

2021 Norwich Township Minutes Summary

1/13/21

- Due to current orders from the Health Dept., the Hall will not be rented at this time
- Zoning Administrator requested combination of two adjoining parcels. Since the combination met all requirements of Zoning Ordinance, the combination was approved.
- Election Grant information to be submitted by end of January
- Discussion regarding salaries of Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer. Per MTA survey, salaries for these positions were significantly below the average of townships similar in size. Resolutions were passed to increase salaries, which will be reviewed every two years.
- Vacancy on Planning Commission discussed.
- Annual Budget Meeting to be held in March after regular Board Meeting
- Due to the pandemic, resolution passed to allow residents to submit complaints in writing for the March 2021 Board of Review meeting only
- Assessor received approval to use qualified subcontractor to complete duties during 2021
- Snow shoveling and snow plowing contracts to be updated

2/10/21

- Zoning Administrator's report was presented
- Due to the current orders from the Health Dept., it was agreed that the hall would not be rented at this time
- Snow removal contracts were presented for signature
- Diane Schindlbeck, staff member with Rep Jon Bumstead, announced a public meeting at the Stream in Newaygo. A representative of Bill Huizenga's office will also be present. She indicated that if anyone was having trouble with unemployment issues to contact their office. She can also provide information about the Reconnect Program
- Budget line item adjustments were approved
- New line items for the \$5000 election grant were approved for use and amounts to be transferred
- New members to the Planning Commission were announced
- Road repairs will be discussed in the near future
- Luke Cotton from the Conservation District would like to attend a meeting in the spring to discuss gypsy moths treatment

3/10/21

- Discussion regarding rental of townhall tabled until April meeting to see if guidelines ease relative to COVID
- Approval of fire contract for 1 mill yearly for fire protection and \$700.00 for First Responder Service
- After discussion, approval of payment to the Board of Review, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals for the mandatory training

- /Discussion of annual road repair included Hickory, Hungerford Lake Drive from Cypress to Skiberian and north on Skiberian. Cottonwood was also a concern but had been sealed 5 years ago
- Amendments to budget were presented and approved

3/10/21: In a separate meeting, discussion was held regarding the wages of Board members, Assessor and Board of Review. The 2021-22 budget was presented and approved.

4/14/21

- Hall will not be rented until Governor's orders are lifted.
- Cost estimates were provided for repairs to Hungerford Lake Drive and Hickory Drive. Repairs to Hungerford Lake Drive approved. Clarification needed for repairs to Hickory.
- Township Clean Up Day for township residents scheduled for second Saturday of June.
- Newaygo County Household Hazardous Waste scheduled for May 15th at County Road Commission building.

5/12/21

- Discussion of road repairs; 7 Mile west of Elm approved.
- Rule on gatherings has not been changed; hall will not be rented.
- Luke Cotton from the Newaygo County Soil Conservation District briefly discussed invasive species, including gypsy moths. He will contact Commissioner to let him know the interest in a spray program.
- A resident interested in participating in Hipcamp will be directed to Planning Commission.
- A discussion was held regarding Ambulance Service. The current millage will expire at the end of 2021 and so would need to be renewed during election year 2022. Current agreement with Mecosta County is in excess of \$20,000. Life Ambulance would be available at no charge, with response times being slower. First Responder service would still be available from Mecosta County; transportation would be by ambulance.

6/9/21

- Hall can be rented; sanitation fee removed
- Gypsy moth information from Newaygo County Emergency Services and CROP CARE COMPANY LLC, Shelby, MI 231-861-2210 (For additional information select "More" on the Home Page and scroll to Gypsy Moth)
- Discussed the use of security cameras
- Flag to be replaced; old flag will be given to Boy Scouts to dispose of
- HipCamping in the Township was discussed
- The invasive species, Japanese Knotweed, was found near Hungerford Lake and will be reported to Luke Cotton
- Seth Latimer will temporarily take over property visits for Assessor, Stephanie Rockey

7/14/21

- Hall can be rented by residents for a memorial service at no charge. A security deposit will be collected and returned if the hall is cleaned.
- Zoning map dated 2013 will not be posted to the webpage at this time.
- Township cleanup results: 31 Norwich households with 42 trips and 3 dumpsters.
- Norwich Township formed on January 8, 1872; further discussion next month.
- Clerk requested election reimbursement from Big Rapids Schools.
- COVID reimbursement funds available from State
- Discussion regarding removal of dead trees and stumps from cemetery
- Newaygo County Hazard Plan adopted via resolution
- MTA requested Board members' signatures on Principals of Governance to foster trust between Board members and public,

8/11/21

- Discussed 150 year anniversary of the Township
- Clerk has applied for Federal COVID funding
- Big Rapids School District has repaid Township for the cost of the May election

9/8/21

- Board was updated on the progress of the removal of the tree, stumps and debris at the Cemetery
- Hungerford Lake Drive project is still on the Road Commission's fall schedule
- Discussion held regarding the 150 year anniversary of the Township
- Replied to FOIA request and provided them with \$606.00 cost for information they were legally entitled to. They were informed that personal information would be redacted to protect the privacy of the residents. No reply was received.
- Zoning Administrator provided information for three applications in August for barn/garage/pole type buildings.
- Amy Stockwell of the White Cloud Library introduced herself as the new Director and expressed interest in historical information regarding the Township. She provided fliers regarding a Cemetery Walk at the Everett Big Prairie Cemetery.

10/13/21

- Trees at Cemetery have been removed and stumps ground.
- The problems with the work done on Hungerford Lake Drive have been discussed with the Road Commission and will be repaired
- May 21 has been suggested as the date for the 150 year celebration. Dan Wanink is working on details and Phyllis Carlson is putting together historical information,
- Kelly Smith introduced himself as Republican candidate for State Representative
- Supervisor discussed reason or Special Meeting held by the Planning Commission regarding the purchase of Pineview School and use of the building
- FOIA request which will be completed upon receipt of payment

- Malicious emails were discussed
- Budget amendment to the Cemetery Repairs Line Item was approved in order to cover tree removal and additional mowings.
- Budget amendment to the Road Fund was approved in order to cover the road repairs

11/8/21 Special Meeting to Explore Options for Auto Sales Business Request

- Ryan Coffey, MSU Land Use Educator, presented information regarding possible options which could be taken by the Board for a Special Use Permit for an auto sales business
- Option one: Refuse the request for the permit, as it is not allowed within the current Ordinance.
- Option two: Spot zone the property as commercial, which would be illegal and would open the Township up to legal liability.
- Option three: Amend the Master Plan to allow commercial business at the location and then rezone under the "four corners" theory. This would allow commercial businesses to build at this intersection as long as the businesses are allowed in the Township's Ordinance.
- Option four: Amend the Ordinance to add section "k" under Agricultural uses. Then modify the Special Uses portion of the Ordinance to specify any requirements and make the permitted activity limited in scope. The option requires the involvement of the Township's Attorney, as well as public hearings and formal adoption by the Board.
- Mr. Coffey explained that home-based businesses are different than a strictly commercial activity; home-based businesses are allowed in the Ordinance. Those businesses may be taxed as a commercial operation but zoning would not change. Thus a parcel could be taxed as commercial but be zoned as agricultural or residential.
- The Planning Commission will review the options and inform the Board whether they believe the matter should progress forward.

11/10/21

- Discussion regarding 150 year anniversary of Township
- The Special Use application by Todd Dalman had been sent to the Planning Commission, who could not come to an agreement and made no recommendation. Several options were discussed. Motion to deny application was unanimously carried.
- Township received a check for the first half of the COVID grant
- A resident made a complaint regarding neighbors who are living in camper trailers as possible violation of the Township Ordinance. There is an ongoing problem with larceny, drug usage, and police presence. Zoning Administrator and Supervisor will look into Ordinance for violations and what further action can be taken.

Dan Wanink thanked Todd Dalman for cleaning up the property on Elm, even if a permit could not be given for his commercial venture.

12/8/21

- No further action has been taken regarding the 150 year anniversary of the Township
- Zoning Administrator's report was presented
- Officer Molly Kidner was present and introduced herself
- The legality of going onto a resident's property and talking to them regarding current zoning ordinance violations was discussed
- Planning Commission will be working on the Master Plan and would like Ryan Coffey to attend a meeting and give them guidance
- FOIA request has been prepared and charges were discussed
- Clerk to prepare updated contracts for snow shoveling and plowing; mowing contract to be reviewed

