

**RIVES TOWNSHIP VIRTUAL HEARING  
2021/2022 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET  
March 16, 2021  
Rives Junction, MI 49277**

A meeting of the Rives Township Board was held Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 6:00 pm by virtual meeting. Members present: Supervisor Jerry Adams, Clerk Judi A. McCord, Treasurer Janina Teske, and Trustees Christine Beecher and Bryce Hammond.

The purpose of the meeting was to hold a public hearing for the 2021/2022 fiscal year budget.

Hearing opened at 6:00 PM

**Questions / Answers**

Question - Why was the assessor's budget for wage raised?

Answer - We are leaving our options open.

Question: - When is the assessor's contract expire?

Answer - It expired on 3/31/2020. The assessing position is an at will employee.

Question - March 8, 2018 Rives Township Special Meeting/Budget Workshop has a motion from McCord supported by Culver to approve the resolution to make an additional principal payment to the County of Jackson in the amount of \$25,000 from Sewer fund and a monthly payment of \$5,000.00 from general fund starting April 1, 2018 to reduce the future liability for sewer bond?

Answer - USDA has refused to accept payments in the amount of \$5,000 per month. The county does not have a decision in this. We make our USDA payments to the county, but USDA has the final decision on how we pay. The instructions from USDA that were received in response to payments being sent back was from the previous clerk mailing the payment directly to USDA.

Question – Was the \$50,000 paid in March of 2016 ever cashed?

Answer – Additional payments are as follows:

Check 036	June 3, 2015	\$50,000
Check 040	March 24, 2016	\$50,000
Check 041	March 24, 2016	\$50,000 Voided
Check 048	March 7, 2017	\$10,000
Check 2002	March 13, 2018	\$25,000
Check 2005	Sept 10, 2018	\$50,000

Question - Why was Safety gear decreased?

Answer - Safety gear is our fire departments apparel. Uniforms, patches, hats, boots, jackets, etc. We have provided a large amount of this gear in the past years, and our projection is there is not as large a need this year, for additional apparel. Therefore, we lowered the budget line for this item.

Question - There was discussion at a Fire Board Meeting a while ago that the Fire Department could get a new Engine without all the bells and whistles for about \$300,000.00. Where in the budget besides the \$53,000.00 under Equipment repairs is going to accommodate \$146,000 refurbished Fire Engine which would be Rives Township's share to pay? My

concern with the decrease in Equipment from \$85,000 in 2019-20; \$50,000 in 2020-21 now down to \$20,000 which that line item has been used consistently of \$60,000 yearly per budget. How are you planning on accommodating this difference?

Answer: We will not be purchasing a new rig this year but reviewing repurposing our Fire Engine, for that reason we have made a larger projection on equipment repair.

Question - What is the status of our audit?

Answer - Our audit and F65 were submitted timely in respect to the extension that was filed due to the death of our auditor Doug Atkins. We are scheduled for a May audit with new auditors.

Question: - Seeing several increases in wages throughout this budget and asking for a 3% pay increase for Clerk, Supervisor, Treasurer, are concerning. Resolution to Establish Township Officers Salary as below which shows the clerk position with the largest pay increase in 2017.

This is incorrect the clerk's wage was required to be returned to the original amount by law after the former clerk ask for her wage to be reduced and then requested it be reinstated. There has been no increase for this position or the treasurer since 2007.

Treasurer - Resolution # 2017-04: \$28,000.00 base salary with additional salary of \$2,000.00 to compensation for Management and Administrative functions for Building Dept., Collection Site, and Sewer Payments receipt. Prior salary was \$27,444.00 with a difference of \$556 with addition \$2,000.00 additional duties. Pay increase to start on 4/1/2017.

Our treasurer has been providing a service to the community writing building permits for the past six years with no compensation. She has requested the \$20.00 permit fee be reinstated as was previously the practice.

Supervisor - Resolution #2017-06: Supervisor salary \$15,000.00. Prior salary was \$12,240.00 with a difference of \$2760.00 pay increase to start on 4/1/2017. The supervisor received a wage increase in 2015 which was done by the former clerk by a motion. A resolution is required by law for all officers. We simply redid the pay increase properly by resolution.

Question - Deputy Clerk and Treasurer line item has increase by \$800.00 which means they are able to work 386 hours yearly @15.00 hr. With our Township being open 80 hours a month our deputy can work 32 hours monthly. This doesn't include the creative budgeting that is used by the Township for our Deputies. What I mean from this Deputy Clerk can also get money from the Election line item and from Staff Salaries from Township Board line item. Deputy Treasurer also works out of the Permit Department salary and Township Board Staff Salary line items. Give me a good reason why a Deputy needs to work 32 hours a month from one line item.

Answer - Deputy Clerk and Deputy Treasurer budget was increased to allow them more hours to work but was moved from within each dept from other budgetary line items. The department did not increase their budget. This allows our deputies to work 7.33 hours per week. Our deputies have multiple responsibility, Deputy Clerk has election responsibilities everyday to stay compliant with the State of Michigan and is paid from the election wage budget line item. As well as the Deputy treasurer assists with tax, collection site, payroll and building department. It is a requirement that a person be paid from the department from which they do work.

Question – Cleaning line items increased by \$500.00 in 20/21 budget which would be an extra 33 hours @\$15.00 hr. do we really need this increase if no taxpayers are able to be in the Township Office?

Answer - With the concern of COVID, and cleaning is done not only for our office but our other township facility, including the fire station where three meetings/trainings are held each week. Yes, we need to keep our firemen safe as best we can by keeping their work area clean and sanitized.

Question - Supervisor Adams discussing possible road millage to do Rives Township Roads. My question is where is all the left-over money from the road budgets?

Answer - Budgets are a projection of cost, not actual dollars. We project what our expenses will be and the amount of revenue we will receive. Jackson County Department of Transportation can only accommodate a certain amount of road repair for us. We have been given multiple options and costs and have chosen to repair the most badly damaged road. We will project the total cost of repairs for the roads that Rives is responsible for and bring that amount to the residents for a vote. It will be the choice of the residents as to whether they would like to establish a millage for the repair of Rives Township local roads.

Question – Why ask for millage if we are spending line by line vs package?

Answer – The road millage is something the board will meet with the County Board and residents for input not the board saying we, must do a millage, we are just presenting to residents, this will not be a board deciding, it is up to the people to make the decision. We have never, spend the entire 150K projected.

Question – Tax millage is this the road millage we are talking about?

Answer – There is no road millage. A  $\frac{3}{4}$  mil is the \$90,000 projected to Rives from property tax.

This board has reduced the budget projected every year in the last four years and has not spent the projected budget in the last four years.

Hearing adjourned 6:40 PM

Submitted by Judith A. McCord  
Rives Township Clerk