letters to parcel owners were returned as non-deliverable.

- Approximately 45 inquiries, either in-person or by phone, were received regarding the notice.
- 2 written protests were received prior to the public hearing.

The Public Hearing was called to order at 7:03 PM by Supervisor Galardi.

Manager Dymczyk presented a brief overview on the details surrounding the Remy-Chandler intercounty drain and how the assessment roll was established.

Clinton County Drain Commissioner Phil Hanses further described the history of the affected drain, and the formation of the intercounty drain commission that governs it. He described the affected landowners as being located within the watershed that flows to the drain. DeWitt Charter Township's contribution is based upon the percentage of total acres that flow towards the drain. This figure is 28.71%. The cost to be collected from all municipalities that benefit from the drain will go to planned maintenance, vegetation cleanout, sculpting of banks, culvert maintenance, and other maintenance intended to keep the drain flowing freely for the next twelve years. Additionally, the intercounty drain commission will form an asset management plan that will inform decisions about the drain for years to come.

Bruce Keilen, 3220 E. Stoll Rd., states that his property is at the lowest point of the drain and believes that the benefit to his property is minimal. He submitted a letter to the Board and Phil Hanses stating his concerns about increased flow within the drain from Ingham County, and his feeling that additional detention is required upstream. He feels that the Drain Commission does a good job, but is unable to stand up for Clinton County residents when it comes to the intercounty drain.

Shelby Hall, 1040 E. Wieland, believes that it is not proper to assess an additional tax on residents when they already pay taxes. He believes his voice is not being heard.

Greg Whitlock, 12625 Old US 27, questioned if the percentage of municipal contribution is a fixed number or if it changes. He also wondered if the assessment total on the letters received by residents is the total assessment or an annual number for three years.

Andrea Zeeb Polverento, 3200 E. Herbison Rd., believes that the assessment is unreasonable and objectionable. She objects to the assessment on the grounds that the affected properties are not receiving a benefit from the proposed improvements, and that there is disproportionality between the amount being assessed and the accrued value of the improvements. She submitted a letter of objection to the Board and Phil Hanses. She also provided that the apportionment across properties was not consistent.

Jackie Reese, 14567 Wood Rd., appreciates that maintenance is being routinely performed on the drain. Her question is in regard to the difference in the per-acre rate that is being assessed between properties. She also would like to know if there is a difference in the rate between commercial, agricultural, and vacant properties. Ms. Reese would like to know if the percentage of benefit to DeWitt Township is based solely on acres or if there are other considerations such as land use.

Faye Hagy, 1745 E. Clark Rd., would like to know if those landowners that own property directly on the drain are assessed at the same rate or higher than landowners that own

property away from the drain but still within the district. She also feels that public notices published in the DeWitt Bath Review are not reaching the residents.

Gary Tarrant, 1914½ W. Stoll Rd., feels that there is a discrepancy in the assessment. He also doesn't feel that the entirety of the assessed acreage is able to drain into the Remy-Chandler. During the prior assessment, Phil Hanses had reviewed the topography and issued an exception.

Norm Farnum, 14601 S. DeWitt Rd., wondered why DeWitt Township is not paying this assessment using at-large tax revenue. He is complimentary of the job that the Drain Commission does for residents.

Lisa Stowe, 1120 Commerce Park Dr., agrees that the assessment should be spread across all properties in the township. She feels that she is being punished for having a ditch on her property. Ms. Stowe also inquired about the different assessment rates.

Gary Horning, 3043 Herbison Rd., had his property re-graded away from the drain and wonders how to have this evaluated.

Stump moved, Seeger seconded, to close the Public Hearing at 7:57 PM.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Clinton County Drain Commissioner Phil Hanses addressed a portion of the questions asked during the public hearing:

- He welcomes input from Township Officials and residents and encourages all to reach out or attend Drain Commission or Intercounty Drain Commission meetings.
- He doesn't feel that Clinton County has an equal voice on the Intercounty Drain Commission. He would appreciate more attendance from Clinton County residents and voicing of concerns.
- The percentage of municipal service area for the Remy-Chandler Drain has been unchanged since a 2002 study performed by Spicer Engineering that took land use and type into consideration. This percentage is less than the total acreage that DeWitt Township possesses. There is a concern that if the apportionment were to be reopened that the DeWitt Township portion would increase.
- If a landowner feels their property isn't effectively draining into the Remy-Chandler, he encourages them to reach out to the Township and review can be scheduled with the Drain Commission.

Clerk Cramton advised that public notices published in the DeWitt Bath Review are also published for seven days in the Lansing State Journal in print and online. Publication in a local newspaper is a legal requirement and there are fewer options every day.

Supervisor Galardi stated his desire to compile a database of contacts to disseminate information to residents.

Manager Dymczyk stated that, firstly, the Township is making a 10% at-large contribution to the drain project, followed by a minimum assessment of \$50 to all

property owners in the district with less than approximately 3.65 acres. The remaining assessment was then distributed at a rate of \$15.92 per acre.

Clerk Cramton presented that the assessment listed on the letter to landowners is the total assessment, rather than a per-year.

Township Assessor Chris Coucke explained that the apportionment was done by acreage and the procedure was consistent with the assessment from 2010. Numerous landowners are indicating that they have notices that are levied at a significantly lower rate.

Supervisor Galardi states that the Township will take another look at the apportionment.

Norm Farnum explained how to evaluate a level of benefit for a parcel. He feels that a uniform per-acre assessment isn't fair.

Gary Tarrant does not agree with the Township picking up an at-large portion of the assessment.

Andrea Zeeb Polverento questioned the portion of the calculation that indicates that runoff was a consideration.

Shelby Hall feels that he has already paid his taxes and that the Township is not listening.

Jackie Reese feels that there is a lot of development that has occurred since the 2002 study.

Cramton moved, Galardi seconded, to set another public hearing for October 25, 2021 at 7:00 PM for the Remy-Chandler special assessment.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

The Board took a five-minute break. The meeting reconvened at 8:40 PM.

PRESENTATION

2022 Township Budget Manager Dymczyk presented to the Board the latest draft of the 2022 Budget and highlighted some of the challenges and differences in this budget process from past years.

Trustee Ross appreciates the Township's dedication to improving roads, and stated that the Defined Benefit plan funding level for Police Officers depends largely on the assumptions from MERS. He wonders if there could be a better means to identify the pass-through tax collection for our municipal partners.

Trustee Fedewa stated that, much like the Capital Improvement Committee is tasked with prioritizing capital projects, the budget is not able nor intended to capture every good idea for improvement in the township in one year. He feels the budget as presented strikes a good balance for the essential operations.

Treasurer Stump appreciates the new level of transparency with Public Safety millage funds. She would like to see a better way to communicate the pass-through tax collection that we provide for our municipal partners.

Clerk Cramton added that the creation of stand-alone funds for the Police and Fire departments, as well as the implementation of the Uniform Chart of Accounts, made the 2022 budget process significantly more complicated. He commended Manager Dymczyk for his hard work.

Supervisor Galardi commented that DeWitt Township continues to demonstrate a tradition of fiscal responsibility. The Township's commitment to road maintenance serves to be pro-active and avoid the problem of having to react to a road quality crisis. He stated that the Townships policy of reserve funding is sound and that the millages collected for Public Safety do not tell the entire story of the cost of operations for the Police and Fire departments.

County Commissioner Robert Showers asked for the amount of the total tax revenue that the Township is expecting to collect in 2022. Manager Dymczyk responded that the expected tax revenue is roughly \$2.4 million.

Greg Whitlock, 12625 Old US 27, asked if it was possible to renegotiate the collection fees for the pass-through tax levy for our partner municipalities. He also requested to know the State Equalized Value (SEV) for the entire Township. Manager Dymczyk responded that the SEV is approximately \$565 million.

Smith moved, Galardi seconded, to receive and place on file the October 11, 2021 edition of the 2022 DeWitt Charter Township Draft Budget.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

COUNTY
COMMISSIONER
REPORT

Clinton County Commissioner Robert Showers was in attendance and presented handouts updating the county-wide population analysis resulting from the 2020 census, as well as an updated taxable value chart for the County.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence included the following: 2021 Township Goal Performance Dashboard; and Michigan Fatal Fire Statistics – January-September 2021

UNFINISHED
BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Body Worn Cameras –
Establish
Subcommittee

The in-car video camera system that the DeWitt Township Police Department is currently using is now out of warranty and the system has increasingly become unreliable. The department is in the process of testing other systems to determine what will be best for both the department and our community. There are options now which would include the ability to incorporate Body Worn Cameras into this system so that a more accurate account of an event can be collected.

Police Chief Mike Gute presented that the department has been trialing several different manufacturers' cameras and that all officers in the department are desirous of this technology.

Ross moved, Stump seconded, to approve the formation of a subcommittee of the Township Board to discuss exploring options regarding the future purchase of Body Worn Cameras for police officers.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Ross moved, Seeger seconded, to approve Supervisor Galardi's nomination of Clerk Cramton, Trustee Smith, and Trustee Fedewa to a subcommittee of the Township Board to discuss exploring options regarding the future purchase of Body Worn Cameras for police officers.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Planning Commission
Appointment

The Planning Commission has had a single vacancy since June of this year. Retired Planning Department Administrative Assistant Linda Parkinson-Gray has applied to serve. With her knowledge of Planning Commission procedure, and 22 years of service at the Township, her appointment to the Planning Commission would serve to make an already outstanding public body even stronger.

Cramton moved, Stump seconded, to confirm the Supervisor's appointment of Linda Parkinson-Gray to the Planning Commission for the remainder of a three (3) year term that expires on December 31st, 2022.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

EXTENDED PUBLIC,
STAFF, & BOARD
COMMENTS

Greg Whitlock, 12625 Old US 27, asked if the Township has a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district like the one in Delta Township. Manager Dymczyk responded that DeWitt Township maintains a TIF called the Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) and it is on Old 27 from Sheridan Road to Northcrest. Mr. Whitlock also suggested that it would be possible for the Township to borrow from other Township funds in order to purchase the body-worn cameras.

Shelby Hall, 1040 E. Wieland, requested that the Township explore allowing dogs in Granger Meadows park.

Fire Chief Dave DeKorte informed the Board that body-worn cameras for the Police department will serve to assist the Fire department as well. He presented that the

previous weekend was extremely busy with calls and community events. Additionally, the department held its family picnic on Sunday.

Police Chief Mike Gute was extremely congratulatory about the National Night Out event. He feels that there were between 600 and 700 residents in attendance and thanks all who participated and coordinated the event. Chief Gute thanked the Board for the formation of the subcommittee for body-worn cameras. He also updated the board on upcoming training events and interviews for a new officer.

Manager Dymczyk provided updates on the following:

- Met with the DeWitt Chamber of Commerce
- Budget Workshop held last week
- Fire Station 1 walk-through
- Sewer Master Plan kickoff meeting this week
- Code Enforcement Officer interviews this week
- Pickleball courts project is ongoing
- National Night Out – Manager Dymczyk thanked the Public Safety Committee, Sara Shepard, and the municipal partners that participated

Trustee Smith appreciated that all voices were heard during the Remy-Chandler public hearing, and also appreciated the information provided from County Commissioner Robert Showers.

Trustee Fedewa stated that he will be absent for the October 25th meeting.

Trustee Ross requests an update on the Senate and House Bills concerning mining. Community Development Director Brett Wittenberg will look into this further.

Trustee Seeger would not be in agreement with any type of at large Township or County assessment for the Remy-Chandler drain. Also, he feels that time will continue to improve and lower the cost of body-worn camera technology.

Treasurer Stump reports that all of our municipal partner 1-4029 form levying taxes have been received. She will take a look at the timing of the Remy-Chandler assessment.

Supervisor Galardi congratulated the Public Safety Committee for the successful National Night Out event.

ADJOURNMENT

Seeger moved, Ross seconded, to adjourn at 10:04 PM.

Motion voted and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Cramton, Clerk

Rick Galardi, Supervisor