



Schoolcraft Township Board Meeting
January 9, 2024
Including Zoom

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance

Members Present: Supervisor Ulsh, Clerk Mongreig, Trustee Fryling, and Trustee Stafford.

Treasurer Scott Absent

Motion by Fryling with second by Stafford to Agenda with the addition of f.) Public Meeting will be scheduled for Planning Commission Land Use Master Plan revisions/additions. **Unanimously Approved.**

Trustee Stafford again discussed her displeasure of the November 14, 2023, minutes, and the Zoning Minutes from the November 9, 2023, meeting. Trustee Stafford referenced the Open Meetings Act and an email with the Michigan Townships Association attorney regarding the difference of opinion with Clerk Mongreig regarding the November and December 2023 minutes. Trustee Fryling stated that the question with the December 2023 Zoning Board of Appeals Minutes is a moot point until the Zoning Board of Appeals presents their minutes of the November 9, 2023, minutes.

Motion by Fryling with second by Ulsh to approve the Minutes of the Meeting December 12, 2023. **Motion carried by a vote of three to one with Stafford being the dissenting vote.**

Motion by Fryling with second by Stafford to approve the List of Bills as presented. **Unanimously Approved.**

In Treasurer Scott's absence Clerk Mongreig read the following:

Income for the month of December 2023	\$ 71,378.73
Expenditures for the month of December 2023	\$ 67,692.82
December 31, 2023, Balance	\$382,446.67

Motion by Fryling with second by Stafford to approve the Treasurers Report as presented. Unanimously Approved.

Public Comment:

Schoolcraft Township resident Christine Augustine addressed the meeting regarding newly passed Public Act 233 which negates townships and other local governments from control over the siting of certain renewable energy wind, solar and battery storage facilities. Ms. Augustine is working with Citizens for Local Choice, and Our Home Our Choice; groups working to create language and circulate petitions to reverse these acts and asks that anyone interested contact her to join in the effort to initiate a non-partisan petition drive for a referendum that the citizens of Michigan will vote on at the polls in 2024. The language goes to the canvassers on January 19, 2024, for approval. If not approved the language will go back to the canvassers in February 2024.

NEW BUSINESS:

Barton Lake Weed Control Contract: Motion by Mongreig with second by Fryling to table the discussion until Treasurer Scott can explain the Special Assessment District. **Unanimously Approved.**

Award 2024 Mowing Contract: Motion by Fryling with second by Mongreig to present the 2024 Mowing Contract for Schoolcraft Township and the Schoolcraft Township cemeteries to Personal Touch Lawn and Landscape using the Township equipment only in an emergency - or as backup stated Supervisor Ulsh.

Roll Call Vote: Fryling — yes, Ulsh — yes, Mongreig — yes, and Stafford — yes. Unanimously Approved.

U.S. 131 Water Supply Discussion:

Three representatives were in attendance to report on the Proposal for Lockport Township-Water Supply Project Add-On.

Frank Lapierre, Director of the South County Sewer and Water Authority, and member of the St. Joseph and Kalamazoo County's Wastewater Treatment Facility and the infrastructure steering committee including the recent concept of adding a study and/or analysis specific to the possibility of extending a public water supply system to service existing and potential future development. Mr. LaPierre reported that the authority has submitted the feasibility study and has been in contact with State Representative, Matt Hall, State Senator Sean McCann, and four other legislators from St. Joe County, for earmarked funding toward the project from the State of Michigan.

Pavilion dmm
The committee also includes ~~Brady~~ Township Supervisor John Speeter, Supervisor Don Ulsh along with two township supervisors in St. Joe County and Doug Zoning Inspector.

Doug Kuhlman is the Zoning Administrator for municipalities south to the Michigan/Indiana border except for the City of Three Rivers and the Village of Constantine. Mr. Kuhlman frequently receives call from individuals' interest in building a facility along U.S. 131. The lack of Sewer/Water services causes them to look elsewhere.

Mr. Kuhlman discussed the desire for water to existing facilities along U.S. 131, along with a significant \$250mm project scheduled south of Schoolcraft Township in St. Joseph County, and a business park in St. Joe County. The Committee had positive meetings with JRS Rettenmaier and Forming USA, both in Schoolcraft Township.

The steering Committee is asking for Schoolcraft Township for \$5,000.00 for the Water services feasibility study.

Mr. Kuhlman stated that the tide is changing, that the Village of Schoolcraft has new leadership coming in and the Village is interested in both the sewer and water. The committee would like to negotiate with the Village of Schoolcraft to include the existing Water Tower which would mean a savings of 2-3 million.

Motion by Mongreig with second by Ulsh to approve payment of \$5,000.00 for engineering/project costs.
Unanimously Approved.

The Board authorized Supervisor Ulsh sign the "Letter of Intent" entered by Lockport Township which represents the parties' understanding as to exploring the potential development of Water services along U.S. 131 and into Schoolcraft Township,

Trustee Steve Fryling submitted his letter of resignation effective January 11, 2023. Fryling stated that now that he and his wife are spending more time in Florida, he cannot, in good conscience, serve the citizens of the township as well as a trustee should. He expressed his gratitude to those who elected him and said that the board has had many worthwhile accomplishments in his tenure and wishes the board many more in the future.

Motion by Ulsh with second by Stafford to accept Trustee Fryling's resignation.

Each of the Board Members thanked Steve and wished him well, but truly regretted his resignation.

Appointment of Trustee: Motion by Ulsh second by Mongreig to appoint Jennifer Sportel to fill the Trustee position vacated by Fryling. Roll Call Vote: Ulsh — yes, Mongreig — yes, and Stafford — yes. Unanimously Approved.

Planning Commission

Trustee Stafford stated that the Planning Commission approved the Vicksburg Storage LLC Site Plan.

The Planning Commission also approved the “Fence” definition submitted by Christine Hamilton.

Article 2 Rules of Text Interpretation Definition of Terms

Add to Article 22 Section 22.1.5C

Non-retaining walls and privacy-type fencing.

Fence: means a structure within the required setback that serves as an enclosure or screening and shall be made of traditional material/s made for fencing and typically sold through retail outlets, and will be enforced going forward, with existing fences grandfathered in until they fall into disrepair.

Master Plan: The Planning Commission agreed at their January 8, 2024, meeting to ask the board for authorization to distribute the newly updated Master Plan for review and comment. The Master Plan will be available on-line and to surrounding entities. Following the 42-day period of review and comments a Public Hearing on the Master Plan will be published.

Motion to approve distribution and schedule the Public Hearing by Stafford with second by Fryling.

Clerk Mongreig commented on the costs incurred during the recent Zoning Board of Appeals case.

Eric Jasiak mentioned during the mowing discussion that selling the Kabota tractor would in his view be a mistake. Personal Touch has taken on extra jobs. It would be a step backward to sell the Kabota.

He also said that there is much equipment in the barn that is not only used for mowing.

Mongreig stated that the Parks are in good shape with Personal Touch maintaining the common Township property and Schoolcraft Little League maintaining the Little League grounds.

Mongreig reported that the Township Hall needs someone we can call on to help around the township building.

SKCFA — Approved the proposed budget.

South County Sewer & Water Authority: above

Members Time:

Mongreig: Absentee Voter Applications have been mailed by the Clerk’s Office. Many voters have had questions on the newly implemented Early Voting process, which resulted due to passage of Proposal 22-2.

Vicksburg Cemetery has been cleared of plastic and silk flowers.

Clerk Mongreig reported receiving five ballots last week from the November 2023 Special Election. The ballots were postmarked October 26, 2023, in the Vicksburg Post Office.

Ulsh: The Zoning Board of Appeals must have a member of the Planning Commission on its board. Supervisor Ulsh approached David Aubry who accepted the position. Motion by Ulsh with second by Stafford to appoint David Aubry as Zoning Board of Appeals Member. **Unanimously Approved.**

The Road Commission of Kalamazoo County has requested a joint meeting with the township.

Schoolcraft Township will spend \$400,000 on roads in 2024.

Trustee Fryling expressed his gratitude to the board. Together we have accomplished much. He commented that the members of Schoolcraft Township Board are passionate about the township and quality infrastructure. Appreciates Clerk Mongreig working to complete elections with the new procedures.

Motion by Fryling to adjourn with second by Stafford.

Meeting Adjourned 7:25

Virginia M. Mongreig, Clerk

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Virginia M. Mongreig", is written over the printed name of the clerk.