

CALL TO ORDER: Supervisor Julian called the regular meeting of the Kasson Township Board to order at 7:00 pm, with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Members Present: Greg Julian – Supervisor, Dana Boomer - Clerk, Julia Carter – Treasurer, Roger Noonan – Trustee, Tad Carter – Trustee
Member(s) Absent: None
Staff Present: None

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA – The board briefly discussed the agenda. Winter Tax Resolution was added to Financial Reports. **T. Carter moved to approve the agenda as amended. Noonan seconded. All in favor, motion carried.**

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jerry Konczal asked whether anything had been done about the DTE corner as part of the Maple City streetscape project, as that corner is still unsightly. Regarding the camping issue on Tower Road, he is wondering if any additional information has been received on that topic.

Jeff Ross – He is an applicant for an opening on the Planning Commission, and has previously introduced himself and sent in a summary of his experience, including his experience with zoning. He sees changes in the community over the last few years, and looking at the current Zoning Ordinance, some cleanup is needed to the current language. Zoning is a balance between competing interests, between the right of an owner to use their property and the rights of the neighbors to enjoy their property.

MINUTES – The board discussed the minutes from the regular meeting on October 10, 2023. **Noonan moved, J. Carter seconded to approve the October 10, 2023 regular meeting minutes as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**

The board discussed the minutes from the special meeting on November 6, 2023. **Noonan moved, J. Carter seconded to approve the November 6, 2023 special meeting minutes as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**

PERTINENT COMMUNICATIONS: None

PRESENTATION: None

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

- a) **TREASURER'S REPORT:** J. Carter had previously submitted the treasurer's report to the board. Receipts total \$22,567.46. Disbursements \$275,863.58. Balance \$752,643.28.
- b) **BUDGET REPORT:** Boomer presented a budget report for October. The board briefly discussed.
- c) **BILL APPROVAL** – Boomer presented the updated check detail. The board briefly discussed. **Noonan moved to pay the bills as presented; seconded by T. Carter. All in favor, motion carried.**

- d) **DEBIT CARD TRANSFER** – Boomer and J. Carter requested a transfer to the debit card account of \$5,000. The account has been drawn down by purchases, mainly of printing, stamps and office supplies. A full accounting of purchases is available in the office. **Noonan moved to transfer \$5,000 into the debit card account; second by J. Carter. All in favor, motion carried.**

- e) **WINTER TAX RESOLUTION** – J. Carter presented the Winter Tax Resolution – Resolution # 14-2023. Winter Tax is due and payable December 1, 2023 to February 14, 2024 for no penalty. For taxes to be receipted for 2023, payments must be received by December 31, 2023. February 15 through February 29, 2024, Kasson Township assesses a 3% penalty. March 1, 2024 and thereafter, unpaid taxes and additional penalties are payable to the Leelanau County Treasurer only. **Boomer moved to approve the Resolution #14-2023, Winter Tax Resolution, second by Noonan. Roll call vote: J. Carter (yes), T. Carter (yes), Boomer (yes), Noonan (yes), Julian (yes). All in favor, motion carried.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a. **Cemeteries** – Boomer reported no need for discussion on the cemeteries at this time.

- b. **Mining/Gravel Legislation** – Julian reported that the legislature has taken no action on the gravel legislation.

- c. **Sidewalk Ordinance** – No discussion - tabled

- d. **Park Tables & Benches** – Julian has been continuing to work on getting specifications for park tables and benches with Dave Murphy.

- e. **Other Unfinished Business** - None

NEW BUSINESS –

- a. **Hall Events Request – Amy White** – Amy White stated that she is currently teaching yoga at Nature, which is up for sale. She is interested in possibly moving to the Township Hall when Nature sells. She also teaches at the Empire Township Hall, and similar events are put on at the Solon Township Hall. Her current schedule is Monday evenings and Wednesday mornings, but that could be changed to accommodate the schedule of the hall. The board had consensus that White could use the hall, and since her classes are by donation only, there would be no charge.

- b. **Planning Commission and ZBA Appointments** –

Jerry Gretzinger’s term on the Zoning Board of Appeals is expiring. Julian spoke with Gretzinger, who is willing to be reappointed to serve at least through the end of the current case, although he may enter his resignation after that. Julian recommended to re-appoint Jerry Gretzinger to the ZBA. **Noonan moved to reappoint Jerry Gretzinger to the ZBA through November 2026. Boomer seconded. All in favor, motion carried.**

Chuck Schaeffer has submitted his resignation from the Planning Commission effective December 19, 2023. Julian has spoken with Thrasos Eftaxiadis, who remains interested in the position, and Julian recommended that Eftaxiadis be appointed to the Planning Commission. **Boomer moved to appoint Thrasos Eftaxiadis to the Planning Commission, with a term running from January 2024 through November 2025. Noonan seconded. All in favor, motion carried.**

No end date was included when David Noonan was appointed to the Planning Commission. Boomer asked to have an end date of November 2025 set for David Noonan's term. **Boomer moved that David Noonan's term on the Planning Commission run through November 2025. Noonan seconded. All in favor, motion carried.**

Julian and Boomer have interviewed two candidates for the Recording Secretary position. Julian recommends that Marsha Wolf be hired as the Recording Secretary for the Planning Commission and ZBA. The board briefly discussed. Boomer will remain as the acting recording secretary for the ZBA through the conclusion of the Enduro case, and then transfer that position to Wolf. **Noonan moved to hire Marsha Wolf at \$25/hr as Recording Secretary for the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals after the Enduro matter is completed. All in favor, motion carried.**

- c. **Snowmobile Trail** – Julian stated that he has been in contact with the organizers who are working together to re-develop a snowmobile trail in Leelanau County through Kasson Township to Maple City. The group is interested in running the trail down Newman Road past the township hall to property owned by Reith Riley, to avoid traveling Kasson Center Road, and is looking for approval from the Road Commission on this issue. Mark Coe spoke for the Benzie Manistee Snowbirds, who have been maintaining the trails in Benzie, Manistee and Leelanau County for about 40 years. Coe spoke on the past usage of the trails – a substantial amount of revenue is generated in the region by snowmobile users.

Coe stated that the Snowbirds are working with the County Road Commission to use Newman Road. They are concerned about traveling from Newman Road up Kasson Center Road for safety concerns and the number of private driveways in the stretch of Kasson Center between Newman and Pierce Roads. Coe covered the insurance coverage for the trail. Snowmobiles are one of the top trail users in the state of Michigan. Coe summarized the road mileage in Manistee and Benzie Counties, which is substantially higher than what is proposed in Leelanau County. He has received numerous letters of support from landowners and business owners for bringing the trail back to Leelanau County.

T. Carter stated that snowmobiles are allowed in the road right-of-way already and asked if the issue was the signage and formal designation as a trail. Coe stated yes, he believes that the signage and formal designation as a trail is the main issue. Noonan stated that he thinks snowmobiles being allowed to go 55 mph is too fast, given that they tend to ride close to the banks and could easily be hit by vehicles trying to enter the roadway. Julian asked if the roadside would become packed from the snowmobiles? Coe stated that the roadside would not be groomed. Snowmobiles will sometimes leave snow in driveways, but it is easily clearable in a regular driveway plow. Barry Krull asked whether stakes and other markers should be painted a certain color, or what the liability is if snowmobiles go off trail and hit objects or stakes. Coe stated that snowmobiles off-trail are trespassing and that can be enforced by law enforcement. Coe recommended orange paint or special markers for stakes to make them more visible.

Funding from snowmobile trail stickers and recreational fuel tax goes to snowmobile clubs throughout the state to pay for trail clearing, grooming, and other maintenance. Coe is uncertain about insurance liability, but anyone who goes off trail is guilty of trespass.

Julian asked about the end of the trail in Maple City. Coe stated that Broomstacks is a staging area, where there will be a porta-John, and the Snowbirds will assist with parking lot plowing. They would like to connect with the owner of the land behind the gas station to groom onto their property, but have not been able to make contact with that land owner. The Snowbirds have also spoken with the Sheriff's Department about this plan. They are hoping that the road option is a temporary option while they work with land owners to get a land-based option for next year. Julian concerned about enforcement, safety, and snowmobilers not respecting private property.

- d. Parking Ordinance** – Boomer reported that as a parking ordinance would be a police power ordinance, the Planning Commission has declined to work on a model ordinance as being outside their jurisdiction, and sent the issue back to the Township Board. Tim Cypher has some potential ordinances that could be used as models. Julian will look into this and bring some ideas back to the next meeting.
- e. Parking Lot Striping** – Molon Asphalt has submitted a bid for \$1,308.00 for striping the parking lot. There would be three handicap spots and twelve regular parking spaces, and three ADA parking signs would be included. The board discussed the project, as well as the parking lot and flag lighting. **Noonan moved, J. Carter seconded to approve the bid for Molon Asphalt for \$1,308, with striping to take place in the spring. All in favor, motion carried.**
- f. Meeting Dates** – There has been a request for meetings to be moved from the second Tuesday, as that conflicts with the County Board of Commissioners meetings. In December, the board will be approving the meeting dates for 2024. The board discussed potential meeting dates. Due to other conflicts, the board had consensus to leave the majority of the meeting dates on the second Tuesday.
- g. Other New Business** - None

CAPITAL PROJECTS – EXPLORATION

- a. Maple City Improvement Project** – Julian received a communication from the Leelanau County Road Commission regarding the improvement project, with an initial high-level review. In part, the Road Commission stated that “With the potential impacts to this corridor and the community due to construction, this would need to be a single-phase project. As these are primary roads in Leelanau County the Road Commission would normally be responsible for 100% of the cost of reconstruction within the roadway. In this case, within a more urban setting would be the roadbed (2-11’ lanes and 2-3’ shoulders). For LCRC, reconstruction would consist of milling the existing pavement and replacing in-kind with raised edge in various location to channel water. Any additional work would need to be included in the street scape design.”

Julian is continuing to discuss the issue with the Road Commission. The board had consensus that the next most important question is the timeline – when is the Road Commission looking at being able to schedule this work. A secondary question is whether their engineer is ready to work with the township's engineer on specific drawings to be used for bids. Julian stated he has

been in contact with DTE regarding their installment, and they have expressed no interest in putting any sort of barrier around their installation in the village.

- a. **Township Hall Renovation** – Leelanau Construction has made substantial progress on the construction at the hall. Julian has been in contact with Flaska and the electrician to work on finishing the project.
- b. **Fire Department Capital Improvements** – Julian has been continuing to work on finding potential properties for a new fire station, reaching out to both realtors and citizens in the area. He has continued speaking with Tim Stein on the subject. He has been working with Chief Doornbos and various regulatory agencies, and it appears that an approximately 3 acre property is the minimum acreage possible to allow for building, parking, septic, well, and other aspects of the project, and more acreage would allow for potential future growth of the facility.

REPORTS: Planning Commission (PC) – T. Carter was not present at the meeting to report.

Zoning Administrator (ZA) – Cypher had previously submitted written reports to the board. There will be a ZBA meeting on November 20 at 1 pm regarding the Enduro matter. Noonan and Julian have had constituents asking them for faster responses from the Zoning Administrator. The board briefly discussed the position, and the extensive knowledge and experience that Cypher brings to the position. The board asked for anyone who might be interested in becoming a Zoning Administrator to come forward to potentially take training through MSU and begin learning about the position to fill future needs of the region.

Supervisor – Julian summarized his activities for the month.

Assessor – Standard assessing business is ongoing. The required Board of Review training has been scheduled.

Fire Board – At the November meeting, the Board was appreciative of the support of the townships for the budget, which has now been passed by all four townships. The interlocal agreement group will likely be making a recommendation to move to one-year budget cycles.

Clerk/Elections Report – Boomer reported that the election went smoothly. Traverse Tax and Accounting will be switching to a new payroll software; Boomer will be working with the representative on the first payroll using the new system next week.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Hall Use and Buildings and Grounds Reports – The community music group will continue to use the hall now that the election is finished. The board discussed cleaning; the hall will be cleaned once construction is finished for the fall.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Jerry Konczel – Ross brought up the zoning language, and Konczel would also like to see the zoning language tightened. He would like to know about the Tower Road project – Boomer stated it is not on the agenda for the Township Board or Planning Commission at this time, and will be a Planning Commission issue when and if an application is submitted.

BOARD COMMENT: T. Carter stated that he missed the last board and PC meetings. There has been a lot of discussion on farm stands and farm markets, and what can be sold and not sold. His position is that a farm stand should only have those agricultural products produced on the farm. Other products

should be sold at a farm market. What T. Carter does at board meetings affects his son and daughter-in-law, but he feels there is no conflict of interest.

Noonan is concerned about the snowmobile trail running on Newman Road.

Julian thanked everyone for attending, and wished them a happy Thanksgiving and hunting season.

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, December 12 at 7 pm.

Motion by J. Carter to adjourn, second by Noonan / **All in favor, motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Submitted by:
Dana Boomer, Township Clerk