

ELY TOWNSHIP
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
July 21, 2021 – 6pm
MEETING IS BEING RECORDED

CALL TO ORDER

Supervisor Jeremy Laakso called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was in order.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

Jeremy Laakso, Supervisor; Dawn Schuhknecht, Treasurer; Glenn Wing, Trustee; Art Gischia, Trustee; present. Glenn Wing, Trustee; Molly Taseris, Clerk; absent-excused. Deputy Clerk Erin Stratton present for Minute taking.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Laakso recommended the Board approve the agenda with the following change: The First Responders discussion was moved up to number 10, to allow the speakers to leave earlier. Addition of the Water System Improvements for Diorite and Greenwood Cellular Systems to number 16 a. and b. Schuhknecht made a motion to approve the agenda, with Laakso's support. Ayes - 3, Nays – 0, Absent – 2. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Supervisor Laakso directed that new public comment procedures will be enforced at all meetings. Each person wishing to make public comment will be limited to 3 minutes at each opportunity, with a total of 6 minutes at each meeting. They will need to step to the podium at the front of the audience, and give their name and address for public record. There was no public comment at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Previous Minutes
- B. Treasurer's Report
- C. Clerk's Report
- D. Pay Bills
- E. Assessor Report
- F. First Responders
- G. Supervisor Report

- H. Water System Operator Report
- I. Planning Commission Minutes

Motion by Gischia, supported by Schuhknecht to approve the Consent Agenda. Ayes – 3, Nays – 0, Absent – 2. Motion carried.

BUDGET REVIEW

Supervisor Laakso noted there was a few internal budget adjustments, as were needed with it being the final budget. Motion was made to approve with the budget changes in the Supervisors Report by Gischia, supported by Schuhknecht. Ayes – 3, Nays – 0, Absent -2. Motion carried.

WATER SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

Laakso spoke of concern of using money from the American Rescue Act for the water systems, that it would not be in the best interest of the township as a whole. Kevin Nancarrow stated that Matt Treado was unable to attend this meeting and asked for an additional meeting with Board members to discuss grant options for Greenwood and Diorite, as well as an option to combine Greenwood with Ishpeming Township. Laakso motioned support for UPEA to begin talks on combining the systems. Schuhknecht supported. Discussion from Gischia was supportive in seeing this option as a positive move for the water system future. Ayes – 3, Nays – 0, Absent – 2. Motion carried.

Nancarrow also discussed C2R2 results and their focus on PFAS. As Greenwood and Diorite have not had this issue; he stated that Legislators are also frustrated that no funds are going to systems with other problems. Lead and copper have both been issues for aging water systems for a longer time, but funding is going to communities with the PFAS.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Gischia updated the Board on recent Planning Commission activity including: communications, CUPPAD survey with disappointing results, tabling the Marijuana Ordinance, support for the Solar Ordinance with a Public Hearing at next Commission meeting, support for the Noise Ordinance, with some wording changes and clarification on the enforcement and also a Public Hearing at the next Commission meeting, and follow-up on the Harsila Salvage Yard complaint of activity on the North side of 41.

Laakso commented that some follow-up needs to be done on many of those items.

FIRST RESPONDERS

Laakso mentioned that in working with the other Townships and lawyers to figure out a cost for them to start and maintain the West End Authority that there would be no millage needed. He believes that the cost would be similar to what our current budget allows for. The costs per Township will be based on history and population. He also stated that Champion Township has already voted yes to join at their last Board meeting. Motion made by Schuhknecht to join the

Authority, support from Gischia. Discussion included Gischia asking for clarification of the scale and possible costs. Roll call vote: Ayes: Gischia, Schuhknecht, Laakso, Nays: None, Absent: Taseris and Wing. Motion carried.

Alison Sundberg, Director of EMS for UPHS, was in attendance, and had options from the state in how to keep our current First Responders in action until the Authority is created. As Ely has no vehicle for the responders, and it is not cost-efficient or geographically feasible for the Township as a whole, they cannot continue as a unit according to State Guidelines. Sundberg stated that she would be able to add our First Responders to her roster for the UPHS-West ambulance, then all of them would be in compliance. Gischia asked for a timeline and Sundberg stated this would be an interim plan, preferably 60-90 days, as the authority works out the details. Laakso made a motion for the UPHS-West ambulance to add the Ely Township First Responders to its roster, supported by Schuhknecht. In discussion the Board thanked Sundberg for all her work and effort. Ayes – 3, Nays – 0, Absent – 2. Motion carried.

ELY TOWNSHIP HALL RESTROOMS

Gischia presented the bid from the only General Contractor to submit, being A&F Contracting, with subcontractors Swick, Carpet Specialists, and Frailing Electric. The bid was for \$46,580, and the timeline would be 2-3 weeks. Schuhknecht stated that with the American Relief Act Grant, we could possibly increase the current budget and replace some “patches” that were in the bid to complete repairs, and also upgrade materials. She also inquired if the lack of bids were because of the low budget. Gischia suggested to accept the current bid, and ask for a change order in the upgrades from this contractor. Motion by Laakso to accept the current bid, but ask for change order, supported by Schuhknecht. Discussion was made to thank Gischia for his work on this process. Ayes – 3, Nays – 0, Absent – 2. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING

Laakso opened the Public Hearing for the proposed Dangerous Building Ordinance. All steps have been taken to educate the public of this hearing, and the Ordinance has been reviewed by a lawyer. Laakso stated that all definitions, process of notice, and enforcement by the Supervisor or an agent he would designate. He also stated that this Ordinance is overdue, as Ely Township has many buildings in disrepair and that are dangerous to the public. Laakso asked for any public comment in favor, there was none. He then asked for any public comment for opposition, there was none. He closed the Public Hearing at 7:45. Schuhknecht made a motion to adopt the said Ordinance, with Gischia supporting. No discussion was needed. Roll call vote: Ayes: Gischia, Schuhknecht, Laakso, Nays: None, Absent: Taseris and Wing. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT MARQUETTE COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Laakso stated the plan is available online, and that Taseris prepared the resolution. He stated that it would allow the Township to apply for FEMA grants if needed. Schuhknecht made a motion to adopt the resolution, and Gischia supported. Roll call vote: Ayes: Gischia, Schuhknecht, and

Laakso, Nays: None, Absent: Taseris and Wing. Motion carried. Resolution is adopted July 21, 2021.

OFFICE LAPTOP PROPOSAL

Laakso stated that a laptop for the Office Manager Schuhknecht would be helpful, as she has been out of town on personal business, but is willing to do office work remotely. A laptop would have all of the capabilities of the computers in the office, and most recently would be an assistance to applying for grants. Gischia asked about the security of not only the laptop, but in any network, it was connected to. Laakso made a motion to purchase the laptop, with the verification from Compudyne on its security, and Gischia supported. No discussion was had. Ayes – 3, Nays – 0, Absent – 2. Motion carried. After there was a question from Schuhknecht on disposal of Laakso's old computer. It will be added to the next month's agenda.

ROOF REPAIRS

Schuhknecht stated that it was discovered that there was bare wood showing on a part of the roof of the Community Building. Bell Roofing was called to do an estimate, and they did the necessary patches at no cost to the Township. The Board reviewed the photos of the roof. According to Bell Roofing, the current lifespan of the roof is 2 years. Laakso stated that this is an item that can be added to future budgets and he will do so. Schuhknecht will hold on to the estimate from Bell, which is \$30,000-35,000.

WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

Diorite - The estimate given to the Board for a cellular phone system is \$5,000. This would allow for text alerts to be sent to whoever was connected to it for any issues for the water system. Currently this system has a light that will go on when the levels are off, but the Township is reliant on residents to know if it is lit. Motion made by Laakso to purchase system up to \$5,000, but if exceeds that amount, as the estimate was from the past, then it will need reapproval. Supported by Gischia. Ayes – 3, Nays – 0, Absent – 2. Motion carried.

Greenwood – This water tower needs a pressure transmitter switch according to Water Department Administrator Al Harris, as this is necessary for the same system to work. He also stated both systems come with a 2-year contract, so after that is done, there will be a monthly or yearly contract for the Township to pay. The cost for this system would be \$7,000. Laakso made a motion to move forward with this system as well, with the same stipulation that if the amount exceeds \$7,000, then reapproval will be needed. Supported by Schuhknecht. Ayes – 3, Nays – 0. Absent -2. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

There were no questions about the correspondence.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sheryl Grove, 9 Lawer Drive, commented that she had completed the First Responder class with the intention of joining the Ely Township First Responders, but was unaware she needed to apply first and sign a contract for reimbursement. Motion by Gischia to reimburse Grove, with support from Schuhknecht. The Board thanked her for completing and joining the crew. Ayes – 3, Nays – 0, Absent – 2. Motion carried.

CLOSED SESSION

Not needed.

BOARD COMMENTS

Gischia commented that he was happy on all of the positive outcomes of this meeting.

Schuhknecht stated that Compudyne did an excellent job upgrading the computers in the office and all that was left was to work with BSA to update their system for the title companies, so less calls to the office. She also informed all of the Carnegie Reading program at the local parks, with the Diorite Park having one in August. She stated that the American Relief Act Grant was applied for with the Township to receive \$205,000 in the next two years. An account will be created just for this money, as it all needs to be carefully accounted for. She followed up with the work Maintenance worker Steve Wing completed at the Gold Mine Lake Park, as requested by the Planning Commission.

Laakso addressed the need for the Recreation Plan to start focusing on the Clarksburg Park, regardless of the survey results. He also gave an update on the Diorite School, as MIOSHA was there today, addressing a complaint of minors working.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m. by Laakso.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Stratton
Deputy Clerk