



1401 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt, MI 48820
October 23, 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 **Seeger moved, Galardi seconded, to approve the agenda as presented.**

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA **Ross moved, Galardi seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda which included the following: Board of Trustees regular meeting draft minutes, September 25, 2023; Planning Commission regular meeting draft minutes, October 2, 2023; and General Vouchers 76107-76189, Tax Vouchers 9617-9633.**

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT None.

PRESENTATION None.

PUBLIC HEARING

Remy Chandler
Intercounty Drain
Assessment

On September 13, 2021, the Board approved resolution 2021-09-63 directing the Township Supervisor to prepare the tentative special assessment roll for the Remy Chandler Intercounty drain. On October 11, 2021, and again on October 25, 2021, the Board failed to adopt resolution 2021-10-64 confirming the assessment roll. The Board agreed to a \$28,568 at-large contribution, and the first of five payments were made by the Township to the intercounty drain board in the summer of 2022.

On September 25, 2023, the Board set a public hearing to consider and hear objections to the confirmation of a special assessment roll for the purpose of defraying, in whole or in part, the cost of providing maintenance on the Remy Chandler Intercounty Drain. After closure of the public hearing, it will be necessary to approve Resolution 2021-10-64 that approves the roll.

As of the start of the board meeting, the following information is provided regarding the Remy Chandler Drain Assessment Public Hearing:

- DeWitt Township accounts for \$180,838 of a total \$600,000 assessment
- DeWitt Township is making a \$28,568 at-large contribution, leaving \$152,269 to be assessed.
- The owners of 1872 parcels were notified of the proposed assessment and public hearing by first class mail.
- Notice was twice published in the Lansing State Journal.
- 7 letters to parcel owners were returned as non-deliverable.
- Approximately 45 inquiries, either in-person or by phone, were received regarding the notice.
- Two written protests were received.

The Public Hearing was called to order at 7:02 PM by Supervisor Galardi.

Manager Dymczyk and Clerk Cramton provided a brief presentation explaining the Remy Chandler drain, who is responsible for managing the drain, defining a special assessment, and explaining the Remy Chandler special assessment.

Faye Hagy, 1745 E Clark Rd, spoke by phone during the hearing. She inquired about the culverts that she can see from her yard and when they would be cleaned.

Greg Whitlock, 12625 S US 27, spoke in-person during the hearing. He would like to know if the assessment is a 1-year or a 3-year assessment, and what work was performed on the drain.

Cathy Steele, 1377 W State Rd, Lansing, spoke in-person during the hearing. She is concerned about the condition and maintenance of the ditches and drains on her property that feed the Remy Chandler. She feels that the Drain Commission should be more proactive in assessing the condition of the drain infrastructure.

Jeffrey Ovenhouse, 1069 W Wieland Rd spoke in-person during the hearing. He owns five properties that are being assessed the minimum assessment of \$50 each, totaling \$250. He maintains that if his properties were joined, or if he was assessed at the per/acre rate, his assessment would be much lower.

Norm Farnum, 14601 S DeWitt Rd, spoke in-person during the hearing. He informed the Board that many years ago, during previous Remy Chandler assessments, he worked with the Drain Commission to get his property removed from the assessment due to the fact that water is detained and cannot flow off of his property. At the time, the Drain Commission removed his property from the assessment, but did not remove it from the district. He would like his property removed from the district in the future.

Andrea Nejois, 14195 Boichot Rd, spoke in-person during the hearing. She reports that along Boichot Road there is standing water in the ditch at all times. She would like the Drain Commission to assess the situation.

Richard Stevens, 14327 Turner Rd, spoke in-person during the hearing. He reports that the Drain Commission installed new drains near his property and that the drains have been full of water for four years. He would like the Drain Commission to assess the situation.

Andrea Zeeb-Polverento, 13828 Hamersley Rd, Bath, spoke in-person at the hearing on behalf of Centennial Land & Timber, LLC, as well as providing a written letter from Patrick J. Zeeb, Centennial Land & Timber, LLC (multiple parcels). Andrea questioned the benefit received from the Fishbeck study, which cost is included in the assessment. Her feeling is that the majority of the benefit is for the urban developed communities to the south of the Township assessment district. She would like to know what proposed items from the plan have been implemented. She notes that the assessment roll, which she has reviewed, is different than the roll that was provided in 2021. Lastly, she had expected to receive invitations to the Intercounty Drain Board meetings and has not, to date, received any.

Jacqueline Reese, 14567 Wood Rd, spoke in-person during the hearing. She is also disappointed that the Drain Commission does not have a representative at the public hearing. One of her concerns is about the asset management plan for the drain and its focus on the urban developed areas. This seems like a disproportionate benefit to her. She also spoke of the need to perform a new apportionment study to determine a more current contribution for the Township drainage district.

Johanna Balzer, 3450 Clark Rd, spoke in-person during the hearing. She would like Township board members to regularly attend the Intercounty Drain Board meetings to advocate on behalf of the Township. She also feels that the study and maintenance mostly benefits the upstream communities.

Seeger moved, Fedewa seconded, to close the Public Hearing at 8:00 PM.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Seeger moved, Stump seconded, to adopt Resolution 2021-10-64 confirming the 2021 Remy Chandler Inter-County Drain assessment roll and authorizing payments.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Supervisor Galardi called for a brief recess at 8:10 PM. The Board meeting was reconvened at 8:21 PM.

2024 DeWitt Charter
Township Budget
Presentation

The Township Board reviewed the 2024 budget at the September 12th and October 10th board meetings.

The Public Hearing was called to order at 8:22 PM by Supervisor Galardi.

Manager Dymczyk provided the Board with a presentation highlighting aspects of the 2024 budget including SCCMUA enhancements, revenue sources, taxable valuation of the Township, and use of reserves. There are still many unknowns at this time with the MBS project out for bid, as well as a Township-wide wage study to be implemented.

Greg Whitlock, 12625 S US 27, asked what the Townships portion of the SCCMUA project was. Manager Dymczyk responded that the Township is responsible for a little over half of the total project cost.

Seeger moved, Smith seconded, to close the public hearing at 8:49 PM.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Smith moved, Fedewa seconded, to approve Resolution #2023-10-63 to adopt the 2024 Budget.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Smith moved, Fedewa seconded, to approve Resolution #2023-10-64 that authorizes the budget appropriations.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

**COUNTY
COMMISSIONER
REPORT**

Commissioner Ken Mitchell was present and offered an update. He had provided, ahead of the meeting, slides from a Lansing Chamber presentation that he attended concerning the Lansing area economic outlook. Commissioner Mitchell informed the Board about upcoming legislation for solar and wind farm zoning as well as proposed permitting requirements for septic systems. He addressed concerns about proposed minimum staffing for public safety departments, and how this could negatively affect contract negotiations and result in unavoidable penalties. The Commission has authorized more spending for the prosecutor's office, and Commissioner Mitchell reviewed the overwhelming response to the recent tragic events in Watertown Township.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence included the following: DeWitt Township Police Department September 2023 activity report; DeWitt Township Fire Department September 2023 activity report; DARA Newsletter, October 2023; and Clinton County Sheriff's Office September 2023 jail billing.

**UNFINISHED
BUSINESS**

None.

NEW BUSINESS

**Election Inspector
Wage Scale**

Some months ago, Clerk Cramton discussed with several local Clerks the possibility of increasing the compensation for the Township's Election Workers. At this time, he is proposing an increase for DeWitt Township's workers that will be working elections in 2024. While DeWitt Township's election workers are not the highest paid in the region,

local Clerks make every effort to match their closest municipal neighbors so as to not pull workers from each other.

Clerk Cramton proposes the following wage scale effective January 1, 2024

- Chairpersons - \$18.00/hr
- Assistant Chairpersons - \$16.00/hr
- Election Inspectors - \$15.00/hr
- Certification training \$35
- All other trainings \$25

A brief history of Election Worker wages during Clerk Cramton's tenure:

Effective June 1, 2022

Chairpersons - \$15.00/hr

Assistant Chairpersons - \$13.00/hr

Election Inspectors - \$12.00/hr

Effective January 2018

Chairpersons - \$13.00/hr

Assistant Chairpersons - \$11.00/hr

Election Inspectors - \$10.00/hr

Galardi moved, Smith seconded, to establish the following Election Inspector Pay Schedule, effective January 1, 2024, as follows: Chairperson hourly rate at \$18.00 per hour, Assistant Chairperson hourly rate at \$16.00 per hour, and Election Inspector hourly rate of \$15.00 per hour. Training pay to \$35.00 for Certification Training, and \$25.00 for ePollbook and other miscellaneous trainings.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Snow Removal Map
2023-2024

In the fall of 2015, the Complete the Streets Ordinance (O2015-1-7) became effective. A provision for snow removal was provided in the Ordinance to ensure safe passage for walkways, including sidewalks and shared use pathways, within the Township. Instead of requiring all sidewalks and pathways within the Township to be cleared of snow, the adopted ordinance ensured that "sidewalks to nowhere" did not need to be cleared. Below are some relevant guidelines as to when sidewalks are to be cleared of snow or ice.

- Sidewalks and shared use pathways shall be cleared from a path of at least 36" in width from the outside edge.
- Snow and ice shall be removed from sidewalks or shared use pathways within 24 hours after accumulation or drifting of snow, sleet or freezing rain or by the beginning of business hours of the next day, whichever is shorter to ensure passage.
 - Exception provided when the wind chill is below zero degrees Fahrenheit.
- Snow removal is subject to an annually adopted sidewalk and pathway snow removal map adopted by the Township Board.
 - Includes properties along corridors that have greater than 75% of sidewalk or shared use pathway between 2 street intersections.
 - Properties within ¼ mile of a school or 300 feet of a bus stop location.
 - May include properties that provide pedestrian access to destination areas to provide safe and accessible passage.
 - Destination areas include but are not limited to:
 - Parks, schools, commerce areas, and religious institutions that have pedestrian connectivity within the existing system.

- In the event of a significant snow or ice event, an additional 48 hours shall be allowed for the removal of snow and ice from sidewalks or shared use pathways.
 - Significant snow/ice event means a period of snowfall of 6 inches or greater within a 24-hour period or ice formation of greater than ¼ inch.

The significant change from last year’s adopted map to this year is the Webb Road sidewalks and pathways.

Ross moved, Cramton seconded, to adopt resolution 2023-10-65 based on a finding that it satisfies the criteria under Section 34-8 of the Codified Ordinance for the Township’s annual sidewalk and pathway snow removal map.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual: Section 18. Other Leaves of Absence Update

The Township’s Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual was adopted with a major update effective May 14, 2019. The manual is continuously reviewed throughout its application for any exposures, required updates, or best practice items to implement. While examining the Other Leaves of Absence policy, Manager Dymczyk believes that health care coverage can be extended to employees under this leave for a period of 3 months with limited adverse outcomes. This expansion of benefits would potentially aid in employee attraction and retainment.

Manager Dymczyk provided a strikethrough and revised copy of Section 18. Other Leaves of Absence. The language revision has been reviewed by the Township attorney.

Galardi moved, Smith seconded, to adopt the proposed revision to the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual Section 18. Other Leaves of Absence to be effective October 19, 2023.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

Verizon Cell Tower Lease

T-Mobile and Verizon Wireless lease the Township’s water tower as a platform for their cellular networks. Verizon has asked the Township to extend the current agreement that expires November 30, 2023. The new agreement is consistent with the original lease and subsequent amendments. Funds collected from these leases contribute to water tower maintenance costs. Manager Dymczyk recommends execution of the sixth amendment to the Lease agreement between the Township and Verizon Wireless for the use of the Township’s water tower as a platform for their cellular network.

Manager Dymczyk provided the original lease agreement and the sixth amendment to the agreement. Verizon Wireless acquired Alltel Corporation in June of 2008.

Fedewa moved, Seeger seconded, to authorize the Township Clerk to execute the Sixth Amendment to Lease Agreement between the Township and Alltel Corporation

(Verizon Wireless) for the use of the Township's water tower as a platform for their cellular network.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Motion carried.

EXTENDED PUBLIC, STAFF, & BOARD COMMENTS
Greg Whitlock, 12625 S US 27, asked if the Township has a separate bill to pay for the Jail Billing report that appears monthly. He also inquired if ACH was available for tax payments as well as sewer payments. Treasurer Stump replied that ACH is not available for tax payments.

Carl Tielking, 1835 Fletcher St, informed the board that he is interested in developing a tiny home community for veterans in DeWitt Township. His goal would be 40 to 75 structures for individuals, couples, or small families serving households with incomes starting in the mid \$60k's. Supervisor Galardi responded that this is a housing type that there is a need for in the Township, but is currently not allowed in our zoning ordinance. He instructed Mr. Tielking to work with Community Development Director Wittenberg to see what would be required to pursue this type of development.

Community Development Director Brett Wittenberg informed the board that there has been no movement on the trio of sand and gravel mining bills in the State legislature. The Webb Road pathway project will be completed this week, and the Ridge Rock and Pines neighborhood sidewalk projects are beginning.

Fire Chief Dave DeKorte updated the board on a recent increase in vehicle crashes, as well as pedestrian / bike/ skateboard accidents. The Department will be participating at the High School job fair on November 2nd.

Police Chief Matt Merony updated the board on his recent Chief's training, and informed the board that Officer Kolka has left the Township for an opportunity outside of law enforcement. As a result, the Township will no longer have a K9 until the Department is staffed well enough to afford the approximately three months of training for a K9 and officer replacement. The Police Department will also be attending the High School job fair. Chief Merony stated that FOIA requests have increased, and car/deer accidents are also on the rise.

Manager Andrew Dymczyk provided updates on the following:

- Concrete work at the Township.
- Assessing statistical analysis shows the Township as a model for honest assessing in the state – congratulations to Assistant Assessor Joe Lorenc for this great result.
- Dog Park amenities have been installed, with a few remaining to install in the spring. The amenities were provided by a local Eagle Scout who will attend the board meeting on November 27th for recognition.
- Pickleball courts are tentatively scheduled to be ready for play sometime during the week of October 30th. There are still some weather-sensitive projects to complete.
- Clinton County Road Commission open house on November 21st.
- GovHR wage study progressing through personnel committee.

- MAFF negotiations scheduled for November 16th and 19th.
- CCLP has no negotiations scheduled at this time.
- Water and sewer master plan will be on the next agenda.
- MBS pre-bid meeting to happen on November 26th.

Trustee Smith congratulated Manager Dymczyk on the 2024 budget, and is looking forward to the upcoming large projects in the Township.

Trustee Seeger informed the board that, along with the public open house, the Clinton County Township Officer's Association will be meeting at the Clinton County Road Commission on November 21st.

Treasure Stump presented that all L-4029 tax transmittal forms have been received for all agencies for which the Township bills.

Clerk Cramton complimented Manager Dymczyk on the 2024 budget presentation, and informed the board that the Salary Compensation Commission has met and the resolutions for board compensation will come to the next board meeting.

Supervisor Galardi was complimentary of the hard work happening in the Manager's office, with all Township staff, and on the board. He continues to be proud to serve.

ADJOURNMENT

Seeger moved, Ross seconded, to adjourn 9:39 PM.

Motion voted and carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Adam Cramton, Clerk



Rick Galardi, Supervisor