

**Rives Township Regular Board Meeting
8682 Lansing Ave, Rives Junction MI 49277**

March 6th, 2025

Board members present: Supervisor Jerald Adams, Clerk Joseph Super, Trustee Bryce Hammond, Treasurer Carol Schulz, Trustee Brandon Adams

Meeting was called to order at 6:01PM.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Trustee Hammond, supported by Trustee Adams, to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes, motion carried.

Public Comment

Public comment began at 6:02PM.

- Resident discussed a potential Ethics policy violation that occurred on social media, claiming the information presented was not “truthful”, and requested the Township board terminates the employment of the employee who posted a comment.

Public comment ended at 6:04PM with one (1) person speaking.

Approval of February Meeting Minutes (2/6/2025 and 2/13/2025)

(M-2025-29) Motion by Supervisor Adams, supported by Clerk Super, to approve the February 6th, 2025, regular board meeting minutes as presented. All ayes, motion carried.

Discussion of 2/13/2025 meeting minutes and clarification on a line regarding non-statutory duty as well as striking two items from the meeting minutes and rephrasing one of those.

(M-2025-30) Motion by Supervisor Adams, supported by Trustee Adams, to approve the February 13th, 2025, special board meeting minutes as changed. All ayes, motion carried.

Payroll & Bills

(M-2025-31) Motion by Clerk Super, supported by Supervisor Adams, to approve payroll

checks #32181 through #32205. Roll call vote. Trustee Hammond - aye, Clerk Super - aye, Trustee Adams - aye, Treasurer Schulz - aye, Supervisor Adams - aye. All ayes, motion carried.

(M-2025-32) Motion by Clerk Super, supported by Supervisor Adams, to approve accounts payable checks #84389 through #84411 and sewer checks #2236 and #2237. Roll call vote. Trustee Adams - aye, Treasurer Schulz - aye, Trustee Hammond - aye, Clerk Super - aye, Supervisor Adams - aye. All ayes, motion carried.

(M-2025-33) Motion by Clerk Super, supported by Supervisor Adams, to approve reimbursement for Mary Hall in the amount of \$184.16 for stamps and forms. Roll call vote. Trustee Adams - aye, Trustee Hammond - aye, Clerk Super - aye, Supervisor Adams - aye, Treasurer Schulz - aye. All ayes, motion carried.

(M-2025-34) Motion by Clerk Super, supported by Supervisor Adams, to approve reimbursement to fire department for fire gear in the amount of \$4569, to be used from previously appropriated ARPA funds. Roll call vote. Trustee Adams - aye, Treasurer Schulz - aye, Trustee Hammond - aye, Clerk Super - aye, Supervisor Adams - aye. All ayes, motion carried.

Risk Assessment

A copy of a recent risk assessment report was given to board members and discussed briefly. Clerk Super discussed the Michigan Township Participating Plan grant cycle that occurs in the fall and suggested the board looks into applying for said grant and using the funding for security measures, on advice from the Risk Assessment employee who provided the report.

Clerk Super also pointed out that the report does reference the changes to the Rives Main St. park which had a risk assessment in July 2023 and did get necessary updates that had been flagged in that earlier assessment.

FOIA Appeal 2025-01

A Freedom of Information Act appeal was held for a FOIA that required a “good faith deposit” before providing the records. Requester appealed on the basis of the fee being “excessive” given the nature of the request. The request is for “service tickets” from IT company VC3, which are automatically logged digitally after any Township worker calls to get assistance with an issue. Requester stated that a similar FOIA had been fulfilled by the previous FOIA Coordinator quickly by simply searching the relevant keywords in the Outlook search bar, and then the redactions were minimal. The previous request had been done in under 15 minutes and the

Requester was not invoiced at all due to the small amount of time to fulfill that previous FOIA, and that the one being appealed was similar in nature but should end up with fewer records, indicating it would take even less time than the previous request. Requester stated they feel like they are being treated different due to the relationship between Requester and FOIA Coordinator, and that this is not best practices. Treasurer Schulz explained that the good faith deposit was on the advice of the Township attorney, and Clerk Super confirmed that if the work involved in fulfilling the request was *less* than the good faith deposit estimated then the overpayment would be refunded to the Requester, which was generally accepted by all as a good way to go forward with this.

(M-2025-35) Motion by Supervisor Adams, supported by Clerk Super, to uphold Good Faith Deposit fee for FOIA 2025-01 per attorney recommendation, with refund of fees given to requester if fee is higher than necessary upon payment. Roll call vote. Trustee Adams - aye, Treasurer Schulz - aye, Trustee Hammond - aye, Clerk Super - aye, Supervisor Adams - aye. All ayes, motion carried.

Budget Meeting Schedule

(M-2025-36) Motion by Supervisor Adams, supported by Trustee Adams, to hold Budget Workshop on 3/11/25 at 5PM at Lansing Ave firebarn and Budget Public Hearing and Budget Adoption on 3/20/25 at 5PM at Lansing Ave firebarn. All ayes, motion carried.

Parks and Recreation Committee Discussion

Member of the Parks and Recreation Committee thanked Trustee Adams and Deputy Treasurer Adams for their assistance and cooperation in Parks-related logistics such as grant writing. Committee member asked that the Board approve the Parks Committee soliciting donations. Local businesses and residents will be approached, and that said donations would be appropriated to the Parks Department rather than the General Fund.

(M-2025-37) Motion by Supervisor Adams, supported by Treasurer Schulz, to allow Mary Miller to solicit donations and funding for the Rives Township Parks & Recreation Committee. Roll call vote. Trustee Hammond - aye, Clerk Super - aye, Trustee Adams - aye, Treasurer Schulz - aye, Supervisor Adams - aye. All ayes, motion carried.

Non-statutory Duties Discussion

Clerk Super brought up the non-statutory/additional duties that the Clerk, Treasurer, and Supervisor currently perform. Due to the term change, the Board needs board action each individual duty and the person performing it, which was decided to be handled at the budget

adoption. The additional jobs were also discussed in terms of payment, as they currently get a per diem but Clerk Super suggested it all change to “hourly” instead, in order to make it easier to track those hours for the newly changed Earned Sick Time Act. The additional duties are currently:

Treasurer - Sewer Admin (monthly, \$47.11) and Collection Site Admin (monthly, \$47.11)
Clerk - Payroll Admin (monthly, \$47.11) and Sewer Invoicing (quarterly, \$47.11)
Supervisor - Sewer Manager (monthly, \$300)

Earned Sick Time Act Discussion & Resolution

Ongoing discussion about the ESTA and how to move forward while being in compliance with the new changes regarding accumulating paid sick time. Collection Site workers, people performing the non-statutory duties (Sewer Admin, Payroll Admin, Collection Site Admin, Building Department, Sewer Invoicing, and Sewer Manager), and possibly Township inspectors were determined to be tracked in regards to the ESTA. Some need to be confirmed as to how to proceed. Elected and appointed officials do not qualify under the ESTA.

Board determined that the fiscal year would be used as the Township’s required “year”, rather than the calendar year, to stay consistent with the other Township scheduling. A change was made to the resolution language where the term “Clerk” was used for the person tracking ESTA, with Clerk Super suggesting it should say “payroll administrator” instead due to it being a non-statutory duty, which was agreed on.

(M-2025-38) Motion by Supervisor Adams, supported by Treasurer Schulz, to approve Resolution 2025-07 Earned Sick Time Act Policy. Roll call vote. Trustee Adams - aye, Treasurer Schulz - aye, Trustee Hammond - aye, Clerk Super - aye, Supervisor Adams - aye. All ayes, motion carried.

Purchasing Policy Discussion & Resolution

Discussion of the Corrective Action Plan and the need for a Purchasing Policy. Supervisor, Clerk, and Treasurer will have the ability to move and approve money within their own departments, up to \$1000, without board action. The Supervisor will have authority to use funding for emergencies.

(M-2025-39) Motion by Supervisor Adams, supported by Trustee Adams, to approve Resolution 2025-08 Purchasing Policy. Roll call vote. Trustee Adams - aye, Treasurer Schulz - aye, Trustee Hammond - aye, Clerk Super - aye, Supervisor Adams - aye. All ayes, motion carried.

Communications

Trustee Adams - Talked about the recent Planning Commission meeting and Region II planning assistance. Conversation about the Township Board approving up to \$7,500 in payment to Region II, with the Board agreeing that \$3,600 of that cost should be invoiced immediately and paid out of the Planning Commission's 2024-2025 fiscal year funds, with the remaining payment coming from the 2025-2026 budget. No motion was necessary since the Board had previously agreed to the cost up to \$7,500 and this was within that approval.

Treasurer Schulz - Brief discussion of taxes being sent to the County on March 3rd, 2025.

Trustee Hammond - Talked about workers being present on Broughwell near the railroad tracks and that they are laying fiber optic lines. Confirmed with workers that this was **not** for internet.

Clerk Super - Mentioned that the Zoning Board Chair would like to see table skirts placed on the tables in the meeting room so it would be more professional looking. Supervisor Adams agreed that the purchase could be made and the Chair would be reimbursed for the cost, and that it could come out of the current fiscal year budget easily. Clerk also circled back to the Region II discussion briefly.

Supervisor Adams - Referenced a recent sale of two parcels, both being vacant land that's zoned Agricultural, and that one of the properties sold for approximately \$10,000 per acre. Supervisor stated he will reach out to the Planning Commission Chair to get the Region II invoice quickly so half can be paid out of the current fiscal year.

Supervisor also gave the Board copies of a bid from Jackson Doors & Windows to do some redesign inside the Township office. The bid was originally from 2023 with the previous Clerk, but Supervisor Adams had confirmed with the company that they would honor that older quote and do the redesign for the same price. The redesign will include a floor to ceiling wall on the east half of the office, effectively making a "Treasurer office" for the Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, and Assessor on the east side of the office. The wall will have two separate doors, both able to be locked. The Clerk will be moving into the small office on the west side of the building, where the Assessor's office has been. The Clerk will have the open area by the front door for the Deputy Clerk, and the "public" area will be in the middle of the building, but will not be able to access the Treasurer or Clerk offices after the redesign is finished.

Trustee Hammond strongly suggested getting the required three (3) bids for this project, but Supervisor and Clerk argued that by the time those bids could be gathered the fiscal year may have ended and the opportunity for this lower-than-expected quote will have expired. Supervisor agreed with Trustee Hammond that it would be nice to have gotten multiple newer bids on the project, but that the timing was not realistic to do that before the end of the fiscal year.

(M-2025-40) Motion by Supervisor Adams, supported by Clerk Super, to approve Jackson Windows & Doors bid to redesign office by adding additional wall and doors, for the price of \$9934.11, to be taken from 2024-2025 Township Property Improvement fiscal budget. Roll call vote. Trustee Adams - aye, Treasurer Schulz - aye, Trustee Hammond - nay, Clerk Super - aye, Supervisor Adams - aye. Four (4) ayes, one (1) nay. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Public comment began at 7:16PM.

- Resident from earlier public comment briefly mentioned the Ethics Policy and that the Board has steps to take now to follow through on that policy.
- Resident asked Clerk about holding office hours, and stated that during his campaign he claimed he would have some set office hours. Clerk Super did respond to this and said that he has been available quickly for most residents, but that he has realized over the previous months that “pretty much no one” is coming to the office specifically to see the Clerk, and most of what he does when someone walks into the office is direct them to the Treasurer or Assessor, claiming that his Clerk duties have involved tasks that the public doesn’t actually come in to discuss.
- Resident asked a question about redesign of the office and received some clarifying details. Also asked the Clerk about how to schedule appointments and, in that comment, another resident and the Board discussed making the Clerk contact information easier to find.
- Resident asked more questions about redesign and also received some clarifying details.
- Resident referenced the first public comment as well as the first public comment of this section.
- - Resident explained to the Board that the Ethics Policy they approved in February directly states that all employees, officials, and volunteers not only need to be made aware of the policy but also are required (per the policy) to sign a written acknowledgment that they have received the information and understood it. Resident argued that until that happens, the policy is not very enforceable and that plenty of Township employees may not know it even exists yet.
- Resident looked up the Township website and discussed the contact numbers for the Board members, in reference to the earlier comments about office hours and scheduling appointments. Board agreed that the website will need to make the contact information easier to find.

Public comment ended at 7:24PM with six (6) people speaking.

Motion by Supervisor Adams, supported by Trustee Hammond, to adjourn meeting. All ayes, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:27PM.

Submitted by Clerk Joseph Super