

Palmyra Township
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2024

Meeting called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Supervisor Dave Pixley at the Palmyra Township Hall, 6490 Palmyra Rd.

Members present: Dave Pixley, Mark Crane, Angie Koester, Steve Papenhagen, Chris Whited

Members absent: None

Supervisor Pixley opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Audience Attendance: 30

Motion Crane, support Whited to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion carried**

- Added to New Business: Increase of Burial Opening a & Closing Fees; Treasurer Deputy; Clerk Deputy; Appointment of Board Member to Planning Commission

Public Comment:

- John Turpening, 3555 Ogden Hwy, stated that the Township has dealing with the solar issue for several years, and the Township residents have made it clear that they do not want it. He stated that it is the Board's responsibility to uphold their requests. John requested that the Township join the Foster Swift appeal against the Michigan Public Service Commission's (MPSC) order.
- Tom Creque, 9555 Sylvania Ave., expressed his support for a workable ordinance. As a property owner in the township, stated that he has invested in the township and is looking forward to progress. He also stated that that he does not agree with the Foster Swift appeal.
- Jeff Ehlert, Blissfield Township, stated that he owns property in Palmyra Township and does not want the Township to join the Foster Swift appeal. He said that the appeal does not benefit the tax payers.
- Travis Cagle, 5840 Rau Hwy., believes that the Township needs to better communicate to residents the information concerning the solar issue. He stated that 30 years is a long time for a solar project, and that a development can ruin roads, and will not be profitable for the Township. He is also concerned about how the solar project will be decommissioned in the future.
- Paul Wohlfarth, Riga Township, state that a solar development will be profitable for the Township, especially from EGLE's Renewable Ready Communities Award, which will reward first time projects \$5,000 per megawatt, resulting in an award of approximately \$850,000 to the Township. He stated that costs have greatly increased for farmers, and they are looking for ways to diversify, and one of the options is leasing land for solar. He stated that farming is a legacy for most farmers, and they want to keep their farms in the family.

- Morgan Powell, Rau Hwy, stated that the \$850,000 award will not all go to the Township, but will be divided. She stated that the Palmyra Township residents voted in 2023, and they do not want solar. She requested that the Board support the what the community wants.
- Mike Vogt, outside attorney for RWE, stated that RWE desires to complete the permitting process with Palmyra Township, but if they cannot permit locally, they will go to the MPSC. He asked the Board that they consider the Renewable Energy Ordinances between now and January and amend them to make them workable. He stated that the workable ordinance will allow the Township to maintain control by proposing conditions to make sure the developer complies. He also clarified that the EGLE award solely goes to the Township hosting the development.
- Eileen Creque, 9700 Sylvania Ave, stated that she signed a lease for her property in the Township. She said that when a solar development is at the end of its life, the company that maintains it must remove everything and restore the land as it was before the project. She also said that the taxes on the property with a solar development will greatly increase because the classification of it will be changed to industrial/commercial.
- Lee Andre, Raisin Township, stated that Raisin Township has four solar developments and encouraged people to go and look at them. He also said that it is in the best interest of the Township to work with the developer.
- Trustee Mark Crane read a letter from Rod and Rosemary Skow. They want to know what impact thousands of acres of solar panels would have on the lives of those in the Township. Rod Skow stated in his letter that he spoke to Jason Hayes, an expert on wind and solar at the Mackinaw Center, and what he learned is quite disturbing. Rod said that he is concerned that natural gas, propane, and electricity, which are all reliable sources of energy, are being shut down. He urges the Board and residents to go to the Mackinaw Center website and read the report “Shorting the Great Lakes Grid.”

Minutes & Reports

- Minutes: presented by Clerk Whited
- Financial: report presented by Treasurer Matt Koester
- Fire & EMS: report presented by Chief Paul Rohlan,
- Code Officials:
 - Code Enforcement: report presented by Clerk Whited
 - Building Inspector: report presented by Clerk Whited
 - Electrical Inspector: report presented by Clerk Whited
 - Mechanical Inspector: report presented by Clerk Whited
 - Plumbing Inspector: report presented by Clerk Whited
- Planning Commission: Trustee Mark Crane reported that the Planning Commission met on November 20, 2024, for a public hearing for the Renewable Energy Ordinances. The next meeting is Friday, December 20, 2024, 6:00 pm.
- Drain Commission: Supervisor Pixley reported that he attended the CLSS management meeting on December 4, 2024, and they reviewed the 2025 Budget and the flow rates of the Central Lenawee Sewer System, specifically regarding the prison.
- Park Committee: Clerk Whited reported that she will call for Special Meeting of the park Committee in January to review the revised park plan.

- Roads/Bridges: Supervisor Pixley reported that road projects are complete.
- FOIA Requests: None

Motion Papenhagen, support Crane to approve the November 12, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes, as well as the reports, and place them on file. **Motion carried**

Communications:

- **Land Divisions:** Supervisor Pixley reported that Robert Goetz submitted a Land Division Application for PA0-126-3050-00, 5717 Crocket Hwy.
- **Variance Request:** Clerk Whited reported that the Zoning Board of Appeals granted a variance to Ed Judson for properties PA0-110-4600-00, 4000 Pope Rd. and PA0-110-4900, 6000 Rogers Hwy., which did not meet the lot coverage and minimum lot width requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
- **Road Commission Countywide Township Meeting:** Supervisor Pixley reported that the Road Commission is hosting a countywide township meeting for Board members on Tuesday, January 28, 2025, 5:30 to 8:00 pm. He encouraged Board members to sign up to attend the meeting.
- **Comcast:** Supervisor Pixley reported that Comcast consolidating. He also reported that Comcast has increased the strength of the Xfinity Network.
- **Michigan Railroad:** Supervisor Pixley reported that the Michigan Railroad association will be enhancing the railroad system.

Unfinished Business:

- **Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Articles V, VI, & VII:** Discussion postponed until the February 11, 2025 Regular Meeting
- **FY 2024 AFG Program – Opens Nov. 12th 2024:** Chief Rohlan said that he will review the 2023 AFG Grant proposal that was submitted in the 2023 AFG Grant Program by Lexipol and make the necessary changes to submit by December 20, 2024 for the 2024 AFG Grant Program. The Supervisor and Clerk will assist in submitting the proposal instead of Lexipol.
- **PFD Backup Cameras:** Discussion is postponed until the February 11, 2025 Regular Meeting.
- **PFD Guardian Angel Safety Lights:** Motion Whited, support Koester to allow Chief Paul Rohlan to purchase 6 Guardian Angel Safety Lights at a cost of \$100 each plus shipping. **Motion carried**
- **Township Hall Generator:** Motion Papenhagen, support Crane to contract Adrian Electric & Generator to install a 48 kw Kohler generator in the Township Hall and to purchase the monitoring option as well as the 10-year extended warranty at a cost of \$37,050; and \$27,566 will be covered by the remaining amount of the ARPA fund and \$9,484 will be expensed to the Township Hall Building Improvement Account 101-265-975. **Roll call vote:** Koester – yes; Crane – yes; Papenhagen – yes; Pixley – yes; Whited – yes **Motion carried**

New Business:

- **PTFD –**
 - **Employment applications:** N/A
 - **Probation terminations:** N/A
 - **Resignations:** N/A
- **PFD Nomex Fire Hoods & Gloves:** Motion Pixley, support Koester to allow Chief Paul Rohlan to purchase 20 Nomex fire hoods & 20 pairs of gloves at a cost of \$5,800 plus shipping and the cost will be expensed to the Operating Expense Account. **Motion carried**
- **PA 116 partial Termination Application – Ed Judson:** Motion Pixley, support Whited to accept the Resolution for a Partial Termination of a Farmland Development Rights Agreement for Agreements numbered 46-58757-123146 and 46-41947-123133, approving the partial termination request. **Roll call vote:** Whited – yes; Koester – yes; Papenhagen – yes; Pixley – yes; Crane – yes **Motion carried**
- **Planning Commission Appointments:**
 - Motion Pixley, support Crane to appoint Carmen Loar as a member of the Planning Commission for 3-year term, beginning January 1, 2025. **Roll call vote:** Papenhagen – yes; Whited – yes; Crane – yes; Pixley – yes; Koester – yes **Motion carried**
 - Motion Pixley, support Crane to appoint Vivian Pell as a member of the Planning Commission for a 3-year term, beginning January 1, 2025, **Roll call vote:** Whited – yes; Crane – yes; Pixley – yes; Koester – yes; Papenhagen – yes **Motion carried**
 - Motion Pixley, support Crane to appoint Loran (Dean) Schnieder as a member of the Planning Commission for a 2-year term, beginning January 1, 2025. **Roll call vote:** Koester – yes; Whited – yes; Crane – yes; Pixley – yes; Papenhagen – yes **Motion carried**
- **4204 Rouget Rd., PA0-700-8013-00:** Motion Crane, support Koester to allow Supervisor Pixley to contact attorney Dave Lacasse to have him draft a letter instructing the property owner of 4204 Rouget Rd. to contact the Lenawee County Drain Commission to find a solution for the illegal driveway over the pump system, and the letter is to be sent via registered mail. **Motion carried**
- **2025 Palmyra Township Hardship Resolution:** Motion Whited, support Koester to adopt the 2025 Palmyra Township Hardship Resolution **Roll call vote:** Crane – yes; Whited – yes; Papenhagen – yes; Pixley – yes; Koester – yes **Motion carried**
- **Palmyra Cemetery, Sect D – Brush Removal:** Motion Crane, support Koester to allow Collin Reckner to remove the brush along the fence line that separates Section D of the Palmyra Cemetery from the adjacent 5-acre parcel, as well as removing brush at the river's edge on the 5-acre parcel at no cost to the Township. **Motion carried**
- **Cemetery/Township Groundskeeping:** Motion Crane, support Papenhagen to accept the lawncare/groundskeeping contract submitted by D&C Lawn and Landscaping for \$18,800 - \$15,200 for cemeteries; \$2,750 for Twp Hall and Fire department; and \$850 for park area. **Motion carried**

- **Arbor Professional Solutions Request for Information:** Motion Pixley, support Whited to allow collections of \$1,686 on account #23340848 by Arbor Professional Solutions. **Roll call vote:** Whited – yes; Pixley – yes; Crane – yes; Koester – yes; Papenhagen – yes **Motion carried**
- **2025 Twp Board Regular Meeting Dates:** Motion Pixley, support Whited to schedule the 2025 Township Board regular meetings at 7:00 pm on the following dates:
 - January – No Meeting
 - February 11, 2025
 - March 11, 2025
 - April 8, 2025
 - May 13, 2025
 - June 10, 2025
 - July 8, 2025
 - August – No Meeting
 - September 9, 2025
 - October 14, 2025
 - November 11, 2025
 - December 9, 2025

Motion carried

- **Payment of January Bills:** Motion Papenhagen, support Crane to allow the Clerk to pay the January 2025 Township and Fire Department bills. **Motion carried**
- **Michigan Earned Sick Time Act (ESTA):** Motion Pixley, support Koester to allow the Clerk to contact attorney Dave Lacasse to obtain guidance on the Michigan Earned Sick Time Act. **Motion carried**
- **Road Commission 2025 Annual Meeting:** The Board discussed the dates to attend the Lenawee County Road Commission annual meeting. Supervisor Pixley will check to see if Tuesday, February 18th, 9:00 am or Tuesday, February 25th, 9:00 am are available.
- **Fee Increase for Opening & Closing Burial Sites:** Motion Whited, support Koester to increase the fees for opening/closing cemetery burial sites, and the following fee increase will be effective January 1, 2025: **Motion carried**
 - Open/Close (Monday – Friday) - \$600
 - Open/Close (Saturday/Sunday/Holiday) - \$650
 - Cremains Open/Close (Monday – Friday) - \$300
 - Cremains Open/Close (Saturday/Sunday/Holiday) - \$350
- **Treasurer Deputy:** Treasurer Angie Koester appointed Shelia Southward as Deputy Treasurer.
- **Clerk Deputy:** Clerk Christine Whited appointed Deborah DeSeranno as Deputy Clerk.
- **Appointment of Board Member to Planning Commission:** Motion Koester, support Papenhagen to appoint Trustee Mark Crane as a member of the Planning Commission for a four-year term. **Motion carried**

Bill Payment

Motion Pixley, support Koester to allow the Clerk to pay all Township and PTFD bills. **Motion carried**

Adjournment

Motion Koester, support Whited to adjourn at 10:00 p.m. **Motion carried**

Next Regular Meeting: February 11, 2025