

WHITEWATER TOWNSHIP BOARD**Minutes of Special Meeting (including Budget Public Hearing) held March 21, 2022****Call to Order**

Supervisor Popp called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Whitewater Township Hall, 5777 Vinton Road, Williamsburg, Michigan.

Roll Call of Board Members

Board Members present in person: Treasurer Benak, Clerk Goss, Popp, Trustee Vollmuth

Board Members absent: none (trustee vacancy)

Others present in person: 10

Others present via Zoom: 16

Set/Adjust Meeting Agenda

Vollmuth requested to add putting moratorium on MMFLA and MRTMA special use permits and applications due to governor's changes.

Benak and Goss opposed the addition.

Popp will work with Vollmuth to bring it on the April agenda.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

Public Comment (10:38)

Public comment began at 9:03 a.m.

Dan Belanger, 9429 Whitney Road, park ranger at Whitewater Township Park, spoke to concerns regarding not rehiring the current administrator, the impact it would have on the park, especially at the 11th hour, and suggested the evaluation and appointment process take place at the end of the season in order to have someone trained and ready to go by January.

Scott Smith, 387 W Mitchell Street, Sanford, been camping in this park for at least 15-20 years, campers fund the park and support many local businesses in the township, staff have done a tremendous job improving the park over the years with the income it generates, big indicator that you should continue with that path.

Ken Manchester, Sanford, seasonal camper in the park, staff does a very good job running the park, rumor that you want to close the park and let the boat launch run without staffing to police it, late in the game to train and get new people involved, asked the board to put their differences aside and concentrate on the good of the township.

Lois MacLean, 5919 Linderleaf Lane, spoke to starting pay for rangers of \$16.95 and for deputies at \$14.30, one increase in deputy starting wages of \$1 since 2012 election, proposed \$17/hour for deputies significantly lower than wages of deputies in other areas where they also offer benefits, and is disappointed that the deputy clerk and deputy treasurer are valued so

extremely low, does not see experienced replacement deputies starting at higher mark with current attitudes, deputies do not qualify for retirement benefits the board is offered. Wages and pay amounts the clerk is involved with are lower than others, park rangers, parks and rec advisory committee, election workers, and deputies, pretty obvious there is serious bias. Regarding appointment of clerk as park administrator, good luck finding anyone with experience and dedication to do the job for \$7,800 for the year. If there is no park administrator, do you have plans for filling the gap, with who, for how much pay, when will they start, who is going to train them? Online reservations start in two weeks. The obvious bias demonstrated repeatedly by Popp and now Vollmuth against the treasurer and clerk feeds down to those that work or are employed under their jurisdiction, including me and my compensation.

Rod Rebant, 648 Island View Drive, spoke to the township's dilemma, small township, want to support everything, cost to managing, providing services, prioritization is important, will never support a budget in the red, township board unable to prioritize, fair amount of fiefdom in the township and the budget process. important things need to float to the top, which to him are safety. Fire department has some issues, funding, citizens expect minimal service, questionable whether they have funds and human resources to make it happen. Will not argue the small potatoes, a dugout at the ballfield that nobody seems to use. Mentioned the 3/11 PC meeting and loss of a couple valuable resources, PC is instrumental to the township, lot of issues are zoning related, no resolution on the 5-acre ruling, the proposed campground on M-72, something proposed on Baggs Road, PC setting up a master plan that all can agree to, get house in order.

Vicki Beam, building right now at 6847 Baggs Road, been attending meetings lately due to proposed site condo for putting 22 homes on 30 acres on Baggs Road. Planning committee meeting, embarrassed and appalled sums up how that went. Thought the same thing of board meetings, board all has personal agendas, not representing what we are looking for, should not be grudges, painful to watch. Cannot imagine trying to run her business or household with a budget in the red. Agrees people need to be paid, no part-time jobs have any extras, giving 3% raises a year, not happening in the public. Maybe there should not be an overlap of more than one position; lot of retirees looking for part-time positions and to make a contribution to our township. Restated her opposition to the proposed Baggs Road development, no green space, 22 homes, 30 acres, 22 septic, 22 wells, at least 22 cars coming and going, not preserving rural character, need to pause, no turning back.

Melissa Melton, 5044 Vinton Road, chairperson of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee, thanked board members for all they do for the community, thanked Goss for dedication and outstanding support for the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee, helping to get Recreation Plan finalized, uploaded and recently approved, and the operation of the township park, Hi Pray Park, among other recreation areas. Provided detail of last year's Recreation Fund approved budget, actual expenditures, and delays causing projects to be pushed into 2022, including finalizing the Rec Plan. Community survey done by PRAC showed over 60% had high interest of trail upgrades. Met with Grand Traverse Land Conservancy to evaluate potential direction on the BCNA and Lossie Trail projects, hopes to bring in a third-party agency or company to assist further. Met at their last meeting with Grand Traverse Conservation District, who they believe will be a huge help with moving trail projects forward. By taking away all funding of the capital projects, they cannot continue this progress. Spoke of funds being approved in the past and not

lost if the project went into the next fiscal year budget; it seems to have changed. They should be given a reasonable length of time, especially since many of their larger projects go over one year; if expenditure does not happen in that fiscal year, should not have to go back to board to get reapproval again and again. If changing the rules, they as the park advisory committee would like to know that, may need to evaluate our projects to make sure they get done and expensed within an 11-month time period. Regarding contingency fund for emergencies such as windstorms blowing down many trees, should an emergency situation like that be taken away from a parks and rec budget to improve and do capital projects? Or should this be taken from a general contingency fund and evaluated for those emergencies only?

Melton read an e-mail from Amber Voice, lived here since she was 12 years old, mother of three, volunteer coaching soccer, vice president of Elk Rapids Youth Baseball League, donated a lot of time to the baseball fields at Hi Pray Park, cleaning up weeds and trash, dragging fields, spreading diamond dust, cleaning up brush around the fields, cleaning up fence lines, does it to help the community and for the kids that love baseball. Over 150 kids in Little League baseball program, all from Elk Rapids-Williamsburg area, the kids and parents love these fields, league tries hard to help in any way to keep them nice. Bothers her that the dugouts were never replaced after they were removed, were told they were getting new ones last year, it never happened, disappointed the township is considering not putting them in. Fields are used so much in summer from their league and everyone who lives in area. Hi Pray Park one of the most incredible baseball fields in the area, described its amenities, lights for night games, only field in area with lights, asked the board to put the dugouts in this year. Spoke about Whitewater Township Park campground and its amenities, need to keep this park open and up to date; this park makes our area more unique as a campground with a boat launch. Expressed her opinion about the reason people live here; large housing complexes and affordable housing is not a desired attraction.

Goss read a letter from Deputy Clerk Terese Hooper, 6575 Cook Road, rebutting certain people on the board that do not think she is qualified or trained in her position, said she accepted position to bring her many years of experience and vast knowledge, described the duties she performs in the clerk's office, stated she feels she produces more in her part-time hours than someone with less experience working more hours. Spoke of the deputy treasurer and her experience and duties. Pointed out that a journeyman plumber only needs 4,000 hours of work experience, journeyman electrician only needs 5,000 hours of work experience, and do not need to know every aspect of their job as they are always learning. She has worked approximately 7,700 hours in 9 years, just wants to be considered for a fair wage, especially since there are no benefits.

Goss read an e-mail from Allie Bernard describing what Whitewater Township Park has meant to their family over the years, the many fond memories of times with friends and family there, the friendly faces they have come to remember, Peggy and Dan, begged the board to not take this place from them. Looking forward to visiting the campground and lake during the summer keeps them going the rest of the year; this place is about the people you serve; it is a big deal to a lot of people.

Goss read an e-mail from pennybillyu@yahoo.com, they love the campground, go every year, enjoy it so much, please leave it open. They enjoy the Halloween camping, too.

Goss read an e-mail from Dana Willard expressing they heard their camping season at Whitewater Township Park may be in jeopardy, have been going to Whitewater Township Park for over 20 years, revenue brought into the community from all of the campers, only campground available on Elk Lake. They have been seasonal at the campground over the past few years, gotten to know the staff and great hospitality and service they provide. They help whenever they can and would be willing to help more. Cheryl is very organized, has done a great job over the years managing the park, understand this requires a lot of time from her position as township clerk, would be willing to do as much as possible or allowed for a non-resident, encourage you to please keep the park open for more memories to be made. If closing the park is the final decision, would the township board please consider allowing the seasonal campers to remain, possibly only need electric, one shower, water and bathrooms, could take turns cleaning and providing supplies, wouldn't require much assistance at the park, would be self sufficient; we hope to encourage you to keep the park open.

Goss read an e-mail from Chuck Harrington, been using this campground for the last 15 years and holding family reunion get-togethers. If the campground closed, they will lose this ability in an area they love, cannot see us using the park if we cannot camp, also use the boat launch when they camp. Has a membership with Outdoor Adventure but still prefers the township park, which offers some of the best scenery in Michigan. Please do not close the park.

Goss read an e-mail from Kandy Harrington, read a Facebook post stating a board member suggested they close the campground on Elk Lake, has been camping at this campground since she was a young child, now of retirement age. Non-campers may not realize how devastating closing one of the best parks in Michigan could be, described amenities at the park. They have family gatherings there every year, have not missed a Halloween at this park, have enjoyed getting to know many new and repeating campers every year. Rangers play a big part in keeping the park clean and safe and do an outstanding job making sure everyone enjoys their stay. Really hopes they reconsider and keep this beautiful, family friendly park open.

Goss read an email from Terry and Michelle LaVigne, been coming to Whitewater since the early 90's, spoke of Thad and Carol who ran the park, campers are social and care about the environment, pick up after themselves and others, enjoy what the park has to offer, hiking, swimming, boating, camping. They frequent small businesses, craft shows, farmers' markets, little fruit stands, shops like Myrtle & Maude's, Seven Gables, ACTS resale shop, evenings on Main Street in Elk Rapids or the casino, campers support your residents, purchasing at garage sales. They frequent beaches in the area, used for parties after hours, remnants of campfires left, trash, human waste, animal waste. Is that what you want for your beautiful park.

Heidi Vollmuth, 8388 Winnie Lane, hearing all the good, isn't going to air the bad or dirty laundry, tried to bring this up in a special meeting, somebody didn't want to discuss, how do we move forward when we don't complete things, good project manager sees project from beginning to end, can't follow some projects, no dates, no completions, other issues, lot of trees

down, lot of broken roads, rules changing, process changing, good project manager completes tasks.

Linda Slopsema spoke on a red deficit budget, half million-dollar shortfall, get focused, prioritize critical projects, projects not sufficiently developed should not be included, balance the budget, increasing general administration budget unacceptable, reduce wasteful overhead through automation and use of computers, citizen concerns with out of date master plan and need to update zoning ordinance, substantial increase in special use proposals, will be taken advantage of by developers, will not protect our "rural character," recodification project should be completed with zoning ordinance update, fire department in crisis, staffing and equipment needs, recommends advisory group to study it, trees down on Lossie Trail, 9 months to clear downed trees, could have been done with volunteer work day or hiring tree service providers, do not exhaust your reserve on minimal impact projects that the community is not asking for, use township survey as guide.

Tom McElwee, 8016 Lakeside Trail, spoke on subdivisions allowed on agriculturally zoned land, code name site condos, 2015 master plan, preserve township's rural character is major goal, planning commission in disarray, resignations of members and consultants, in process of updating master plan, zoning ordinance written to uphold goals of the master plan, currently falls short, propose moratorium on approving future site condo subdivisions until master plan update and zoning ordinance reflect what is deemed important.

Connie Hymore, no problems hearing the board, problems hearing planning commission sitting back in chairs. Voiced disagreement with proposed Baggs Road condominium development, does not meet master plan and zoning ordinance, concerned about percentage of open space, site drainage, landscape preservation, follow master plan and ordinances.

Mark Rickey, 7950 Hoiles Drive, referred to condo situation, has planning commission visited the property, propose everything be suspended as far as new applications until plan is properly determined, right now it is a bit of a debacle and out of control.

John Keuvelaar, 1701 Horton Avenue, Essexville, MI, heard a lot of the comments about families and everything, has been attending this park since he was 4, his 59th year, a place his dad took him to, dirt road to the lake with boat ramp you couldn't use, went to Angell Road, watched whole area develop, learned everybody's names, yes it was Thad. Biggest thing occurring is they are doing a tremendous job, maintaining it, it is clean, other places don't run it like it is run here, very valuable to people in general, important to families, his kids have come here, plan on continuing that. Hearing budget in the red, good news is campground doesn't draw from budget, is self-sufficient, required to be that way, shouldn't be a concern, not sure why any thoughts to shut the thing down. Cheryl has done a great job taking over for Carol, upgrading things, more needs to be done, need to reappoint her because April 1st starts the budget, no time to find anybody else; at under eight grand to do all work she does, not going to find somebody of that quality, even a retiree part-time, awful lot of work and responsibility. Upgrade the job description, take a look at increase in pay, comes out of the park budget generated by campers, can't be anything from taxpayers, not going to affect township budget at all. Upgrade everything, open it up for people to apply at end of camping season, make decision by January,

person can hit the ground running, too many things to be done to find someone of same abilities as Cheryl. Peggy and Dan are the face of that place, bring such a positive energy. When we come camping, we don't want to hear problems, want to escape the world, enjoy ourselves, already put in for our time, like many other people, would hate to see it wasted because somebody closed the campground because they didn't have the foresight. Get that job done, do it the right way; if you want to hire somebody else later on, look for next year when you can do it right. This is a great place, they are doing a great job there, believe they got other projects that they are finally going to be able to get completed this year, and like to see it, and like to be able to put our reservations in on the 4th.

Pete spoke on the Baggs Road property scheduled to have condos built on it. has come to the area for 30 years visiting his wife's family's place on Hoiles Road, watched area grow and flourish, owns a property on Watson Road, planning a retirement home in a few years, this development will possibly put too many people in the area, more urban rather than rural. Not for the Baggs Road condo project at all, will increase traffic, use discretion before allowing developers to turn farm into urban development.

Kim Mangus, chair of planning commission, announced Mickey Dean tendered his resignation; they continue to be short, don't have a board representative, Wroubel considering whether to continue. Encouraged board to expand membership. Regarding Baggs Road, PC has requested Hall give brief tutorial on what a site condo is. Proposed site condo development has only been brought in preliminary notification to the PC that they are considering a development, no engineering work, water evaluations, soil and erosion, drain commissioner's office, fire department review, not evaluated a formal application.

Jim Symons, in Ada, MI, been coming to the park for 27 years, thanked Cheryl for her efforts, it is a lot of work. They have gotten to know previous staff and current staff. They have 33 people that come two weekends, take up to eight campsites. He and his wife also come four or five different weekends because they like the park so much. They have camped everywhere from Montana; going to Maine this summer, Whitewater is the only park they come to every year. Hopes we are able to keep it open. Great if you can do it with the current staff. We enjoy your park, enjoy your community. They drove around Torch Lake and Elk Lake looking for different campgrounds in case Whitewater is not open, nothing even comparable, let alone they will not be able to get in it.

Public comment ended at 10:19 a.m.

Agenda Items as Listed in Special Meeting Notice

Public Hearing – 2022/2023 Fire Special Assessment District Budget

Public hearing was opened at 10:20 a.m.

Publication date of legal notices: Traverse City Record-Eagle on 02/27/2022, Elk Rapids News on 03/03/2022.

Property tax millage rate proposed to be levied is 1.0000 mills.

Fire Fund proposed revenues are \$288,500.

Fire Fund proposed expenditures are \$287,339.

Written comments: None

Verbal comments: None

Public hearing on the Fire Special Assessment District budget was closed at 10:22 a.m.

Public Hearing – 2022/2023 Ambulance Millage Budget

Public hearing was opened at 10:24 a.m.

Publication date of legal notices: Traverse City Record-Eagle on 02/27/2022, Elk Rapids News on 03/03/2022.

Property tax millage rate proposed to be levied is 1.5000 mills, as reduced by Headlee.

Ambulance Fund proposed revenues are \$350,666 (sic).

Ambulance Fund proposed expenditures are \$315,300.

Written comments: None

Verbal comments:

Rod Rebant: Not following the process described, assuming what you are asking is are there concerns from the community about whether we have the proper funding for millage to support these organizations, or are you asking something different.

Popp: Public hearing is the time for public to speak their mind about how we have budgeted for those departments.

Rebant: Is there an opportunity to talk about millage for the fire department, for ambulance service.

Popp: That would have been during the public comment of the Fire Fund, but if he has a comment, he would be happy to ask the board to reopen that particular public hearing or maybe allow Rebant to make his comments, if it is in regard to emergency services, underneath the ambulance.

Rebant: Expressed concern about the millage set currently for the fire department. Rural township fire departments are struggling with funding for additional resources or replacement resources, people in general, manpower to man the station, to respond to emergencies. We have an opportunity to look at a millage increase to help us adjust accordingly. Does not want to envision a disruption in service that lessens their ability to respond. If we think we are underfunded, we need to address that as part of this budget process.

Public hearing on Ambulance Millage Budget was closed at 10:30 a.m.

Public Hearing – 2022/2023 General Fund Budget and All Other Township Budgets

Public hearing was opened at 10:30 a.m.

Publication date of legal notices: Traverse City Record-Eagle on 02/27/2022, Elk Rapids News on 03/03/2022.

Property tax millage rate proposed to be levied is 1.0000 mills, as reduced by Headlee.

General Fund proposed revenues are \$565,015, proposed expenditures \$758,893.

Written comments: None

Verbal comments:

Rod Rebant: Commented on the amount of legal fees, seems like we go to the table too often on legal opinions on a lot of the activities occurring around the township.

Melissa Melton: Regarding recreation budgets and funds, if you want the Rec Fund to be funded through its own internal resources, the board needs to create that fund for revenue, i.e., hire an administrator solely committed to Hi Pray Park and the resources to get that as a positive revenue-generating asset. Pointed out Little Leagues using the fields, done a lot of projects to improve that over the last few years. To make it a valuable asset, get the lights running and have someone who can manage and make that a resource for our community. Otherwise, the Rec Fund is a derivative of taxpayer monies and what the taxpayers want. Talked about contingency amounts. Rec Fund should not be negatively impacted by windstorm. Asked board to evaluate that carefully and, from a contingency aspect, it needs to be resourced through General Fund, not taken specifically under account for the Recreation Fund.

Vicki Beam: Commented on the money spent for Chris Grobbel and his assistance. He left the meeting and they (PC) continued to talk about his report. Questioned if the board is being stewards of how monies are spent for legal and professional fees. How many more professional fees have to be spent as a result of Grobbel resigning?

Road Fund proposed revenues are \$27,530, proposed expenditures \$37,500.

Written comments: None

Verbal comments: None

Road Repair/Replacement Fund proposed revenues are \$400, proposed expenditures \$161,000.

Written comments: None

Verbal comments:

Rod Rebant: Township cannot evolve without road maintenance, money spent on repairing roads, private road is the subject of most people's comments, doesn't know of any specific plans across the township for long-term road repairs, puts it in safety, some of the roads are bad, it is one of the areas of expenditure that needs to be elevated; it is a real need here in the township.

Park Fund proposed revenues are \$451,200, proposed expenditures \$482,460.

Written comments: None

Verbal comments: None

Recreation Fund proposed revenues are \$58,000, proposed expenditures \$120,829.

Written comments: None

Verbal comments:

Rod Rebant: Concerned with amount of money being asked, have to question are we getting our investment on what is already in place. In particular the ball field, he believes, is underutilized. Doesn't like the idea of putting money into something we are not getting true value out of. Does not seem like a priority when we are in a red deficit situation. Regarding cleanup of trails, heard \$60,000, that is a lot of money, not sure it is a priority, part of it would be safety; now seems like the wrong time; he would look at cutting or delaying.

Vicki Beam: She hardly ever sees anybody at the ball fields, questions putting dugouts, lot of uncertainty this year, gas prices, everything else. Are we using taxpayer dollars the right way? Regarding park, boat launch improvement of quarter million, not sure why it needs to be done

right now. With everything going on in the township right now, think we all need to take a pause.

Craig Barnhart, Mabel Road: Every year he spends hundreds of hours of his own time, with his own \$25,000 Ranger and all of his drags, to spread diamond dust, drag the fields, line it, water it. He takes care of the fields. There is a lot of other people that help, too. He averages probably about 15 games a week, 3-4 hours into doing all three fields for each game, and do the one at Mill Creek, too. There's a lot of games being played there in the summer. Maybe you people don't see them, but there is.

Vollmuth: She spent hundreds of hours volunteering for her children. In her community of 10,000 people, they paid to have their kids play baseball. It wasn't cheap; sometimes kids couldn't afford, so she paid for it. Sometimes parents couldn't get their kids to the ball field, so she bought a bigger car. We have to look toward the future correctly. Our biggest problem with our money is how we start and finish our projects. Said as a private citizen she wouldn't accept any of our projects. You're missing too much data, missing too much understanding from the public, we need to be better stewards. As far as legal fees go, some of us get to call the attorney and some of us don't. Legal fees have been a problem in this community for over 7 years. Go back and listen to some minutes. We need to be better stewards, need to look at the big picture and concentrate on doing it right the first time, not taking 9, 10, 11 tries at it. We need to be better stewards and figure it out.

Melissa Melton: Thanked Craig Barnhart for all the work he does; it is wonderful. Amber and her dad have put forth a lot of voluntary efforts and it should be noted and addressed by the board as a thanks. Little League does have to pay to play and there are lots of things that go into the cost of children in many sports. We as a community a long time ago, long before she was old enough to be on the board, decided that the Little League Association could use our fields at no cost because they do so much to help improve and utilize the fields, and it is also part of the community service that we are willing to offer. She thinks it is a huge attribute in most communities. They have fees and it is very difficult for other areas to allow for children to play ball because it gets very, very costly. She thinks that is a really huge value that we provide to our community members. If you want the Rec Fund to be a revenue-generating aspect, then it needs to be figured out with a specific person who can run leagues, manage everything, manage the ball cage, which Amber didn't mention in her memo, but she has commented to Melton on a number of times on how great that is, there are so many people in the area who have said it is a wonderful place to be able to go and do batting practice, even for people who are not in our area. Teams from Kalkaska have also made that same comment, as well as others in the Elk Rapids area. It is cliché, but as the movie says, if you build it, they will come. In some attributes, that is kind of what we have done. We have really tried to make a place that is safe and a place where kids can go and play and have fun, get out their energy in a healthy way, not sitting in front of a computer or a screen for 20 hours a day. She thinks it is a very huge part of our community and we should respect that. Second thing about the Rec Fund, you talk about you don't think any projects should be moving forward. The Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee put out a community survey for the reason to understand what our community wants. This is not me saying what I want. This is not our Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee saying what they want. It's about we listened to the public. The survey came back and it was astounding. She

said she was astounded. She thought for sure it was going to be they want the road paved on the campground park, because that is generally what she hears; it is a big comment. But it was really astounding for her to see the huge interest level in all of our trail systems. There were a number of comments that were made also that the trail systems, that they didn't know about it, that they wanted to have more information. All of those things they try to do as a parks advisory board. We do not make the decisions. You at the board level make those decisions on what projects can be moving forward, but she really encouraged the board to think in their mind of what does the community want. Well, the survey was pretty clear. There are a lot of assets that we own that we have that are not valued, are not known about, and are not updated. The tree removal is a huge expenditure, and if she were to just make a comment about that, we had a private community member who was willing to put forth his time and effort, went out and did an estimate, surveyed the area and gave the board a reasonable budget. It was decided to then spend money toward an arborist, and basically it has increased that whole project at least double, if not triple. That is a little disappointing because those funds, \$60,000, to your point, is a huge number. She thinks that there are local community people that should be looked at, not just in a very large broad spectrum of we need to hire some person from Timbuktu and we have to hire a contractor from Washington DC or something like that or Washington State. She thinks we do need to look toward those funds and resource it appropriately, but it is safety and it is something that has to be looked at. If we want people to use our trail systems, you can't have trees crossing over the trails. It is not safe, as well as the Lossie Road not being safe with basically a swamp you can't even walk through, I don't even think if you had muck boots on. I just ask you guys to consider that. We are just an advisory board. We are here to serve the community as best as we can, but if we are not given any direction and any budget to work from to do that, it puts them at a disposition (sic).

Ambulance Replacement Fund proposed revenues are \$0, proposed expenditures \$0.

Written comments: None

Verbal comments: None

Federal Fund (new this year for funds received through the American Rescue Plan Act) proposed revenues are \$147,000, proposed expenditures \$100,000.

Written comments: None

Verbal comments:

Melissa Melton: What are the restrictions? Have we incorporated as much improvement in our community as we can with those funds? Are there any restriction to putting funds toward recreation, a trail system, a ball park? During Covid years, we have experienced a huge number of people who the only thing they can do healthy and stay safe is to go outside and use our natural beautiful area. Do those funds allow for some of that to be contributed toward those areas?

Popp and Benak responded to Melton's question.

Public Improvement Fund proposed revenues are \$125, proposed expenditures \$30,000.

Written comments: None

Verbal comments: None

Fire Capital Improvement Fund proposed revenues are \$50,175, proposed expenditures \$135,500.

Written comments: None

Verbal comments: None

Public hearing on the General Fund Budget and all other Township Budgets was closed at 11:08 a.m.

Board comments and discussion followed concerning the proposed budget.

General Fund 402 line item, Property Taxes, will be adjusted to \$144,592, bringing total revenue to \$572,086.

Board of Review 702 Salaries will be reduced to \$1,200. Board of Review Social Security and Medicare will be reduced to \$102 and \$24 respectively.

Planning Commission 702 Salaries will be reduced to \$9,500, reducing the total budget for Planning Commission to \$47,033, per Popp's calculation. (Reductions in Social Security and Medicare were not provided.)

General Fund total expenditures, as calculated by Benak, will be \$754,925, with an operating deficit of \$182,839.

At about 12:06 p.m., the meeting recessed.

At about 12:21 p.m., the meeting reconvened.

Lengthy board comments and discussion on the budget continued.

Fire Fund 402 line item, Property Taxes, will be increased to \$247,802, with total revenue increasing to \$297,302.

Park Fund 590 line item, Grants-Private Sources, will be reduced to \$100,000, with total revenue decreasing to \$351,200.

Ambulance Fund 402 line item, Property Taxes, will be increased to \$360,403, increasing the total revenues to \$368,003.

In the Federal Fund, it was noted that 1/3 of the total funds has been committed to broadband, by resolution.

Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Budget Amendments

Goss provided a memo and budget document showing no budget amendments are necessary.

Resolution #22-05 Salary for Supervisor 2022/2023

Motion by Benak to adopt Resolution #22-05; second by Vollmuth.

Roll call vote: Vollmuth, yes; Benak, yes; Popp, yes; Goss, yes. Motion carried.

A true and complete copy of said resolution is attached to the minutes.

Resolution #22-06 Salary for Clerk (2022/2023)

Motion by Benak to adopt Resolution #22-06; second by Vollmuth.

Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Vollmuth, yes; Popp, yes; Benak, yes. Motion carried.

A true and complete copy of said resolution is attached to the minutes.

Resolution #22-07 Salary for Treasurer 2022/2023

Motion by Goss to adopt Resolution #22-07 Salary for Treasurer 2022/2023; second by Popp.

Roll call vote: Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Vollmuth, yes; Popp, yes. Motion carried.

A true and complete copy of said resolution is attached to the minutes.

Resolution #22-08 Salary for Trustees 2022/2023

Motion by Benak to adopt Resolution #22-08; second by Popp.

Roll call vote: Popp, yes; Goss, yes; Vollmuth, yes; Benak, yes. Motion carried.

A true and complete copy of said resolution is attached to the minutes.

Resolution #22-09 General Appropriations Act 2022/2023

Motion by Vollmuth to adopt Resolution #22-09 General Appropriations Act 2022/2023; second by Popp.

Goss will update the Section 6 and Section 7 numbers which were revised today.

Popp rescinded his second.

Motion by Vollmuth to adopt #22-09 as amended with the clerk's changes that were discussed on today's date.

Goss noted it is the board's changes.

Second by Popp.

Roll call vote: Popp, yes; Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Vollmuth, yes. Motion carried.

A true and complete copy of said resolution is attached to the minutes.

Graded Wage Scale 2022/2023

Motion by Goss to adopt the Graded Wage Scale 2022/2023; second by Benak.

Goss provided a corrected document to reflect the \$17 starting wage for park rangers with 3% annual increases.

Brief discussion followed.

Roll call vote: Benak, yes; Vollmuth, yes; Popp, yes; Goss, yes. Motion carried.

Salary/Wage Schedule 2022/2023

Motion by Popp to adopt Salary/Wage Schedule as presented for 2022/2023; second by Goss.

Roll call vote: Popp, yes; Benak, yes; Vollmuth, yes; Goss, yes. Motion carried.

Appointment of 2022/2023 Parks & Recreation Administrator

Motion by Benak to appoint Cheryl Goss to the position of parks and recreation administrator for fiscal year 2022/2023 at the annual salary rate of \$7,935; second by Popp.

Lengthy board comments and discussion followed.

Regarding discussion about the parks and recreation administrator job description, it was agreed that a meeting will be scheduled to bring this particular item back when there is a full board. In the meantime, any new employees will be provided with the Personnel Policy Manual and section 3 of the Administrative Policies & Procedure.

Popp and Vollmuth want to be sent everything contained in Appendix A.

Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Benak, yes; Popp, yes; Vollmuth, yes. Motion carried.

Board Comments/Discussion

None

Public Comment (5:49:24)

Popp read an e-mail from Jan and Denny Fox on the topics of budget, salaries, balanced budget, marihuana, attorney fees, expenditure bypassed vote of community members, pushed forward during Covid and lockdown times, lack of transparency, mistrust, credible concerns, place moratorium on permits until community can vote, obligation to wait, love community.

Goss read an e-mail from Jeff Miller on the topics of the 2022 camping season, long-time campers at the park, first camped there over 30 years ago, heard about special meeting to determine if campground will open this year or not, several changes to the park over the years and more changes and upgrades planned, hearing township is struggling with staff shortages this year, hope the issues can be resolved so the park can remain open for camping and boating, suggestions how campers could alleviate staff shortage, unable to attend meeting to show their support; hope Ron will be able to speak for us.

Goss read an e-mail from Dale Poellet on the topics of he and family coming to the park for 5-6 years, their favorite location in Michigan, shocked you are considering closing it, great location and beautiful spot, ask you to consider how closing the park would affect surrounding businesses, ask you to please make a smart and good economic decision and keep the park open.

Connie Hymore quoted Article 28, Section 11, paragraph D, condo developments, hard to watch dissension within the board and planning commission meetings, shocked by behavior of PC members on 3/11, taxpayer money wasted, Grobbel resigned, planning commissioner resigned, what action is board going to take after public implosion, master plan is important.

Jim Symons commented we love your park, thanks again for the opportunity, asked for clarification whether the vote was to keep Cheryl as the park administrator and the park will be open, eyeopener for him, listened to the whole meeting, will listen on future meetings.

Melissa Melton spoke on accurate zones dimensioned in the site plan, future slide is unknown size, place marker, not approved by the board or been through their committee to recommend a slide; same thing with the tables. Regarding existing playground equipment to be moved, all dimensions on site plan have the minimum safe zone requirements. Referred to ADA comments in the (playground inspection) report; our parks are not ADA compliant. Regarding construction management, asked what board expects as far as true construction management. Approved budget bottom line is only \$19,000 for capital projects, which are dugouts to be finalized this year. No funding for any potential projects of any kind, other than tree removal, which should have been evaluated more as an emergency fund capacity, not taken out of the ability for the parks & rec committee to do some good in the community. Asked for more procedural guidance from the board regarding making sure projects happen within the same budget year they are approved or else they are taken away. Asked what the board wants them to move forward on, because there is a zero budget to do any projects with. Spoke about the reservation system being a fabulous thing for the campground, suggested it be extended to pavilion rental, maybe even Hi Pray baseball field and batting cage. Suggested as the board starts to review the parks administrator position, the board look at whether they are going to be a full-time employee with responsibilities to start evaluating means of revenue for Hi Pray Park, i.e., bringing more leagues into the community, doing tournaments, things of that nature.

Karen spoke on it being her first meeting, very disappointed with the combat between everybody up here, should be working together, understands there will be disagreements, has a bad taste in her mouth as to who is running our township, does not feel like the board wants to work together, have a feeling that the board has personal vendettas against each other and that is more important than uniting the township. Regarding the development on Baggs Road, does not want to see condos there but understands that is not everybody's priority. Biggest thing is safety in our township, working together as a community, telling us how we can work to help everybody, how we can help the township. Would like to see personal vendettas, personal feelings put aside during a meeting, try to work together. Has lived here since 2005, her family has been here since the 1940's, no idea there was so much emphasis on Whitewater Park, will be going over there to check it out, used the boat launch before, no idea there were so many trails, understands they need to be cleaned, but \$60,000, get a group together to help do that, understands some of it can't

be done by individuals, focus money on safety. If fire department needs money, why aren't we focusing on things more important than the dugout, not trying to discount anybody, recreation for kids is awesome, have to prioritize what is important for the whole community, going into hard times, gas prices, everything going on, really need to focus on being one. Grateful for all that you do, please put your differences aside, work together, real turnoff to hear bickering among each other, unity goes a lot farther than division.

Vicki Beam: Put personal differences aside, work together more, meetings are painful, expressed opposition to Baggs Road development, take a pause, kids playing baseball, walking trails, providing some of this for residents of Kalkaska but don't have our house in order, not understood why parks and rec is such a big topic for this board when there are so many things going on, thank you for service, stewards, fiduciaries of the township.

Adjournment

Motion by Benak to adjourn; second by Vollmuth. Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Benak, yes; Popp, yes; Vollmuth, yes. Meeting adjourned at 3:09 p.m.

Cheryl A. Goss
Whitewater Township Clerk