

RIVES TOWNSHIP REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
January 4, 2024  
Lansing Avenue Fire Barn

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Supervisor Jerald Adams, Clerk Vercilla Hart, Treasurer Carol Schulz, and Trustees Christine Beecher and Bryce Hammond.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.  
The Solar Master Plan Amendment will be addressed next month.

Hammond asked for Parks and Recs to be added as 7a to the agenda.

**Motion by Beecher, supported by Schulz, to approve the agenda as changed.** All ayes.  
Motion carried.

Public Comment began at 6:10 p.m. and ended at 6:26 p.m.

- Jackson County Commissioner Tony Bair reported the following:
  - James Shotwell, Jr, was reappointed as Chair, and Corey Kennedy as Vice-Chair.
  - At the December 19 meeting, some private roads were approved as public roads.
  - 4 airport hangar extensions were approved.
  - A Motor Vehicle Use policy for county employees was approved, but Bair voted against it because untrained supervisors can file complaints against employees if they just suspect a violation.
  - A new MSU Memo of Agreement was approved.

Adams asked Bair if he would agree to meet with 5 Township Supervisors in his district, and he agreed to do that.

- Dana Blaszkowski gave information about the Stockbridge Area Senior Center that she has founded. It is open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Hot lunch is served on those days. There are about 155 members now, and dues are \$20/yr. Anyone in the surrounding areas can join. The phone number is (517) 480-0353, and it is located at 219 W. Elm St in Stockbridge.

**Motion by Hart, supported by Hammond, to approve the December 7th minutes as written, and include the email from Byrum and Attorney Matthew Kuschel's letter to Jobeth Carlton.** All ayes. Motion carried.

**Motion by Hart, supported by Beecher, to approve payroll checks 31752-31775 with EFT 243 and \*EFT 244 and Void check 31571.** Roll call. All ayes. Motion carried.

Hart reported the Accident Fund payroll audit will be January 23rd.

**Correction EFT 242 not EFT 244.
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**Motion by Hart, supported by Hammond, to approve payables checks 84062-84085, sewer checks 2194-2196, and check 83922 is voided.** Roll call. All ayes. Motion carried. The check for the election printer, which was written when Judi McCord was in office, was voided because the township doesn't owe for it.

**Motion by Hart, supported by Hammond, to void checks 2016-2499 from Williams Way. All ayes. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Hart, supported by Hammond to add the \$4,500.00 auditor's bill to Janina Teske's bond review. All ayes. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Hart, supported by Beecher, to pay \$16,700.00 to the auditor for the bill. All ayes. Motion carried.**

Breakdown of Willis & Jurasek's bill: \$11,000.00 for the yearly audit, \$800.00 for ARPA reporting, \$4,500.00 for consultation on Janina Teske's permit review and attendance at a township board meeting, and \$400 for the IRS audit consultation regarding previous Clerk Judi McCord's submission.

### **Fire Department**

Fire Chief Bryon Deraedt reported 674 calls last month. The new software is being used as of January 1st. The city of Hillsdale is interested in the fire truck not in service, and will be meeting January 15th to discuss the quoted sale price of \$50,000.00.

Adams asked that the city be informed the Rives-Tompkins Fire Board meets in February, and would need to approve the sales price if Hillsdale accepts it.

Adams reported Marty Barnes will possibly repair the toilet in Fire Station #1, or Grimes Plumbing will need to be called. Adams said resident Rande Zebarra could check the water softener to repair or replace it.

**Motion by Hart, supported by Schulz, to approve Grimes Plumbing to evaluate the water heater and fix or replace. Roll call. All ayes. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Hart, supported by Hammond, to have Rande's Water Softener to evaluate or replace Fire Station #1 softener. Roll call. All ayes. Motion carried.**

### **Marihuana Retail Store Request- Ron Noocha**

- Noocha reported acquiring a 1500 sq. Ft building next to and on property he uses for the Village Liquors store in November 2018. He is a Farmington Hills resident.
- Adams said Rives Township currently has a prohibition against sales and growth of marihuana.
- Noocha said his proposed marihuana store would increase revenue in the area, create jobs, and attract people from surrounding areas. His location would be more convenient for area residents to acquire marihuana locally.
- Adams said allowing this would open up Rives Township so that marihuana sales can't be restricted. Residents have told Adams this is not needed in Rives Township.
- Comments were made for and against Noocha's proposal.
- Rives Township board will look into the matter more. The number of police calls at dispensaries surrounding Rives Township need to be evaluated.

### **Parks and Recreation**

- Hammond read a motion to establish a Parks Committee, which must seek board approval for all improvements. This would be a volunteer citizens group supervised by Hammond.
- Hart said this committee would require open meetings, minutes, and a capital improvement plan. It would be another job duty for her to collect and file minutes. Hart said the committee plan needs to be written for all township board members to see.
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**Motion by Hammond, supported by Beecher, In Accordance With: Michigan TOWNSHIP PARKS AND PLACES OF RECREATION Act 157, to establish a Parks and Recreation Committee. The Parks & Recs Committee consists of one (1) Township Board Trustee and four (4) non-compensated volunteers, and acts on behalf of the Township Board in the planning, maintenance, design, development, and collecting public opinion for all things concerning the management of Parks in the Township. This Committee alleviates these burdens from the Township Board, and in doing so, must seek Board approval for all projects, plans and improvements. The Township Park Committee shall make a detailed annual report concerning township parks and places of recreation to the township at the board's request. The Parks and Recreation Committee operates within the specifications of MCL (Act 157), para 41.421 thru 41.429. Roll Call Hammond - yes, Hart - no, Schulz - no, Beecher - yes, Adams - yes. 3 -yes, 2 - no. Motion carried.**

### **Private Drive - Henry Rd**

Adams said Rives Township cannot enforce the "use." The township board will not act on this.

### **Penalties and Bank Charges**

Schulz reported that Wendy at the Pleasant Lake Independent Bank branch credited \$206.00 for bounced checks during Treasurer Yang's time in office. The total charged had been \$500.00. Beecher/**Hammond** suggested using other banks.

Hart reported Yang never did the IRS payment due October 10th, so more IRS penalties are expected.

Adams will talk with Yang and give him an opportunity to pay for bank charges and penalties that total \$850.00. Otherwise, this amount could be requested for reimbursement from the bonding company.

Correction: Added Hammond after Beecher name placed in bold for correction.

### **Sewer Charges - Residents**

Adams said sewer rates charged by the City of Jackson will be increasing. Rives Township will need to raise rates to residents.

**Motion by Adams, supported by Beecher, to raise the sewer rate \$10.00 per month in April 2024 and another \$10.00 per month in October 2024. Roll call. All ayes. Motion carried.**

Adams said a resolution may be required in addition to this motion.

Correction:

Per Hammond wanted added into minutes: "April through September Charges will be \$35.00 per month, from October 2024, and moving forward, sewer charges will be \$45.00 a month."

### Communication

- Schulz reported the Williams Way account is closed.
- Beecher said the Planning Commission is reviewing ordinances.
- Hammond was asked to give more details on his \$400.00 reimbursement for posts invoice given to Rives Township, and sign the invoice.
- \*\*\*\*Hart/ **Hammond** attended a free seminar that included information about FOIA charges to requestors. The 1st 15 minutes of research for a request cannot be charged to the requestor.
  - **Motion by Hart, supported by Adams, to rescind the December 7 motion to approve the FOIA amendment. All ayes. Motion carried.**
- **Motion by Hart, supported by Adams, to reimburse Vercilla Hart \$511.68 for waterproof containers to secure township records. Roll call. All ayes. Motion carried.** The insurance company requires waterproof tubs with a seal around the top.
- **Motion by Hart, supported by Beecher, to pay Vercilla Hart for 19.25 hours @ \$18/hr for cleaning the basement, at a cost of \$346.50. Roll call. All ayes. Motion carried.**
- Hart reported that the Fire Dept payroll summary for 2023 shows Rives costs were 56.94% compared to Tompkins costs of 43.06%. Rives Township also pays Tompkins Township a yearly fee of \$215 for bookkeeping.
- Neither Hart nor other board members have received valid documents from Hammond regarding his communication with The Decker Agency about Stacy Stoner's bond. The documents were cut down and altered. Hammond said "I could care less" \*\*\*\***when** Hart asked the board what they want to do. Adams asked Hammond to give the entire communication on the documents to Hart.

\*\*\*Correction: 1) Add Hammond (placed in bold)  
2) Change the word when to **then** (then placed in bold)

- **Motion by Hart, supported by Hammond, to resign as Clerk, effective immediately. Hammond - yes, Hart - yes, Schulz - no, Adams - no, Beecher - no. 2 -yes, 3 - no. Motion failed.**

Hart left the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

- Adams reported discussing issues regarding the proposed jail at the monthly Supervisor's meeting.
- Discussion by board members and Jobeth Carlton followed Adams' communication.

**Public Comment #2** - Began at 8:38 p.m. and ended at 9:00 p.m. Adams asked Stacy Stoner to do this meeting's minutes, but she refused due to the circumstances. Adams asked if there was a recording. Jobeth Carlton said she would send the recording to Hammond to draft the minutes.

**Motion by Adams, supported by Beecher, that Bryce will be doing the minutes moving forward until a Clerk can be found for replacement. All ayes. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Hammond, supported by Adams, to adjourn. All ayes. Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm

Vercilla Hart, Rives Township Clerk