

**West Branch Township  
Public Hearing  
January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

**Public Hearing opened by Supervisor Morris at 5:00 pm**

**Public Present** – Approximately 33 Citizens in attendance within the Hall.

**Correspondence Received** – 15 letters, submitted.

**Board Members Present:** Jim Morris, Diane Philbrick, Jeremy Hickmott, Mike Selinski and Mike Durfee.

**Board Members Absent:** None.

Supervisor Morris opened the Public hearing and had Clerk Hickmott state the procedure of how the Public Hearing would run and the time limits of Five Minutes (5) for each citizen to speak and also Five (5) minutes for each correspondence that was submitted to the Township Clerk.

Clerk Hickmott began by reviewing the corresponding documents in the township board's packet that was also available to the public on the Township TV screen and also paper copies were available on the table for public viewing. The items reviewed included plans submitted by citizens for the proposed special assessment district, an estimated district map, copies of the informal petitions that were submitted to the township clerk, and Clerk Hickmott explained how the billing for the proposed district would work as told to him by the County Equalization department and also the Township assessor.

After review of the documents and explanation of the billing costs by Clerk Hickmott which legal is either by price be foot of frontage or by a flat rate per parcel the meeting was then shifted into the public comment portion.

**Public Comment** – The public comment portion of the public hearing was started with a reminder from Supervisor Morris that the same five (5) minute limit applies to the public as it did to the correspondence that were received by the township Clerk

The public comments ranged on a variety of topics which are listed below

- Concerns of Chemical Treatment
- Issues with sludge in the water.
- Concerns with what is causing the actual problem whether it is failing septic's or farm fertilization.
- Concerns over the costs of projects as a whole
- Concerns or the validity of the petition ( which Clerk Hickmott gave clarification on petition validation)
- Suggestion of sewer options in the Peach lake Area.
- Access to the lake by Back Lots and the public
- Access to Grant Money and other Funding options
- Additional information from Impartial individuals about lake issues

Near the end of the public comment portion there was a general agreement from the public that there are issues at the lake but there needs to be more information done on how to correct the issues and what the actual issues are with the lake as a whole. Also near the end of the hearing there was a vast majority at the hearing the opposed the current plan as presented at the hearing. Clerk Hickmott did provide the public an explanation of what would be the next steps in the process of the Special Assessment district.

**SUPERVISOR MORRIS CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:08 PM**

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
January 11th, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:21 pm.

**Board Members Present:** Jim Morris, Diane Philbrick, Jeremy Hickmott, Mike Selinski, and Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** Rep. from Little Ceasars, Jocelyn Garza – Ogemaw Herald, Brenda Simmon – County Commissioner, and Rodger Mayhew County Commissioner.

**Absent:** NONE

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY SELINSKI TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup> 2022 MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** NONE

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – Brenda Simmons gave the board information regarding what has been going on at the county. This information included appointment of Commissioner David as Chair Person and Brenda as Vice Chairperson. She had also mentioned about a resolution that was missed on a county level in the Clerk's office regarding the Ogemaw County Transit. Also that the county is working with the animal shelter on pet licenses. It was also mentioned that the county is looking at information regarding Juvenile facilities.

**Clerk** – Hickmott provided the board with information regarding the West Branch Township DDA and the fact that they are in the early thoughts of trying to maybe identify their next big project which may include sewer line work on the I-75 Business loop or maybe continuing infrastructure work on cook road. Hickmott also brought up some zoning issues regarding signage at Starbucks that delayed its opening and also several issues with the building department issuing building permits without even checking with local zoning to see it has been approved. Hickmott mentioned that this issue has happened 5 times in the past year with the building department.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY PHILBRICK TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$27,015.56. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor** – Morris gave the board information regarding the status of the Transfer Station and updates regarding the transfer station attendant that will need time off in mid-march for personal reasons. Morris also brought up information regarding the required training the Board of Review folks will need in Feb. He mentioned that the training location is in West Branch at the Quality Inn and also that the Board should purchase new updated books for them as well.

**Treasurer** – Reported that things have going well and that taxes have been coming in as well.

**Trustee Selinski** – mentioned that he reviewed the accounts and everything looked well. He was surprised at the high costs of the forward energy bill. Supervisor Morris explained about the increase of propane costs and that the well house at the water tower uses the propane

**Trustee Durfee** – Mentioned a few of the library events that have been going on. He also mentioned that turnout was good at the library for the Art and Wine walk event back in December.

**Correspondence:** Par-Plan Newsletter

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Little Caesars Utility Billing Issues** – The board was presented with information from Treasurer Philbrick regarding on going issues with Little Caesars regarding disputes with water billing. Philbrick provided the board with details information regarding the issues and an explanation of what the issues were which included a leak. She had mentioned that there is an option for one time forgiveness from the City that the Township can do as well.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY DURFEE TO WAIVE UP TO 100,000 GALLONS USED AND ALSO THE LATE FEES ASSOCIATED WITH THE ISSUES. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE, SELINKSI, AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**Public Participation Plan** – Clerk Hickmott provided the board with the proposed West Branch Township Public Participation plan. Hickmott went into detail explaining the plan and the plans objective. The main person of the plan is to lay out how the township will and will continue to engage with citizens but also to encourage them to stay involved in all elements of local government. Hickmott also mentioned that this is a required item in the Redevelopment Ready Program that the township continues to participate in.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO ADOPT THE WEST BRANCH TOWNSHIP PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE, SELINKSI, AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**Budget Workshop and Hearing Dates** – The board had general discussion on what the dates should be for the Budget Workshop and Budget Hearing should be. It was decided by way of general consensus that the Budget Workshop will be March 14<sup>th</sup> 2023 at 1:00 PM and the Budget Public Hearing will be March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2023 at 5:00 PM.

NO MOTION WAS NEEDED ON THE ABOVE SUBJECT.

**Resolution #01-11-23 A Alternate board of Review Days** – Hickmott presented the board with information regarding resolution 01-11-23A which is the alternate dates for the board of review and is an annual resolution that is passed.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 01-11-23A ALTERNATE BOARD OF REVIEW. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE, SELINKSI, AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**Resolution #01-11-23B Asset Test** – Hickmott presented the board with information regarding resolution 01-11-23A which is the asset test regulations and is an annual resolution that is passed.

**West Branch Township  
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January 11th, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 01-11-23B ASSEST TEST. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE . MOTION CARRIED.

**Resolution #1-11-23C Allowing Residents to protest in Writing** – Hickmott presented the board with information regarding resolution 01-11-23C which allows protests in writing to the board of review and is an annual resolution that is passed.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY MORRIS TO ACCEPT RESOLUTION 1-11-23 C PROTEST IN WRITING RESOLUTION. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHIBLRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE, AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**Resolution #1-11-23D Poverty Exemption Resolution** – Hickmott presented the board with information regarding resolution 01-11-23D which sets the Poverty Exemption guidelines for 2023.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY MORRIS TO ACCEPT RESOLUTION 1-11-23 D POVERTY EXEMPTION GUIDELINES . ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHIBLRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE, AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**Planning Commission Appointments** – The board had a general discussion regarding the need to have a new individual appointed to the Planning Commission. Hickmott mentioned that Jim Delahanty would like to be considered for the position. It was also mentioned that the Supervisor would need to make the recommended appointment to the township board for a vote.

NO MOTION WAS NEED ON THE ABOVE SUBJECT.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE ADDITIONAL.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY DURFEE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 6:52 pm

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
February 8th, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

**Board Members Present:** Jim Morris, Diane Philbrick, Jeremy Hickmott, Mike Selinski, and Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** Mark Beck, Mike Benefiel, Brenda Simmons – County Commissioner, and Rodger Mayhew County Commissioner.

**Absent:** NONE

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY DURFEE, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 11<sup>TH</sup> 2023 MEETING MINUTES AND PEACH LAKE PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** NONE

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – Brenda Simmons gave the board information regarding increase in Transit services for Saturdays. Also information was provided regarding the grant for the new bus garage and that some of those additional costs and other expenses will be covered by the Transits fund balance. Information was also provided regarding the street and downtown changes that MDOT is proposing for the downtown area of the City of West Branch.

**Clerk** – Hickmott provided the board with information regarding the West Branch Township DDA and that they are in a bit of a holding pattern as or right now to let funds build for future projects. He also mentioned that the township is currently about 75% in compliance with the State's Redevelopment Ready program that the township has been engaged in for the past couple years.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$127,423.10. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor** – Morris gave the board information regarding the status the road work and the contract with the Ogemaw County Road Commission for the gravel and ditching work on Finerty Road. Morris also provided the board with some details regarding the overlay program that was provided by the Ogemaw County Road Commission.

**Treasurer** – Reported that things have going well and that taxes have been coming and as of the time of the meeting about 70% were in. It was also mentioned that letters were sent regarding utility meter accuracy.

**Trustee Selinski** – mentioned that he reviewed the accounts and everything looked well and after viewing the bills that also answered some of the questions he had as well.

**Trustee Durfee** – Mentioned a few of the library events that have been going on. He also mentioned that library has a new board member which is the Clerk from Edwards Township.

**Correspondence:** NONE

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mike Benefiel with M-33 access went into detail about changes that are coming to M-33 access including a company merger. He mentioned that this will not change the townships current project that is ongoing. He also requested that the township sending a letter of support to him in an effort to secure grant funding for the area.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Planning Commission Appointment** – Supervisor Morris made the recommendation to the Township board that Mark Beck be appointed to the Township Planning Commission. It was mentioned that Mark Beck had shown interest in the position and also that he has attended the last few meeting to get a feel for the board and the work that they do.

MOTION BY HICKMOTT AND SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPOINT MARK BECK TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE, SELINKSI, AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**Lawn Maintenance** – The board was presented with information regarding potentially placing the lawn maintenance out for bids again. Maps and a sheet with the lawn company standards were also provided to the board. Selinski had asked if we needed to put it out for bids again as we don't with annual snow plowing and previous years it was not done every single year. The board was overall happy with the work of last year's company and a suggested that we renew the previously approved contract with Quality Landscaping

MOTION BY SELINSKI AND SECOND BY MORRIS TO RENEW THE PREVIOUS YEARS CONTRACT WITH QUALITY LANDSCAPING FOR THE 2023 SEASON. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE, SELINKSI, AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**Public Recruitment Guide** – The board was presented a recruitment guide developed by Clerk Hickmott as part of the township continued engagement in the State of Michigan's redevelopment ready program. Hickmott went into details of the guide and how it lays out a clear way and expectations for people to apply to set on township boards and commissions. The guide also provides an application for individuals to fill out if they are interested in setting on a township board or commission.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE PUBLIC RECRUITMENT GUIDE AND APPLICATION AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE, SELINKSI, AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** NONE

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE ADDITIONAL.

MOTION BY HICKMOTT, SECOND BY SELINSKI TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 6:51 pm

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
February 8th, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
March 8th, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

**Board Members Present:** Jim Morris, Diane Philbrick, Jeremy Hickmott, and Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** Mr. and Mrs. Clemens, Brenda Simmons – County Commissioner, and Rodger Mayhew  
County Commissioner.

**Absent:** Mike Selinski

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH WORDING CHANGES. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – SELINSKI. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 8TH 2023 MEETING AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT - SELINSKI. MOTION CARRIED

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** NONE

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – Brenda Simmons gave the board information regarding things that county has been addressing including the grant extension for the campground project, the kids shadowing officials day which was planned for March 9<sup>th</sup>, and appointments to the transit committee. Information was also provided regarding the possibility of a youth detention facility as well and costs associated with that.

**Clerk** – Hickmott provided the board with information regarding the fact that things with the DDA and also township zoning have been pretty quiet over the past month, but overall things have been running smoothly with little issues going on.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY PHILBRICK TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$50,087.16. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – SELINSKI MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor** – Morris gave the board information regarding that Ralph the transfer station attendant will be off for a period of time do too personal / health issues. He also reminded the board about the upcoming board of review days and also gave the board information about the overlay program that the county currently has going on.

**Treasurer** – Reported that things have going well and that taxes have been coming and as of the time of the meeting about 90% were in. It was also mentioned that after March 1<sup>st</sup> taxes are no longer collected at the hall for the winter season and must be paid at the Ogemaw County Treasurers office.

**Trustee Durfee** – Mentioned a few of the library events that included the health department are working with the library to set up a station to register for COVID-19 at home tests. The library was supportive of this effort.

**Correspondence:** NONE



**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Citizens had comments regarding issues and opposition to the COVID-19 testing box at the library and also mentioned previous issues other libraries have had with fraud issues with this types of boxes / stations. The board also had comments regarding the construction work that will be started in the summer in Downtown West Branch. Also citizens had requested an update regarding the Peach Lake proposed Special Assessment District.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Wage Reviews** – The board was presented with three wage reviews for the upcoming year. These reviews included the Assessor which requested no increase, zoning administrator which requested no increase, and the Transfer Station coordinator which was suggested to be increased to \$240 per month and increase from \$100 per month. All agreements and wage changes would be effective April 1<sup>st</sup> 2023.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE ASSESSOR AGREEMENT AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE, SELINKSI, AND MORRIS. ABSENT – SELINSKI. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR AGREEMENT AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL: YEA – PHILBRICK, DURFEE, AND MORRIS. ABSTAIN – HICKMOTT. ABSENT – SELINSKI. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER STATION COORDINATOR INCREASE. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, AND DURFEE. ABSTAIN – MORRIS. ABSENT – SELINSKI. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED

**Resolution #03-08-23 A – Clerk Salary** – The resolution was presented to the board for the Clerk’s 2023-24 fiscal year salary. The resolution reflected an increase of 1.66% over last year.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #03-08-23 A. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, DURFEE, PHILBRICK. ABSTAIN – HICKMOTT. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – SELINSKI. RESOLUTION CARRIED.

**Resolution #03-08-23 B – Treasurers Salary** – The resolution was presented to the board for the Treasurer’s Salary for the fiscal year 2023-2024. The resolution reflects an increase of 1.78% over last year.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #03-08-23 B. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, DURFEE. ABSTAIN – PHILBRICK. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – SELINSKI. RESOLUTION CARRIED.

**Resolution #03-08-23 C – Supervisor Salary** – The resolution was presented to the board for the Supervisor’s Salary for the fiscal year 2023-2024. The resolution reflects an increase of 1.96% over last year.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #03-08-23 C. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, DURFEE. ABSTAIN – MORRIS. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – SELINSKI. RESOLUTION CARRIED.

**Resolution #03-08-23 D – Trustee Salary** – The resolution was presented to the board for the Trustee’s Salary for the fiscal year 2023-2024. The resolution reflects No increase over last year.

**West Branch Township  
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MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #03-08-23 D. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, MORRIS. ABSTAIN – DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – SELINSKI. RESOLUTION CARRIED.

**Sewer Rate Increase** – The board was given information by Supervisor Morris about the need and why the sewer rates would need to be increased by at least .25 this upcoming July. This is because the overall costs will be increased on the township and this cost needs to be covered by raising the rates.

MOTION BY MORRIS AND SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE .25 INCREASE IN SEWER RATES EFFECTIVE IN THE 2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER BILLING. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE, AND MORRIS. ABSENT – SELINSKI. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Q4 Budget Adjustments** – Clerk Hickmott presented the board with budget adjustments for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the 2022-2023 fiscal year. The budget adjustment totaled \$24,105. All of the adjustments that needed to be made were \$5,000 or less.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE 4<sup>TH</sup> QUARTER BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS TOTALING \$24,105. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE, AND MORRIS. ABSENT – SELINSKI. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**1 Year Marijuana review** – The board had an open discussion on thoughts and how things have gone over the past year since the township board had authorized by way of ordinance for Recreational Marijuana facilities. The conversations and discussion including how business has been, the facilities community engagement, and the overall revenues that have been brought in from the facilities over the course of the past year.

NO MOTIONS WERE MADE ON THE ABOVE SUBJECT.

**Transfer of Fund to Road Fund** – The board had reviewed how much was spend on roads over the past fiscal year and how much was left over in budgeted amount for roads this past fiscal year which was around \$59,000. The board had some discussion on how much should be transferred and talked about the overall costs of road projects in the future.

MOTION BY HICKMOTT AND SECOND BY DURFEE TO TRANSFER \$40,000 TO THE TOWNSHIPS ROAD FUND. ROLL CALL - YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE, AND MORRIS. ABSENT – SELINSKI. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE ADDITIONAL.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY PHILBRICK TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 6:49 pm

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk

**West Branch Township  
Budget Workshop / Special Meeting  
March 14th, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

**Board Members Present:** Jim Morris, Diane Philbrick, Jeremy Hickmott, Mike Selinski and Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** Three Reps. from Wise Guys Farms

**Absent:** NONE

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.  
VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY -  
NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** NONE

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – NONE

**Clerk** – Hickmott just mentioned about the township hall having some WI-FI issues but that it was in process of being repaired.

**Supervisor** – Morris gave the board an update regarding the board of review that had been going on the past couple days at the township hall.

**Treasurer** – Reported that she is getting everything resolved and settled out with the county treasurer regarding taxes.

**Trustee Selinski** – Nothing too much to report at the time of the meeting.

**Trustee Durfee** – Mentioned he had received a positive comment regarding the opening of the Woods marijuana facility in the township.

**Correspondence:** NONE

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Proposed Budget 2023-2024 Review** – The board was presented with proposed budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal years. There were generally no questions about anything except for an unusual entry for the Refunds and Reimbursements in the Water and Sewer fund. Philbrick and Hickmott said they would check into why that fund amount had changed so much. It was also noted by the board that this would be the third year that the township is on pace to have revenues exceed expenditures and the 1<sup>st</sup> year for West Branch township that revenues are on pace to exceed \$500,000 in general operating revenues.

**Township Fee Schedule Review** – Hickmott presented the board with the Fee schedule for the 2023-2024 fiscal years which should be reviewed at least once a year. He noted that there were no increases in fees from last year as it was not needed this year. Philbrick did ask if the fees for things that require

meetings like site plan reviews and special use permits are covering the expenditures of those meetings. Hickmott mentioned that it was covering those costs and then some.

MOTION BY MORRIS AND SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE FEE SCHEDULE FOR THE UPCOMING FISCAL YEAR AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE, SELINSKI AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**Recreational Marijuana License** – Clerk Hickmott presented the board with information regarding the status and availability of the 2<sup>nd</sup> available recreational marijuana license in the township. He had mentioned that one of the previous applicants who was awarded a provisional license had not followed through on the project and that their provisional silence had expired along with their site plan review and special use permit.

Hickmott continued on by laying out the procedure for how the township is supposed to handle available license which he stated that all pending application get reviewed first. If there are no other applicants then the township would need to decide when and if to reopen the application window.

The township did have one application that was pending at the time of the meeting and that was Wise Guy Farms from one year ago (Applications for license do not expire according to ordinance). The Reps. from Wise Guy Farms gave a brief overview of their proposed facility in the township. It was also echoed that the townships decision to issue them a provisional license is based off the information submitted to the township with the original application.

MOTION BY MORRIS AND SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE PROVISIONAL RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA FACILITY LICENSE TO WISE GUY FARMS FOR THEIR LOCATION AT 2814 COOK ROAD. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, SELINSKI, DURFEE, AND MORRIS. NAY – PHILBRICK. MOTION CARRIED.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE**

**PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE ADDITIONAL.**

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY DURFEE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 1:23 pm

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk

**West Branch Township  
Public Hearing / Special Meeting  
March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

**Public Hearing** - Supervisor Morris opened the public meeting as 5:00 pm. Two Members of the public were in attendance and the public hearing.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY MORRIS TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 5:03 PM. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT - NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**Special Meeting** - called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 5:04 pm

**Board Members Present:** Jim Morris, Diane Philbrick, Jeremy Hickmott, Mike Selinski and Mike Durfee.

**Public Present :** Arleen Samuel and Peggy Greer

**Absent:** NONE.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** March 9<sup>th</sup> 2022 Board Meeting and March 14<sup>th</sup> 2023 Special Meeting.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE MARCH 9<sup>TH</sup> 2023 MEETING MINUTES AND THE MARCH 14<sup>TH</sup> 2023 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES. VOICE VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**REPORTS:** NONE

**CORRESPONDENCE:** NONE

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Resolution #03 -22-2023 A – General Appropriations Act** – Clerk Hickmott presented to the board the general appropriation act (budget) for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. He and Treasurer Philbrick did point out a few items to the board of interest including the fund balances that the township has and mentioned that overall the township from a budget stand point is in good condition, it was also mentioned that this is projected to be the first year that the Township’s Revenues are expected exceed \$500,000.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #03-22-2023 A – GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT. ROLL CALL: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. RESOLUTION PASSED.

**Peach Lake Road Project (South of M-55)** – The board was presented with information from the Ogemaw County Road Commission on 55/45 split for 1 mile long overlay on Peach lake road from Grey Road up to Gallagher Road. Morris had mentioned that this portion of the road was in pretty poor condition and that the township’s total cost would be in the amount of \$38,153.70. Hickmott also mentioned that this would be coming out of the next fiscal years road money.

MOTION BY SELINSKI AND SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE ROAD PROJECT FOR PEACH LAKE ROAD OVERLAY FROM GREY TO GALLAGHER TOTALING \$38153.70. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE  
MOTION CARRIED

**Public Comments** – Members of the public in attendance had questions and comments regarding the road project next year in the Downtown Area of the City of West Branch. They also had questions and comments regarding the ongoing issues and challenges regarding the proposed Peach Lake Special Assessment district and what the next course of actions maybe.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY MORRIS TO ADJOURN THE SPECIAL MEETING.  
VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE.  
MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 5:37 pm

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
April 12th, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

**Board Members Present:** Jim Morris, Diane Philbrick, Jeremy Hickmott, Mike Selinski and Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** County Commissioner Rodger Mayhew.

**Absent:** NONE

MOTION BY SELINSKI, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE MARCH 22<sup>ND</sup> PUBLIC HEARING / SPECIAL MEETING AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** NONE

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – Rodger Mayhew gave the board information regarding things that county has been addressing including the fact that the county has a \$500,000 plus deficit currently, eliminating outdated and unenforceable ordinances, a standard of conduct policy, and also discussion about housing out of Ogemaw county inmates at the County Jail.

**Clerk Hickmott** - provided the board with information about a few zoning issues on the business loop are being addressed including issues with an individual not getting proper permits and also sign issues. He also reported that the new and updated DDA banners are in and should be installed before the end of the month.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY PHILBRICK TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$30,043.51 (the bills showed \$68,891.87 but that was because of a re-issue check to the city of West Branch that was lost in the mail the previous check that was lost was voided). ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELISKI, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor Morris** - didn't have too much to report but did give an update that he has been in contact with the road commission regarding township road projects and a few issues that have been brought to his attention by citizens as well. He also mentioned that things have been working well at the township transfer station.

**Treasurer Philbrick** – gave the board information regarding the installation of the new meters and how things have been going with utility billing and the reading for that.

**Trustee Selinski** - Mentioned that he had reviewed the accounts and that all was in order and also that he was looking at bank ratings just considering the issues with Banks across the country right now.

**Trustee Durfee** – gave information to the board regarding the vandalism and Graffiti that had been recently done to the little league field in the City of West Branch. He also mentioned that the City police department was investigating and pursuing those who had done the damages.

**Correspondence:** PAR-PLAN Newsletter and S.T.I.N.G Annual Report (Both Available at the Hall)

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**S.T.I.N.G Contribution** – The board was presented information from the S.T.I.N.G Narcotics Group regarding their work and what they have done for the region in terms of removing and dealing with drug activity. This information was discussed by the board and also the information included a contribution invoice totaling \$3,630.20 which was the same amount that the organization requested from the township board last fiscal year as well.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE TO CONTRIBUTION REQUEST FROM S.T.I.N.G TOTALING \$3630.20. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, SELISNKI, DURFEE, PHILBRICK. AND HICKMOTT. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Point Broad Band / Twp. Phone Upgrades** – The board was presented with information and a cost estimate for upgrading the phones and Internet at the township hall for the Clerk, Treasurer, and Supervisor at a total cost of \$1,075.00 and a monthly cost of \$171.97. It was also mentioned that the monthly cost would be about \$60.00 per month less than the townships current provider.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY DURFEE TO THE COST ESTIMATE WITH POINT BROAD BAND. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELISNKI, DURFEE, AND PHILBRICK. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Peach Lake Study** – The board was presented information regarding the potential for a Peach Lake Study to address potential problems and also potential solutions that might be ongoing in Peach Lake. The board had lengthy discussion on the needs of the study, what the potential outcomes could be, and depending on the outcomes of the study what that would ultimately lead to and how much further township involvement or costs could result from the study.

It was also mentioned that further communications and involvement from the State of Michigan and the DNR / DEQ should be pursued more before the township takes additional actions on the subject.

MOTION BY HICKMOTT, SECOND BY DURFEE TO TABLE TO POTENTIAL PEACH LAKE STUDY TILL JUNE 2023. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELISNKI, DURFEE, AND PHILBRICK. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**BS&A Updates / Upgrades** – The board was presented with significant information regarding the updating and expansion of the township involvement with BS&A. Clerk Hickmott provided the board with information regarding why the updates and expansion are needed. Information included that fact that the townships General ledger and account payable programs are in a system currently that is becoming harder and hard to support. It was also mentioned that the townships current payroll program will become outdated at the end of May 2023.

Information was also provided about the benefits of creating a Building and Zoning section in the BS&A program as well that will make zoning permit logging, ordinance violations, and follow-ups on projects



**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
April 12th, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

much easier to track and research if citizens have questions and will make accessibility by other much easier as well.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE ESTIMATE PROVIDED BY BS&A FOR THE SYSTEM UPGRADES AND CREATION TOTALING \$74,750.00. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI, DURFEE, AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Ogemaw County MTA Dues** – The board was presented with a request from the Michigan Township Association Ogemaw County Division for annual dues to be members of the newly re-established organization. The board did have some discussion on the benefits of the program and what the township would get out of being members.

MOTION BY SELINSKI, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO JOIN THE OGEMAW MTA AT THE \$250.00 RATE. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI, DURFEE AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**2023 Brine Program** – The board had reviewed the annual Brine agreement with the Ogemaw County Road Commission. It was mentioned that this is typically a budgeted item by the township and that the township usual goes for a full treatment of all road before the major summer holidays.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL BRINE AGREEMENT WITH THE ROAD COMMISSION. ROLL CALL - YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, DURFEE, SELINSKI AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE ADDITIONAL.

MOTION BY HICKMOTT, SECOND BY MORRIS TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 7:06 pm

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

**Board Members Present:** Jim Morris, Diane Philbrick, Jeremy Hickmott, Mike Selinski and Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** County Commissioner Brenda Simmons.

**Absent:** NONE

MOTION BY SELINSKI, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH THJE CHANGES FOR ADDING RESOLUTION 05-10-2023 MPL FOR THE MASTER PLAN. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELISNKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY DURFEE, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE APRIL 12<sup>TH</sup> 2023 MEETING MINUTESAS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** NONE

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – Brenda Simmons gave the board an update regarding things at the county which included details of transportation authority appointments, information regarding the airport facilities, USDA information regarding the Game refuge, and details about a billing issue regarding the sheriff's office and the purchase of a new Tahoe.

**Clerk Hickmott** - provided the board with information about ongoing zoning issues and concerns including those with landscaping finishing at the Starbucks plaza, finishing work at the Woods and issues at Solutions Physical Therapy. Information was also provided about things the DDA has had going on and information regarding the Audit.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$68,229.10 ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELISKI, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor Morris** – Provided the board with information regarding a few road projects that are currently on going in the township. Including work on Finerty road, gravel and ditching project and the fact that the contract for the Peach lake road work has been signed but the project has not gotten started yet.

**Treasurer Philbrick** – gave the board information regarding a water and sewer issue at the old mulch manufacturing property. She mentioned that they had an ongoing leak in the building to piping issues within the building. Information was also provided on her recommendations for a potential forgiveness of a portion of the bill. It was mentioned as well that the board should not wave everything as property owners need to maintain their own properties to avoid these types of issues.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY MORRIS TO FORGIVE 350,000 GALLONS ON SEWER IN Q1 AND 14,000 GALLONS ON SEWER IN Q2 AND THE DEBT RETIREMENT AND BILL FOR

THE WATER THAT WAS USED. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELISKI, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Trustee Selinski** – provided the board with information regarding ditching issues and culvert issues in the Brookside area. He also mentioned that the accounts are in order and everything is fine except for the accounts remaining very high. Treasurer Philbrick mentioned that she is planning soon to start looking at other options for the high balance including CD's.

**Trustee Durfee** – had little to report at the time of the meeting.

**Correspondence:** National Peace Officer's Day Info.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Updates to Township Master Plan / Resolution 05-10-2023 MPL** – The board was presented with a final draft of the West Branch Township Master Plan for 2023 - 2028. The board had a lengthy discussion about the accuracy of some of the history portions and its relevance overall. It was also mentioned that in the document that the most important part is section 2 which is the leading reason to have a master plan because it points to the townships future and direction. Also the costs of the plan overall was discussed as it seemed high just for a plan, but it was also mentioned that the township is required to have an accurate and updated master plan under zoning enabling laws.

MOTION BY HICKMOTT, SECOND BY SELINSKI TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 05-10-2023 MPL FOR THE MASTER PLAN. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELISNKI, DURFEE, AND PHILBRICK. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Right of First Refusal** – The board was presented information from Clerk Hickmott regarding the right of first refusal regarding Tax Foreclosed property. Hickmott told the board where the only piece of property was in the township. It was discussed about a need or any potential reason why the township would like to acquire the property. After some discussion the board decided to not use its first right of refusal on the property.

MOTION BY HICKMOTT, SECOND BY MORRIS TO NOT EXCERSIZE OUT FIRST RIGHT OF REFUSAL ON THE TAX FORECLOSED PROPERTY. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELISNKI, DURFEE, AND PHILBRICK. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**West Branch Area Fireworks** – The board was presented with the permit for the Annual West Branch Area Fireworks show located in the field to the North of Wal-Mart. Hickmott mentioned that the show is planned for July 8<sup>th</sup> 2023 with a rain date of July 9<sup>th</sup>.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE WEST BRANCH ARAE FIREWORKS PERMIT FOR JULY 8<sup>TH</sup> 2023. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE AND MORRIS. ABSTAIN – HICKMOTT (due to organizational involvement in the event) NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

NONE

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE ADDITIONAL.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY DURFEE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 6:52 pm

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

**Board Members Present:** Diane Philbrick, Jeremy Hickmott, Mike Selinski and Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** Nine Citizens in Attendance & County Commissioner Rodger Mayhew

**Absent:** James Morris

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT - MORRIS. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE MAY 10<sup>th</sup> 2023 MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA - HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – MORRIS. MOTION CARRIED

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** Available on Twp. Website

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – Not Much to report at the time of the meeting.

**Clerk Hickmott** - provided the board with information about ongoing zoning issues but overall things have been pretty smooth sailing for the month. Hickmott also provided some details about out of the ordinary bills for the past month.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY SELINSKI TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$193,184.20 ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – MORRIS. MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor Morris** – Not at the Meeting for the Month.

**Treasurer Philbrick** – gave the board information regarding that status and completion of the Township Audit for the past fiscal year. She had also mentioned that taxes will be going out in July.

**Trustee Selinski** – He also mentioned that the accounts are in order and everything is fine except for the accounts remaining high.

**Trustee Durfee** – had little to report at the time of the meeting.

**Correspondence:** NONE

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**DNR “Spark Grant” / Resolution DNR-SPRK 6-14-23** – The board was presented with a resolution of support for a DNR Spark Grant for the West Branch Commons project on the former West Branch steel property. Hickmott provided the board with details for what the “Spark Grant” is and what the funding

would be used for at the site. Hickmott also mentioned that the application can be upwards of One (1) million dollars in funding for the project.

MOTION BY DURFEE, SECOND BY PHILBRICK TO SUPPORT THE RESOLUTION AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - HICKMOTT, SELISNKI, DURFEE, AND PHILBRICK. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – MORRIS. RESOLUTION APPROVED.

**Ogemaw County Historic Society** – Two representatives from the Ogemaw County Historical society gave the board information about what they do and current projects and activities they have ongoing. They also thanked West Branch Township for being members of the Ogemaw County historical society.

**Made In America Store / Sean Gilbert** – Sean Gilbert gave the township board information regarding his store location the West Branch Outlet Mall. He also gave the board some detailed information regarding his products and just overall information regarding the American Flag.

**Peach Lake Study** – The board was presented information from two months ago regarding the tabled subject of the Peach Lake Study. There was a good bit of board discussion regarding the responsibilities of the township, the current condition of the lake, what the possible solutions could be in the future, and how the lake study would be funded.

The board also received public comments and photos of the lake and its current condition. The photos showed details of the algae areas and their locations. The public brought up comments regarding algae and also some treatment options that they have currently been engaged in to try and resolve the issues.

MOTION BY DURFEE, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE PEACH LAKE STUDY FOR PEACH LAKE. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA - HICKMOTT, SELISNKI, DURFEE, AND PHILBRICK. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – MORRIS. MOTION CARRIED.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

NONE

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE ADDITIONAL.

MOTION BY HICKMOTT, SECOND BY DURFEE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

**Board Members Present:** Diane Philbrick, Jeremy Hickmott, Mike Selinski and Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** Eleven Citizens in Attendance

**Absent:** NONE

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELISNKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT - NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY DURFEE, SECOND BY SELINSKI TO APPROVE THE JUNE 14<sup>th</sup> 2023 MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** Available on Twp. Website

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – Not Present at the Board Meeting

**Clerk Hickmott** - provided the board with information about ongoing zoning issues within the township in particular in the business loop area including issues with temporary signs and also ongoing issues with clear vision areas along Austin Way. He also detailed certain zoning regulations regarding setbacks and what the setbacks are in certain areas on the township.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$25,453.13. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELISKI, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor Morris** – Was planning to meet with the Ogemaw County road commission regarding road improvement projects and what should be getting prioritized in the future. Hickmott also reminded him to have the capital improvement plan there as a bit of a guide as well.

**Treasurer Philbrick** – mentioned that the latest Property Tax bills have been sent out and that some of them have already started coming back to the township.

**Trustee Selinski** – He also mentioned that the accounts are in order and everything is fine except for the accounts remaining high. He also requested that the township look into the costs compared to other communities regarding the price for food trucks to set up in the township.

**Trustee Durfee** – had little to report at the time of the meeting but did mention he had to step out early to attend an additional meeting that evening.

**Correspondence:** NONE

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** The Operator of the Made in the U.S.A Store Mr. Gilbert started off the public comment portion with a prepared statement regarding his feelings regarding the recent issues he has had

with the township zoning and Planning department regarding signs and USA Flags in the right of way zones along roads. Mr. Gilbert's speech included personal feelings regarding why he felt he was being "singled out" and that he felt this was nothing more than the actions of a "power hungry Individual". His statement continued on with other information he felt was correct and he felt was truthful (although still violated zoning regulations).

As Mr. Gilbert's statements were continuing the he ran over is allotted 3 minutes that the public is required to have under state laws. He was asked several times to stop so the board could get other comments and continue on with the township board meeting. Mr. Gilbert refused and the Township Supervisor as Chairperson of the meeting stepped away from the table to call the non-emergency line to the police to have Mr. Gilbert removed from the meeting for disrupting the board's process and the work of the board to continue the meeting. The City of West Branch Police was first to show and the Ogemaw County Sherriff's office was second to respond. The board asked the officers to have him at least escorted out of the building so the board could proceed with the meeting.

Additional public comment also was relating to the flag / zoning issue and what had just happened at the board meeting.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Audit Review** – The board was presented with information from Cindy Scott with Stephenson and Company regarding the townships Audit that was no complete at the time of the meeting. The information that was covered including township expenditures, income, and also reviewed the accounting information for the West Branch Township DDA. Some items that were noted but the audit was the higher fund balance that the township has. The Auditor noted that the township should start planning on projects or things to maybe drive the fund balance down a bit.

**Estimate for the Cemetery Roads** – The township board was presented with an estimate from Hodgins asphalt to have the roads re-built and repair in the cemetery at a cost of \$12,750.00. The repairs would include rebuilding the base of the roads, removing of sod and grass, and new stone. It was noted that this project would drive planned expenditures for repairs and maintenance at the cemetery a little over budget.

**MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE ESTIMATE FOR THE ROADS REPAIR IN THE CEMETERY TOTALING \$12,750.00. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELISNKI, DURFEE, AND PHILBRICK. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.**

**Temp. Sign Removal Policy** – There was very limited discussion on this topic considering what had transpired just a short time prior regarding signs and there locations in areas.

**MOTION BY HICKMOTT, SECOND BY MORRIS TO TABLE THE TEMP. SIGN POLICY FOR AT LEAST ONE MONTH. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELISNKI, DURFEE, AND PHILBRICK. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.**

**Utility Billing Issue** – Treasurer Philbrick had given the board information regarding a utility bill request from Ogemaw Lanes to have the bill reduced over water issues they were having at their location. It was mentioned that we had no other issues with businesses even in the surrounding areas of that business and that Mike Kilackey with water and sewer also mentioned that there were no other issues. It was the general consensus of the board that they should consider using their water forgiveness request at a future date or if they have a future problem.



**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**NONE**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was some additional comments regarding the Mr. Gilbert / Zoning issues. A rep. from the veteran's affairs also had comments regarding what it would take to potentially change the zoning regulations to allow or make this situation workable for everyone.

State Rep. Mike Hoadley also introduced himself and said he was visiting area government offices to see how things are as Lansing is currently on legislative break.

Two residents also inquired about the status of Peach Lake. The board had mentioned that a lake study is currently in process and that there should be people on the lake in late July of Early August to start work. They thanked the board for the continued work on the lake issues.

**MOTION BY HICKMOTT, SECOND BY MORRIS TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:18 pm

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

**Board Members Present:** James Morris, Jeremy Hickmott, Mike Selinski, Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** One Citizen in Attendance

**Absent:** Philbrick

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.  
VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT - PHILBRICK. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY SELINSKI, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE JULY 12<sup>TH</sup> 2023 MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – PHILBRICK. MOTION CARRIED

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** Available on Twp. Website

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – Commissioner Mayhew gave the township board information regarding updates that the county is looking into for the lighting system at the county building and power system upgrades at the county building. Commissioner Scott was also in attendance to give the township board an update regarding the township interest in acquiring the Ogemaw Hills Recreation facility. He had mentioned that a survey is going to one of the first steps and that needs to either be done or a correct survey needs to be found.

**Clerk Hickmott** - provided the board with information about ongoing zoning issues within the township but that overall compliance has been pretty well over the past month. He had also mentioned that things have been generally pretty smooth sailing for the month.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY SELINSKI TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$90,869.15.  
ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – PHILBRICK. MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor Morris** – gave the board an overall review of some of the road projects that have been going on in the township over the past couple months. He also updated the board that the cemetery road improvements have been completed by Hodgins Asphalt.

**Treasurer Philbrick** – Absent from Meeting.

**Trustee Selinski** – wanted a few updates regarding blight issues in the township and that status of those including a few specific properties and also the status of the finishing issues at the Woods Recreational Marijuana Facility.

**Trustee Durfee** – mentioned that he had been in contact with the Historic society in regards to the history of how Peach Lake had received its name.

**Correspondence:** Ogemaw Historic Society.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Fireworks Permit 626 West State Road** – The township board was presented with an application for the use of commercial grade fireworks located at 626 West State Road. The board had mentioned that this is typically an annual private family event and that the township has approved this same style permit in the past.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE FIREWORKS PERMIT FOR 626 WEST STATE ROAD. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – PHILBRICK. MOTION CARRIED.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Temp. Signs Removal Policy** – There was discussion on the temp sign policy. Hickmott had mentioned that Roscommon County has had this same policy in place for 10 plus years with very little issues. It was also mentioned that this policy will be explained further online with diagrams for the citizens to use and read. It was also mentioned that this policy will be greatly helpful during election season when signs are packed in areas and with forgotten garage sale signs.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE TEMP. SIGN POLICY AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – PHILBRICK. MOTION CARRIED.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Commission Scott had spoken and had questions regarding how citizens and individuals could get involved in local government and boards. Hickmott showed him, the board and the audience in attendance on the screen the guide to participation that the township adopted earlier in the years and the applications to fill out. Hickmott mentioned that anyone and everyone are free to fill out and application and return or email it back to the township.

Mr. Gilbert had comments regarding his desire to become more involved in local government and also gave a brief apology regarding his actions at the July West Branch Township Board Meeting.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 6:28 pm

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

**Board Members Present:** James Morris, Jeremy Hickmott, Mike Selinski, Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** Two Citizens in Attendance

**Absent:** NONE

MOTION BY DURFEE, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT - NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 9<sup>TH</sup> 2023 MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – PHILBRICK. MOTION CARRIED

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** Available on Twp. Website

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – None present.

**Clerk Hickmott** - provided the board with information about ongoing things with the West Branch Twp. DDA. He also mentioned the continued work in regards to the zoning amendments and work with the Redevelopment Ready program. Hickmott also gave the board information regarding the status of the Lake study for Peach Lake. Hickmott also mentioned that the fireworks has been working in conjunction with “The Woods” of West Branch on a flag project for the light poles down the business loop. The Woods has offered to help with the costs associated with it and also to help with the proper installation of the flags.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$60,430.22. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor Morris** – gave the board an overall review of some of the road projects that have been going on in the township over the past couple month including the Finerty road project. He did have a couple citizens asking if the road is going to be stripped as well.

**Treasurer Philbrick** – Gave the board information about the upcoming start of the townships transition to the BS&A program which will be starting September 19<sup>th</sup>. She also mentioned that’s taxes have been coming in and that the last day without penalty is September 14<sup>th</sup> 2023.

**Trustee Selinski** – provided the board with information he received from the lawn care contract regarding interest in mowing around the poles on the East side of the business loop where there is no pathway. It was mentioned that in some of those spots on that side of the road that there is a 15 foot gradient change in spots.

**Trustee Durfee** – mentioned that he has been in contact with Point Broadband regarding the installation of the Township broadband that was funded by ARPA Funding. He mentioned to the board that it may be

starting in October 2023 (which is later than planned originally but the company has gone through some changes in ownership).

**Correspondence:** NONE

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Sean Gilbert Information** – The township board received a request from Sean Gilbert to be placed on the agenda but no additional representation or information was provided during the board meeting.

NO ACTION WAS NEEDED ON ABOVE SUBJECT.

**Ordinance 57 (Zoning Amendments)** – The board was provided ordinance 57 which was group of zoning amendments which included business loop setback requirement changes, Solar Farm size requirements, street tree planning, and outdoor seating standards. It was mentioned that this has been worked on and reviewed by the planning commission for the past couple months and also helps to progress the township in the Redevelopment Ready program.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY SELINSKI TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 57 AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – HICKMOTT, DURFEE, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, AND MORRIS. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Ogemaw County Land Division Agreement** – The Board was presented with a land division agreement with Ogemaw County for the land division work they do in conjunction with township zoning. Hickmott mentioned that while the county and the township already work together on land divisions that it was brought to the attention of county equalization that there needs to be a formal agreement between the township and county to continue this. It doesn't change anything that is currently happening it basically is just an agreement to have on file with the county.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE COUNTY LAND DIVISION AGREEMENT. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Policy and Procedures (10 Year Update)** – The board was presented with a copy of the townships policy and procedure handbook that has been updated. It was mentioned that very little had actually changed in the policy and procedure manual but updates needed to be added to including the Tax abatement policy and the temp sign removal policy.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE UPDATED POLICY AND PROCEEDURE MANUAL WITH THE CHANGES AND ADDITIONS. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Joint Development Related boards meeting** – The township board discussed a date for having a development related board meeting which will consist of the DDA, Planning Commission, and the Township board. The planned date would be for October 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM in conjunction with the DDA's monthly meeting. This meeting is required for the Certification in the Redevelopment Ready Program.

The board had generally decided that the date of October 19<sup>th</sup> 2023 at 6:00 PM at the West Township Hall.

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Two citizens were present just wanting to know about the status of the Peach Lake Study. Hickmott mentioned that the report will be out next week and it will be available online shortly after that.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 6:31 pm

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 DRAFT MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

**Board Members Present:** James Morris, Jeremy Hickmott, Diane Philbrick, Mike Selinski, Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** Ten Citizens in Attendance

**Absent:** NONE

MOTION BY SELINSKI, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.  
VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT - NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY DURFEE, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup> 2023 MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** Available on Twp. Website

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – Commissioner Mayhew was present and gave the board some brief information regarding the county budget and also some information regarding pay increases for the county elected officials.

**Clerk Hickmott** - provided the board with information about ongoing things with the West Branch Twp. DDA and ongoing things regarding township zoning administration. Outside the regular items things have been generally quiet regarding the Clerk's department.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$42,474.64. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor Morris** – gave the board information regarding the installation of the new township dual air conditioning and heating system. This will help to increase the efficiency of the hall and also help to lower the overall costs of the heating and cooling of the building. The cost of the system updates are a little less than \$9,100.

**Treasurer Philbrick** – Gave the board information that about 90% of the property taxes had come in to the township.

**Trustee Selinski** – provided the board with information regarding the status of the township bank accounts and that all items are in order and that the accounts are in good condition.

**Trustee Durfee** – mentioned that he has been in contact with Point Broadband regarding the installation of the Township broadband that was funded by ARPA Funding but they had not provided any kind of update as of yet.

**Correspondence:** NONE

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Meeting Updates** – The board was provided an additional reminder of the upcoming joint development related board meeting which was scheduled for October 19<sup>th</sup> 2023 at the township hall at 6:00 PM and also the informational gather regarding the Peach Lake study which is planned for November 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM at the West Branch Township Hall.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Q1 and Q2 Budget Adjustments** – The Board was presented with information regarding the budget adjustments for the first and second quarters of the townships fiscal year. It was mentioned that there were only three adjustments for the first half of the year which is pretty good for being half way through the fiscal year. The total adjustments totaled \$17,200 which came from audit fees, dues and subscriptions, and repairs and maintenance costs at the cemetery.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS TOTALING \$17,200 AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Two citizens were present just wanting to know about the status of the Peach Lake Study. Two additional citizens were also present regarding options for compost in the township so yard waste items don't need to be burned, lastly an additional citizen brought up issues regarding Facebook posts and information provided on the townships Facebook page and felt some of the information may be targeted posts. The last citizen did provide the township board with additional correspondence for the township board to review and for it to be added to the township records that are kept at the hall.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk



**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
November 8th, 2023 MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

**Board Members Present:** James Morris, Jeremy Hickmott, Diane Philbrick, Mike Selinski, Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** One Citizen in Attendance

**Absent:** NONE

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY SELINSKI TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT - NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 11<sup>TH</sup> 2023 MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

MOTION BY DURFEE, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 19<sup>TH</sup> 2023 JOINT DEVELOPMENT RELATED BOARDS MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS:** Available on Twp. Website

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – None Present at Board Meeting.

**Clerk Hickmott** - provided the board with information about ongoing things with the West Branch Twp. DDA which included compliments pertaining to the flags on the Business Loop, information about the Christmas Decorations going up next week weather permitting, and all of the recent poles that have been hit will be covered by insurance. He also mentioned continued work with ordinance violations and issuance of multiple zoning permits and parcel divisions on the business loop. It was also mentioned about that status of the budget, the fact that the township will have a newsletter in the winter taxes, and also information was provided about the 9 days of voting agreement with Ogemaw County. Lastly he provided information about recent law changes regarding state takeover of solar and wind developments across the state and that it will void out most local zoning on those subjects.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY SELINSKI TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$112,835.53 ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor Morris** – gave the board information regarding the completion of the new township dual air conditioning and heating system. He also mentioned a few road projects for the upcoming 2024 year and ask the township clerk to contact the road commission regarding four roads in the township that are in need of repairs including Campbell road, Engle Road, Fairview Road, and also the area around the township transfer station.

**Treasurer Philbrick** – Gave the board information that about 90% of the property taxes had come in to the township. Also that the winter taxes will be going out in December and will be due in Feb. of 2024.

She had also mentioned the continued positive support that she receives from BS & A regarding the transitions to the new programs that are being implemented.

**Trustee Selinski** – provided the board with information regarding the status of the township bank accounts and that all items are in order and that the accounts are in good condition and that mercantile Bank remains to have a good banking reputation. He also had questions about interest rates and the amount of interest the township is making on accounts.

**Trustee Durfee** – mentioned that he has received many positive comments regarding the flags along the business loop that were paid for by “The Woods” of West Branch and installed by the West Branch Area Fireworks and volunteers from “The Woods”. He had also brought up information regarding upcoming mileage renewals for both the library and the Transit.

**Correspondence:** NONE

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Meeting Reminders** – The board was provided an additional reminder of the upcoming informational gathering regarding the Peach Lake study which is planned for November 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM at the West Branch Township Hall. Also a reminder was given about the MTA Membership meeting that will be held at the West Branch Township hall on November 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM for the MTA Membership which is also considered training as well for upcoming things.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Transfer Station Roll off** – The Board was presented with information regarding the proposed new roll off service that would be provided at the West Branch Township Transfer Station. The roll off would allow for the township to take larger items. A price sheet was provided to the board members regarding the costs associated with the roll off service and what would be charged. Some of the items that would be able to be taken include building materials, couches, and larger chairs.

MOTION BY DURFEE, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE NEW TOWNSHIP ROLL OFF SERVICE AND PRICE SHEET AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY DURFEE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 6:28 pm

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Date

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Jeremy R. Hickmott, West Branch Township Clerk

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
December 13th, 2023 MINUTES**

Regular meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

**Board Members Present:** James Morris, Jeremy Hickmott, Diane Philbrick, Mike Selinski, Mike Durfee

**Public Present:** Two Citizens in Attendance

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT - NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup> 2023 MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioner** – None Present at Board Meeting.

**Clerk Hickmott** - provided the board with information about ongoing issues regarding a potential deposition regarding the 102 years' worth of history on the peach lake alley / easements. Hickmott also mentioned that the situation in his opinion is complete non-sense and he also mentioned that this issue has costed the tax payers thousands of dollars in legal fees regarding the issue. Hickmott also mentioned that dates have been set for the installation and upgrades to BS& A program updates and upgrades in 2024.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$67,531.98 ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor Morris** – gave the board information regarding the status and how things have been working with the townships new roll off at the transfer station. He also gave the board an update regarding potential road projects that may need to be completed in the upcoming 2024 year. He also mentioned that the transfer station road will need repairs in the future.

**Treasurer Philbrick** – Gave the board information that property taxes had started coming in to the township. She had also mentioned that cell reads for water and sewer have slightly increased but it didn't increase enough to pass it to the system user yet.

**Trustee Selinski** – provided the board with information regarding the status of the township bank accounts and that all items are in order and that the accounts are in good condition and that mercantile Bank remains to have a good banking reputation.

**Trustee Durfee** – mentioned about upcoming ballot measures that will be on the ballot for the upcoming election season in 2024. Some of those measures include the library, school, COOR, and the Ogemaw County Sheriff's office.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Point Broadband Legal** – The township board was presented with a template letter from the Township Legal Counsel to have sent to Point Broadband. The purpose of this letter is to get a project status update

regarding the project agreement that the township entered into with then M-33 access to have Fiber Optic installed across the township. The project has still not been started as of the fall of 2023 and the township entered into the agreement in 2022.

MOTION BY DURFEE, SECOND BY MORRIS TO HAVE TOWNSHIP LEGAL COUNSEL SEND A LETTER REQUESTING AN UPDATE AND STATUS OF THE PROJECT. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Dangerous Building Official** – The Township was presented with a contract from Lapham and associates to be the dangerous building official as needed. The agreement has a cost of \$1,000 per hearing as needed. Hickmott mentioned that the township would recoup the costs for the official as the township addressed the dangerous structure property owner.

MOTION BY DURFEE, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE AGREEMENT WITH LAPHAM AND ASSOCIATES FOR THE DANGEROUS BUILDING OFFICIAL. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Ogemaw Hills Recreation** – The township board was presented a letter / statement to be sent to the Ogemaw County Officials regarding the status of the potential acquisition of the Ogemaw Hills Recreation facility at the corner of Dam Road and M-55. This subject was brought up over the past couple years and Ogemaw County has not provided any kind of update on the township proposal to acquire and maintain the facility as presented.

MOTION BY MORRIS, SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE SENDING A STATEMENT TO OGEMAW COUNTY REQUESTING AN UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THIS PROPOSAL. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Meeting Schedule 2024** – The Township Board was presented the 2024 meeting schedule. The board point out that the date for the November 2024 planning commission needs to be move back one week due to the 2024 election. Also it was noted that the dates may shift for the board of review due to scheduling.

MOTION BY HICKMOTT, SECOND BY SELINSKI TO APPROVE THE MEETING SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO BOARD OF REVIEW ADJUSTMENTS. ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI, DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Reps from the Wise Guy Farms marijuana facility were at the board meeting to give an update regarding their project that is being proposed in the township. They gave an update regarding a bit of a timeline and some of the challenges they have been having.

MOTION BY HICKMOTT, SECOND BY MORRI TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VOICE VOTE ALL YES. MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm