

**West Branch Township  
Regular Meeting  
March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024 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:** Three Citizens in Attendance

MOTION BY MORRIS, 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 DURFEE, SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 14<sup>TH</sup> 2024 MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOICE VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, SELINKSI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE. ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**REPORTS:**

**County Commissioners** – Commissioner Simmons provided the board with some information about the upcoming County wide mileages that will be on the ballot that include library, EMS, Transit, Headlee, and the Animal Shelter. Commissioner Simmons also told the board about a digital program that is in development where citizens will be able to calculate on the Ogemaw Counties Website how much the Headlee millage will cost each resident based of taxable values. There was a lengthy discussion pertaining to the Ogemaw County Jail and also it's was brought up about information regarding supposed trash issues along the business loop which was called into question.

**Clerk Hickmott** - provided the board with information regarding the February Election and the fact that turnout was about 30%. It was also mentioned about the upcoming elections in May and the millage proposals.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK, SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE BILLS TOTALING \$28,730.33 ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA – MORRIS, HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI AND DURFEE. NAY – NONE, ABSENT – NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

**Supervisor Morris** – provided the board with information road construction, some of the projects that were mentioned was an overlay on Peach Lake Road and the fact that the township was waiting on the some other street repair bids.

**Treasurer Philbrick** – Gave the board information that property taxes and the fact that 94% of the winter taxes have come in and that 95% of the summer taxes have come through. She also mentioned that she is 100% balanced with Ogemaw County Treasurer.

**Trustee Selinski** – Mentioned overall the accounts look good and nothing seemed to be out of the ordinary. He did mention that the account balances remain high in the accounts.

**Trustee Durfee** – Gave the board information about some of the things that need to be done at the Ogemaw Hills recreation facility. He also mentioned that he is trying to organize reps. to come in and discuss the May millages in at the April Board meeting.

**Correspondence** – NONE

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Ordinance 58 (Business I-75 Overlay Zoning Changes)** – The board was presented information regarding the proposed zoning ordinance changes for the I-75 Business Loop overlay zone district. Clerk Hickmott went over the major changes which included housing changes, set-back changes, and other standards. It was also mentioned that the Planning Commission has been working on this for several months and also the proposed changes are the last step in the Townships efforts to become a redevelopment ready certified community.

MOTION BY DURFEE AND SECOND BY MORRIS TO ADOPT ORDINANCE 58 AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI DURFEE, AND MORRIS. ABSENT – NONE. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**Ogemaw Hills Recreation Lease Update** – The board was presented with the Ogemaw Hills recreation lease from 1994 and the proposed update to the lease agreement. The details were given about the proposed changes and what the future structure would need to be for all of the township’s Parks and Recreation facilities including the creation of a Township Parks and Recreation advisory board to give suggested improvements to all Parks and Recreation facilities and to provide the board with information about those areas. It was also mentioned that Ogemaw County as the owner of the Ogemaw Hills Recreation Complex would also need to review and sign off on the updates to the lease agreement.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE AND SUPPORT THE CHANGES TO THE LEASE AGREEMENT. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHILBRICK, SELINSKI DURFEE, AND MORRIS. ABSENT – NONE. NAY – NONE MOTION CARRIED.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Salary Resolutions** – The board was presented Salary resolutions for the Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer and Trustees. The board discussed the following salary resolutions and also provided information about the average citizen wage increase standards for 2023 by the United States Department of Labor which states on average that citizen wages increase by over 4 percent in 2023.

Resolution 03-13-2024 A, Clerk Salary – increase 3.82% from previous year for a total of \$19,000 per year annually starting in the 2024 – 2025 Fiscal Year.

MOTION BY DURFEE AND SECOND BY MORRIS TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 03-13-24 A CLERK SALARY RESOLUTION.ROLL CALL: YEA – SELINSKI, DURFEE, PHILBRICK, AND MORRIS. ABSTAIN – HICKMOTT, NAY – NONE, ABSENT – NONE. RESOLUTION – APPROVED.

Resolution 03-13-202 C Supervisor Salary – increase 2.56% from previous year for a total of \$16,000 per year annually starting in the 2024 – 2025 Fiscal Year.

MOTION BY PHILBRICK AND SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 03-13-24 C SUPERVISOR SALARY RESOLUTION.ROLL CALL: YEA – SELINSKI, DURFEE, PHILBRICK, AND HICKMOTT. ABSTAIN – MORRIS, NAY – NONE, ABSENT – NONE. RESOLUTION – APPROVED.

Resolution 03-13-202 B Treasurers Salary – increase 2.33% from previous year for a total of \$17,500 per year annually starting in the 2024 – 2025 Fiscal Year.

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MOTION BY MORRIS AND SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 03-13-24 B TREASURERS SALARY RESOLUTION. ROLL CALL: YEA – SELINSKI, DURFEE, HICKMOTT, AND MORRIS. ABSTAIN – PHILBRICK, NAY – NONE, ABSENT – NONE. RESOLUTION – APPROVED.

Resolution 03-13-202 D Trustees Salary – increase 0% from previous year for a total of \$4,800 per year per trustee annually starting in the 2024 – 2025 Fiscal Year.

MOTION BY MORRIS AND SECOND BY HICKMOTT TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 03-13-24 D TRUSTEES SALARY RESOLUTION. ROLL CALL: YEA – PHILBRICK, HICKMOTT, AND MORRIS. ABSTAIN – DURFEE & SELINSKI, NAY – NONE, ABSENT – NONE. RESOLUTION – APPROVED.

**Par – Plan Grant** – The board was provided information regarding the upcoming Grant cycle through Par Plan for Risk Reduction Grants. These Grants help to cover costs and help to reduce insurance costs for the township by adding additional security measures to the West Branch Township Hall and other properties to help prevent security issues and can help reduce insurance costs.

MOTION BY MORRIS AND SECOND BY DURFEE TO APPROVE THE TOWNSHIP CLERK TO APPLY FOR THE RISK REDUCTION GRANT THROUGH PAR-PLAN ISURANCE. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHIBLRICK, DURFEE, SELINSKI AND MORRIS. ABSENT – NONE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**Fee Schedule Update** – The Board was provided information and a copy of the West Branch Township Fee Schedule being proposed for 2024. There was only slight changes to the schedule which included adding the permit fee cost for the Newly Created Outdoor seating options that is allowed under township zoning ordinance changes in the Business Overlay Zone district and Urban mixed use area. There was also a change to add vendor / peddler permits to the schedule and also increase those fees from \$10.00 per day up to 14 days to \$20.00 per day up to 14 days.

MOTION BY MORRIS AND SECOND BY SELINSKI TO APPROVE THE FEE SCHEDULE AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL: YEA – HICKMOTT, PHIBLRICK, DURFEE, SELINSKI AND MORRIS. ABSENT – NONE. NAY – NONE. MOTION CARRIED

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** A representative with DTE energy gave the board information regarding their willingness to continue to work with the community regarding renewable energy options and also there was some discussion pertaining to recent law changes about state and local control regarding renewable energy projects.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:02 pm