



## **CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF TEXAS BOARD MEETING, FEBRUARY 14, 2022**

### **CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Supervisor Loeks called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and asked everyone to join Treasurer Roberts in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **ROLL CALL**

Clerk Beutel called the roll, and the following board members were present: Trustee Don Boven, Trustee Barbara Hammon, Trustee Linda Kerr, Trustee Wendy Mazer, Treasurer Trish Roberts, Supervisor Nick Loeks, and Clerk Emily Beutel. Also attending were Deputy Superintendent Brooke Hovenkamp and nine members of the public in person, with two participants attending virtually via Zoom.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Lisa Koop, 5651 Texas Drive, again shared her concerns about the Fire Department family. She shared several traumatic experiences that firefighters have seen while on duty in the Township and stated they need a solid support system and care for the mental wellbeing. She again shared concerns related to command staff and asked for a 360-degree external review of the department.

Jim Kiszka, 6440 Palomino Park, also asked the Board to approve an independent 360-degree review of the Fire Department.

Kathy Staufer, 5620 Texas Drive, stated that she is concerned about the Fire Department's leadership and its reputation. She also asked for an external 360-degree review.

Supervisor Loeks shared that he and Superintendent VanderWiere have been conducting research amongst the Fire Department and are working on a plan of action.

### **PRESENTATION/PUBLIC HEARINGS/COUNTY COMMISSIONER**

There was none.

### **SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

Deputy Superintendent Hovenkamp shared Superintendent VanderWiere's report and updated the Board on the following items:

#### *Administration*

- The Township Office will be closed Monday, February 21 in observance of Presidents Day.

#### *Information*

- BS&A held the first PZE configuration session via Zoom due to the weather, and the trainer identified some improvements that could be made to the permit database to improve functionality.
- The Township Hall property was closed on last week. The Progressive AE team met with staff for a kick-off meeting, and their goal is to go out to bid late summer for the Township Hall project.
- Ms. Johnston has indicated that she is willing to stay on as Interim Planner beyond March 4 if the Board moves forward with hiring an Executive Search Committee. However, the extension will be at an increased billable rate.
- The Parks Committee and VIRIDIS Design Group are working to determine the placement of the Splash Pad southeast of the pavilion.

#### *Flood Mitigation*

- The Drain Office and Prein & Newhof continue to work with EGLE to resolve the remaining issues on the long-term permit request.
- The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 24 at 10:30 a.m. by Zoom.

### **ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA**

Motion by Boven, seconded by Mazer, motion carried, to adopt the meeting agenda as presented.

### **APPROVAL OF GENERAL CONSENT AGENDA**



Motion by Beutel, seconded by Kerr, motion carried, to approve the General Consent Agenda, consisting of:

- Approval of January 24, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes and Closed Session Minutes
- Approval of Bills for \$261,296.62
- Payroll \$60,664.38
- 2021 4th Quarter Financial Reports
- Correspondence - 4Q HHW Reporter

## **BUSINESS**

### ***Tabled***

There was none.

### ***New***

#### Bid Specs for 6<sup>th</sup> Street Park Restroom Project

Tim Britain with VIRIDIS Design Group presented the bid specs and process for the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Park Restroom Project. While the specs are for a premanufactured project, the plan is to bid the project as either pre-engineered or design/build to ensure a competitive bid process. The building includes durable and low-maintenance products and construction materials and meets ADA standards. The drain field and reserve drain field also engineered and part of the project. The anticipated timeline is to start advertising February 16 with a bid deadline and opening March 3 so that the Board can select a vendor at the March 14 meeting.

Loeks asked to extend the deadline to submit bids by a week so they would be due March 10 to allow vendors more time to submit, as it's a busy time of year for scheduling.

Motion by Loeks, seconded by Boven, motion carried, to approve the 6th Street Restroom bid specs as presented and authorize administration to post and distribute, with bids due March 10<sup>th</sup> in lieu of March 3<sup>rd</sup> in the packet.

#### MDNR Park Grant Funding for 2023

Deputy Superintendent Hovenkamp shared that grant applications for the next MDNR funding cycle is approaching for 2023 projects. VIRIDIS has capacity to work on a project application in time to submit for the deadline of April 1, 2022. The Parks & Trails Committee recommended focusing on the next phase of development at the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Park including the pavilion and a portion of either the playground area or parking lot. The Board discussed which projects would fall within scope of the grant and what would be most likely to be funded and felt that playground equipment and pavilion would likely be scored more favorably than a parking lot. The maximum award amount available is \$300,000 and requires a match from the Township.

Motion by Loeks, seconded by Beutel, motion carried, to pursue grant funding in the 2023 MDNR grant cycle and to authorize a NTE of \$2,000 with VIRIDIS Design Group for application development.

#### Review and Approve Current Backup Inspectors List

Building Official McGrew asked the Board to consider updating the Township's current list of backup inspectors, as some have retired, are no longer licensed, or are unavailable. He recommended retaining Garrett Reitenour, Gary Heckman, John Dobberteen, Kevin Cardiff and Robert Somers and removing Adam Dahlgren, Chauncey Hackenberg, Kevin Cardiff, and Henry Jager.

Motion by Boven, seconded by Hammon, motion carried, to approve the updated inspector list and remove those as recommended by staff.

#### Authoring Hiring Backup Building Inspector

Staff stated that Mr. William Wilcox has been Texas Township Electrical Inspector since February 2020 and recently received his Building Inspector Certification as well. He has a history in construction



and has been working with Building Official McGrew the past few weeks to become comfortable with the Township's process for building inspections. If approved, he would primarily be utilized when Building Official McGrew is on vacation or sick but could also assist on Wednesdays during the busy season.

Motion by Roberts, seconded by Mazer, motion carried, to approve Mr. William Wilcox as a backup Building Inspector.

#### Authorize Hiring Backup Electrical Inspector

Deputy Superintendent Hovenkamp explained that Ronald Searles currently works for the City of Portage as an Electrical Inspector and has some capacity to assist Texas Township as a Backup Electrical Inspector. He was a Master Electrician in 2004-2015 and also teaches at KVCC and GRCC on electrical theory.

Motion by Kerr, seconded by Boven, motion carried, to approve Mr. Ronald Searles as a backup Electrical Inspector.

#### BS&A Proposal for Building.NET Configuration Work

BS&A is recommending some overhaul changes to the Township's Building.NET permit database to improve the process for online permit submittals, as well as reporting and tracking capabilities. It estimates that the work will require six days to configure in April to be fully implemented by May 1 before the start of heavy construction season. The cost of the proposal is \$7,365 for the configurations but should ultimately increase online submittals and improve workflows for staff.

Motion by Hammon, seconded by Kerr, motion carried, to approve the proposal from BS&A to assist with reconfiguring the permit database for improved workflows, data capture, and reporting.

#### 2022 Road Projects

Supervisor Loeks stated that the Road Committee met to review 2022 road projects and shared their recommended list of projects. As HMA prices will remain steady through next year, the 2022 projects are heavy on HMA Overlay projects to take advantage of that pricing, anticipating a 20-30% increase the following year. The Road Committee recommended HMA Base and Surface Paving on Eagle Lake Drive; HMA Overlay on Queen Victoria Lane (Veronica to 12th Street), R Avenue (6th to 12th Street) RS Avenue (VanKal Street to 2nd Street), Vail Drive (Corners Cove to Aspen), Canyon Drive (Vail Drive to Inverness Drive), Aspen Lane (Vail Drive to Inverness Drive), Inverness Drive (Canyon Drive to 8th Street); and Chip Seal/Fog Seal/ Some Crack Fill on Dustin Circle (P Avenue to Terrier Trail), Terrier Trail, Fountain Square Drive (Misty Creek Drive to N of Carol Lynn Drive), Carol Lynn Drive.

Motion by Boven, seconded by Hammon, to approve the above listed road projects for 2022 and authorize Superintendent VanderWiere to sign the contract.

#### Approve Hiring of Deputy Treasurer

Deputy Superintendent Hovenkamp and Treasurer Roberts interviewed three candidates for the Deputy Treasurer position and would like to recommend hiring Emily Meinema. She has several years of experience working at the Kalamazoo County Treasurer's Office and came highly recommended by her previous supervisors. She has completed the background investigation as well and is available to start on February 22. With her experience, they recommended compensating at \$22.50 per hour, plus the \$5,000 annual deputy stipend.

Motion by Roberts, seconded by Mazer, to authorize the hiring of Emily Meinema at an hourly wage of \$22.50 per hour with an annual stipend of \$5,000 for serving as the Deputy Treasurer.

#### Approve Posting Temporary Office Assistant Position

Deputy Superintendent Hovenkamp asked for authorization to post a Temporary Office Assistant position to provide clerical support during an upcoming extended medical leave.

Motion by Kerr, seconded by Boven, to authorize posting a Temporary Office Assistant position with an hourly wage of \$15-17.50, depending on qualifications.

#### Executive Search Proposal



Deputy Superintendent Hovenkamp explained that the Planning/Zoning Administrator Interview Committee felt that the candidates interviewed were not an ideal fit for the current needs of the Township. The Board had previously discussed when the position and posting were approved that in the current marketplace, it may be advantageous to hire a company to do an executive search.

Welsh and Associates is a local firm that has assisted the cities of Battle Creek and Kalamazoo with executive searches and comes highly recommended. They provided a proposal, which was shared with the Board, and the cost is 25% of the first year's gross compensation for the hired candidate. On average, they successfully locate candidates in six to eight weeks.

Motion by Beutel, seconded by Kerr, to accept the proposal from Welsh and Associates to provide Executive Search services to locate qualified candidates for our Planning/Zoning Administrator Position.

### **ZONING/BOARD/COMMITTEE REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### Planner Report

The Board reviewed the report provided by the Planner in the packet.

### **BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

There were none.

### **ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

The attorney was not present.

### **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Treasurer Roberts stated that the office was very busy today with it being the last day of tax season. There are still about 300 (\$1.7 million) payments left to collect, and anything in the dropbox at 8 a.m. tomorrow morning will be considered on time. She thanked the office support staff who collected 313 payments today. She also commented on that she feels an independent party needs to review the Fire Department.

Trustee Hammon shared that her mother came to the US in the late 40s as Jewish refugees from Hitler Germany knowing they would be safe here, as they were not in Europe. Now, with anti-Semitic incidents and hate crimes are at an all-time high, she wanted the people of Texas Township to know they are safe here and asked the Board to consider passing a resolution that bigotry and hate crimes against any religious, ethnic or racial group will not be tolerated here.

Clerk Beutel expressed support for Trustee Hammon's resolution and also asked for an external review of the Fire Department.

Trustee Boven also stated he wants an outside, independent look at the Fire Department, the quicker the better. He also thanked Supervisor Loeks for his work on the road projects.

Trustee Kerr asked to add Trustee Hammon's resolution to the next agenda and echoed the need for a 360-degree external review.

Supervisor Loeks agreed that an external review was needed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Boven, seconded by Roberts, motion carried, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:10 p.m.

**SUBMITTED:** February 23, 2022

Clerk Emily Beutel

Attested: Supervisor Nicholas Loeks

**APPROVED:** February 28, 2022, as submitted