

RIVES TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING  
July 11, 2024  
Lansing Avenue Fire Station

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

Present: Clerk Vercilla Hart, Treasurer Carol Schulz, and Trustee Bryce Hammond.  
Absent: Supervisor Jerald Adams.

**Motion by Hart, supported by Schulz, for Clerk Hart to chair tonight's Township Board Meeting.** All ayes. Motion carried.

Everyone was asked to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Motion by Hart, supported by Schulz, to accept the Agenda as written.** All ayes. Motion carried.

Public Comment #1 began at 6:05 p.m. and ended at 6:10 p.m.

**Motion by Hart, supported by Hammond, to approve June 6, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes as written.** All ayes. Motion carried.

Trustee Christine Beecher arrived at 6:14 p.m.

**Motion by Hart, supported by Hammond, to approve General Fund checks 84205 through 84240, with voided check 84157 due to expired before the window was placed, replaced with check #84236; and Sewer checks 2212 through 2214.**  
All ayes. Motion carried.

**Motion by Hart, supported by Beecher, to approve Payroll checks 31925 through 31942, then 31944 to 31955, with voided check 31943, and pay EFT 256 and 257.** All ayes.  
Motion carried.

Sewer Decisions

**Motion by Schulz, supported by Hart, that now that Sewer has been paid off, transfer RRI funds to Sewer Account - transfer amount is \$15,712.87.** Roll call.  
All ayes. Motion carried.

**Motion by Schulz, supported by Hart, to move the October Sewer rate increase to April 2025.** All ayes. Motion carried.  
Increasing the sewer rate again in October, after the April increase, would have raised the rate 80% from the previous fiscal year's rate.

**Motion by Schulz, supported by Hart, for the board to forgive the \$61,576.03 liability of sewer for account 590-000-214.101, which is Due to General Fund.**  
Roll call. All ayes. Motion carried.  
Treasurer Schulz reported the \$61,576.03 balance had accumulated over several years, when the principal and interest on the Sewer bond had been paid by the General Fund.

### ZBA Alternate Appointments

Clerk Hart read an email from Supervisor Adams requesting the board to appoint Gregg Johnson and Tony Baker as Zoning Board of Appeals Alternates.

**Motion by Hart, supported by Schulz, on behalf of Supervisor Adams per email to appoint Gregg Johnson and Tony Baker as ZBA Alternates.** All ayes. Motion carried.

Hart reported both of these residents had requested and received variances on their properties last week, and they are now acquainted with the Variance process.

### Chart of Accounts

Hart was informed by new auditors, Maner Costerisan, that the Chart of Accounts had not been done correctly. State of Michigan standards were not met. The previous auditors have been informed. It will now be another 6 months before the Chart of Accounts will be updated to state standards. The Chart of Accounts should have been updated in 2022.

**Motion by Hart, supported by Beecher, for Maner Costerisan to update the Uniform Chart of Accounts that wasn't updated correctly from previous auditor for maximum cost of \$5,000.00.** All ayes. Motion carried.

### Communications

- Treasurer Schulz said tax season has begun, and she has noticed less payments made at Independent Bank and is grateful that residents are confident to pay at the Township office. She thanked Deputy Treasurer Donna Domm for her assistance with tax payments.
- Trustee Beecher reported that Planning Commission member Jon Hoffman was not in attendance at the last PC meeting, but asked Clerk Hart if the PC minutes he was to correct had been sent to her.
  - Hart said corrections were not made, even though she highlighted for him the areas that needed to be corrected.
  - Trustee Hammond has seen the PC minutes needing correcting and said the misspelling of the names of those commenting at the meetings made it difficult to discern who was commenting.
  - Beecher said she will report to the PC, at the next meeting, the amended motion that Clerk Hart intends to make at tonight's meeting if the board chooses to pass the motion.
- Trustee Hammond said there was a motion made over 2 years ago that he receive the Agenda, and 20 hours before a meeting is not acceptable.
- Clerk Hart received a bill from Tompkins Township for an audit of the Fire Department and would like the board's authorization to pay it.
  - **Motion to pay Tompkins Township for FD audit for \$2,030.00 with obtaining a copy of the audit when finished.** All ayes. Motion carried. Rives' portion is 58% of the total.
- The Fire Department has given Clerk Hart prices on 2 flooring choices for Fire Station #1. She reported the Fire Department offered to install the flooring and a new toilet for free. The board decided to table a decision on the purchase because neither of the estimates were for very thick flooring and the flooring needs to be waterproof and not just water resistant. Hammond suggested a professional be hired who would do any necessary prep work on the floor before laying the flooring.
- Hart would like to amend May's Board motion directing the Planning Commission to remove quarry/gravel pits from Conditional Uses.

- **Motion by Hart, supported by Hammond, to amend the PC motion to review Section 17.42 with emphasis on letter “O” and make a recommendation to the Township Board by August 28, 2024.** Schulz - yes, Hammond - yes, Beecher - abstain, Hart - yes. 3 - yes, 1 - abstain. Motion carried.
- Legal - Hart reported a lawsuit is in progress against the Township Clerk, which has added (2) legal bills: one for \$4,301.89 and another for \$114.00 - a total of \$4,415.89. Hart read the itemized expenses from the \$4,301.89 legal bill. Beecher reported the township attorney is asking for reimbursement for the frivolous lawsuit. Hart said the township attorney submitted a 22-page motion to the court.
  - **Motion by Beecher, supported by Hammond, to pay Fahey Schultz Burzych & Rhodes for a total of \$4,415.89.** Hammond - yes, Schulz - yes, Beecher — yes, Hart - abstain. 3 - yes, 1 - abstain. Motion carried.
- Some transfers of funds need to be made:
  - **Motion by Hart, supported by Schulz, to move \$25,000.00 from Roads to Fire Department - Equipment for the asphalt for their blacktop.** Roll call. All ayes. Motion carried.  
ARPA funds have been used for the Road payment to Jackson County. The Fire Department needed additional paving work done after the original board approval.
  - **Motion by Hart, supported by Beecher, to move \$3,800.00 from Roads to Computer Software.** All ayes. Motion carried.  
Beecher said the new email access is very user-friendly and professional. Hammond’s emails worked at first, but he will need to meet with Hart to get access again.

Public Comment #2 began at 6:54 p.m. and ended at 7:07 p.m.

Hart reported the new auditor was very thorough, and Schulz agreed. Payroll was examined thoroughly, and all of Hart’s reimbursements were examined. The auditor will report at next month’s meeting.

Hart thanked Stacy Stoner for all the direction in the accounting entries since Hart was appointed Clerk. The Township Clerk end-of-fiscal year adjusting entries were reduced from over 400 to only 28 because of Stoner’s assistance, and the audit went very well.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Vercilla Hart, Rives Township Clerk