

Solon Township Board
Regular Meeting
Thursday, September 14, 2023 7:00 P.M
Solon Township Hall
9191 S. Kasson St., Cedar, MI 49621

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Jim Lautner called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board members present: Supervisor Jim Lautner, Treasurer Joan Gauthier, Clerk Shirley Mikowski, Trustee Steve Yoder and Trustee Pat Deering.

Guests present: Wendy Christiani, Judy Janosik, Charlie Smith, Karen Smith, Stephen Kostyshyn, Julie Kradel, Mary O'Neill, Dale Gauthier, Donna Kozisek, Kelly Claar, Lisa Rossi-Brett, Rick Brett, Eric Miller, Chris Comeaux, Mary Taylor, Corey Flaska and Tim Cypher/ZA.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Joan Gauthier and seconded by Steve Yoder to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Steve Yoder and seconded by Joan Gauthier to approve the August 10, 2023 regular meeting minutes as written. Motion carried 5-0.

5. Public Comment

There was none.

6. Correspondence

There was none.

7. Treasurer's Report/Authorization for Payment of Vouchers:

Huntington Bank Checking \$94,535.56, ARPA Funds included in checking: \$26,627.33, Available in Checking Account: \$67,908.23, Huntington Bank General Savings \$148,252.86, Huntington Bank General Savings CD (6 Month 4.2%) \$100,000.00, Total General Savings \$248,252.86, Total Funds Available: \$316,161.09, Huntington Bank Road Improvement Fund \$10,364.75, Huntington Bank Fire Fund CD \$42,754.05, Huntington Bank Fire Fund CD (6 Month 4.2%) \$40,000.00, Huntington Fire Fund Savings \$10,684.31, Total Fire Sinking \$93,438.36, Huntington Bank Sidewalk Fund \$10,014.92, Huntington Bank Sidewalk Fund (6 Month 4.2%) \$7,785.00, Total Sidewalk Fund \$17,799.92, Total other Township Funds Available: \$121,603.03. Total Current Assets: \$437,764.12, Non-Township Funds, Huntington Bank Cedar River Marina Project \$10,022.67, Huntington Bank Cedar River CD (6 Month 4.2%) \$14,200.00, Total Cedar River \$24,222.67, Parks and Recreation \$10,562.55. Voucher #'s 15115-15158 were submitted for payment. Motion by Steve Yoder and seconded by Shirley Mikowski to accept the Treasurer's report and pay vouchers as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

1. Approve Balance of \$1,926.75/PK

Shirley Mikowski explained that the cost estimate that was received from PK Contracting was only an estimated cost and was noted there may be additional charges. They ended up painting a lot more parking spaces. Shirley added they got the job done in a timely manner and did an excellent job. Motion by Shirley Mikowski and seconded by Joan Gauthier to approve to pay the balance of \$1,926.75 to PK Contracting from the Sidewalk Fund. Motion carried 5-0.

8. Committee Reports:

Steve Yoder reported on the Planning Commission meeting held on Tuesday, September 6, 2023. All board members and six guests were present.

- They continued discussion on the Master Plan and are working on getting graphs and maps from the county.
- The Landscape Ordinance was discussed and they have decided to table it.
- They are looking into addressing accessory dwelling units and short term rentals.

Kelly Claar reported the Parks and Recreation Committee met on Tuesday, August 29, 2023 at 6:00 P.M. There were four members and one guest present.

- The third and final Visioning and Planning Session was September 7, 2023. It was very successful and well attended. There was great community feedback and conclusions. A report will be ready for the township board's December meeting.
- The row team gave a lot of positive feedback and really appreciates the use of the Solon Township Beach Park.
- They would like the township to purchase two AED's (Automated Electronic Defibrillator); one for the township hall and one for the beach park. They are looking to apply for the Grand Traverse Band 2% grant funding to purchase them. Chief Doornbos is in favor of having them, but is reluctant in having his staff taking on the responsibility of inspecting them. The liability for having them and the use of them will need to be looked into. Chris Comeaux, former fire chief, is 100% in support and would take on the responsibility of inspecting them.
- Kelly said she was not able to attend the last board meeting and asked if there had been any progress in closing Vlack's Park. Joan Gauthier noted that at the last meeting, she told the board she had contacted the Leelanau County Road Commission, and they said it was okay to close it. Jim Lautner also said at last month's meeting that the Parks Committee needs to look into this.
- Asked if there was any progress in moving the fence. Shirley Mikowski has stayed in contact with Apple Fence Company. They are short staffed.
- The Parks Committee is no longer officially collecting cans.
- Kelly met with the realtor that has the listing for the property in front of Vlack's Park. No one else has shown interest in the property. A DNR acquisition is a very specific and long process. This would increase the Joe Vlack Park to 60 acres.
- The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 27, 2023 at 6:00 P.M. at the Solon Township Hall.

Joan Gauthier asked how movie night went that was scheduled for August 12, 2023 and moved to the Solon Township Hall. Mary Taylor said they set up and no one showed up.

Zoning Administrator Written Report is attached.

9. Unfinished Business

A. Township Hall/Repairs

1. Doors

Shirley Mikowski is still working with Allen Supply to have several of the doors replaced at the township hall. Steve Yoder asked if he could check with other companies, so he will. Shirley will forward the information and pictures to Steve.

2. Cement Work

Shirley Mikowski did leave a message with Novak Masonry, but never got a response. She will try to get in touch with Gene Novak personally to see if they will do the block repair at the township hall and give the board a cost estimate.

B. Parks

1. Fence

Apple Fence Company is short staffed so there is no time frame when they will be removing the fence from the recycling site and installing it at the Solon Beach Park. Zach Baker completed the survey at the Solon Beach Park.

2. Bleachers

Joan Gauthier received a price of \$4,735.50 for 72 – 15 feet long anodized aluminum bleacher boards. The boards will be 8” deep and if we need 9” deep they would need a profile drawing. There will not be a die charge. We will need to go pick the order up in Belding. Shirley Mikowski would like to include the two sets of bleachers that the boards were recently replaced because we will not get this price again. That would make it 90 boards and Steve Yoder said that would bring the cost up to approximately \$6,000.00. Motion by Joan Gauthier and seconded by Shirley Mikowski to approve to purchase 90 - 15 feet long anodized aluminum bleacher boards from Extruded Aluminum Corporation and to pay up to \$6,000.00. Motion carried 5-0.

Shirley Mikowski will contact Alison Beebe to give her an update of how the township board is moving forward with updating the bleachers.

3. Vlack's Park

See under committee reports.

4. Solon Schoolhouse

Jim Lautner said he went to look, but could not find any woodchucks or where they were digging the holes. Joan Gauthier said they are by the steps. Jim has traps to set as soon as he finds where they are. Shirley Mikowski asked about the flag pole that needs replacing, and we need a 3' x 5' flag with pole.

C. Fire Department

1. Interlocal Agreement

Joan Gauthier is very close in completing typing up the present agreement with the proposed language. The Interlocal Agreement expires in 2025.

Chris Comeaux gave the following report:

- They had their Public Hearing for the proposed two year budget. Chris has proposed to change the two year budget cycle to one year to have a better handle on expenses. Jim Lautner said one of the problems of a one year budget is our millage runs for two years.
- There was a major repair on the tanker that cost over \$20,000.00.
- The ambulance has been purchased for \$393,000.00. No payments will need to be made for at least two years.
- First time ever they were able to cover all 18 ALS calls with a paramedic on every call. They also had nine overlapping calls and were able to cover seven of them with Glen Lake covering one of them and MMR covered the other one.

D. Cedar River Project

1. Buoys

Mary Taylor reported that the DNR said you have to mark the river channel with green and white buoys, but the Leelanau Conservancy does not want anything else except the red and white no wake buoys.

2. Polkatober Event

The Polkatober event has been postponed until spring.

E. Drainage District

There was no update.

F. Cemetery

Zach Baker is diligently working on drawing up a new map of the cemetery.

G. Land Use Maps

Tim Cypher/ZA explained the PUD's that have been proposed. They were mostly concentrated where there is commercial zoning. Mr. Cypher noted that Steve Yoder had mentioned at the last meeting that if the Land Use Maps are approved without adopting the Landscape Ordinance it could create some exposure. Steve Yoder said he feels we have come to a dead end without the township boards input with the Landscape Ordinance. Joan Gauthier asked where the verbiage for the Landscape Ordinance came from because it is so different from the one we have. Mr. Cypher said they had used five different samples that all had rural character that he had sent to the township board in an email. He also noted there have been concerns about waivers, but he noted that the waivers give the board flexibility. Mr. Cypher said that single family dwellings will not be affected by the Landscape Ordinance. Joan Gauthier shared her concerns of the areas where the PUD's have been placed on the maps. Mr. Cypher said he will resend the email of the five different samples used to draw up the ordinance.

H. Bunting's Road

Jim Lautner explained that the Leelanau County Road Commission is now requiring a written request before they will give a bid for road improvements. A letter will need to be sent stating that the township board has approved to have the Road Commission give a price for the road improvements and the township will have funds available. Motion by Pat Deering and seconded by Joan Gauthier to approve to request a bid from the Leelanau County Road Commission to improve the road behind Bunting's Cedar Market from their parking lot to Bellinger Road and Solon Township will have funds available for the improvements. Motion carried 5-0.

10. New Business

A. L-4029

Motion by Steve Yoder and seconded by Joan Gauthier to approve the Allocated Operational Millage amount of 0.5632 and the voted Fire/Ambulance Millage of 2.5000 to be levied December 1, 2023. Motion carried 5-0

B. Polka Fest Sponsors

Shirley Mikowski shared her concerns that one of the sponsors for the Cedar Polka Fest is a marijuana distributor. The township had adopted a resolution in 2018 regarding growing and distributing marijuana. Even though they did not sell it or distribute a door has been opened for the township. Steve Yoder said you cannot regulate who the sponsors are or advertising, it is freedom of speech and has no relevance to the resolution. Shirley said that is not what the Polka Fest has been about and should be, and is very disappointed.

C. Eric Miller/Rosinski Road

Eric Miller lives on Rosinski Road and asked township board who pays to maintain the roads. Mr. Miller said the speed limit on Rosinski Road is 55 miles per hour, but there is nowhere on that road that you could drive the speed limit because it is in such bad shape. He recently met with the road commission manager, Brendan Mullane and since then, they came and repaired some of the potholes. Solon Township's line ends in his backyard. The rest of the road is in Centerville Township, so there will be two townships involved. Jim Lautner said he will contact the Road Commission to see what it will cost to fix the road. Centerville Township will also need to be involved.

Mr. Miller said he filed a formal complaint with the Building Inspections Department on the house at 8371 Rosinski Road. The house was never finished and now it is practically falling apart, animals are living in there, and kids are smoking dope and drinking beer in there. It is a nuisance and needs to be looked at. He contacted Barbara Jones/Assessor and she stated that the property evaluation may be reduced and taxes may be reduced. Joan Gauthier said the Sherriff's Department contacted her that morning because the door to that house had been kicked down and was trying to find a phone number for the owner. Chris Comeaux said the fire department can initiate to have the house taken down. Tim Cypher/ZA said there is an administrative process that you need to go through and the Building Inspections Department has an avenue that is called the unsafe structure which Mr. Miller did today. Mr. Cypher asked Mr. Miller to be patient, to allow them to do their job, and see what the outcome is. With his experience with other townships, this process has worked. The complaint will go through the prosecutor and Mr. Miller said he was going to take time to talk to the prosecutor. Jim Lautner said that if it does not work with the Building Inspections Department that he would need to go to his County Commissioner so they can address the Building Department.

D. Elections

1. Agreement

Shirley Mikowski explained that the township clerks have met twice with Michelle Crocker/County Clerk in regards to early voting. The passing of proposal 2022-2 requires early voting (9-day voting) prior to Election Day. Michelle Crocker is working on an agreement with the township clerks for the county to hold the early voting there, but needs the support of the County Commissioners. This agreement will be a trial and can be changed in the future.

2. November/February

The Glen Lake School District has approved to put a millage on the ballot, so there will be an election on November 7, 2023.

The State of Michigan still has not determined whether the Presidential Primary will be held February 27, 2024 or March 12, 2024.

3. Election Pay

The election inspector pay has not been increased in several years. Their current pay rate is \$18.00 per hour for election chair, \$15.00 per hour for an election inspector, and \$12.00 per hour for training. Shirley Mikowski requested to increase the election chair pay to \$21.00 per hour, election inspectors to \$18.00 per hour and training to \$18.00 per hour. Motion by Shirley Mikowski and seconded by Joan Gauthier to pay the election chair \$21.00 per hour, election inspectors \$18.00 per hour and \$18.00 per hour for training. Motion carried 5-0.

E. Appointment/Parks Committee

Motion by Jim Lautner and seconded by Joan Gauthier to approve to appoint Rebecca Goff to the Parks and Recreation Committee with the term ending 12/31/2023. Motion carried 5-0.

11. Public Comment

Lisa Rossi-Brett is the director for the Polka Fest and explained that the Polka Fest is a non-profit organization that supports many local charities while promoting the Polish Heritage. Tens of thousands of dollars has benefitted the community. Mrs. Rossi-Brett said she usually handles getting all of the sponsor's carte-blanche. When the marijuana distributor came to her to be a sponsor, she knew it would be a touchy issue. They reached out to legal counsel and were assured that it was totally legal to have them as a sponsor. A board meeting was called and it was decided they would be fools to turn away the thousands of dollars with how many people it would benefit, and not taking their money is not going to make the distributor go away.

Mary Taylor, co-chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee, noted they are not a board or a commission but a volunteer committee. They have done grant writing, fund raising, parks planning, monitoring maintenance and safety issues and organizing work parties. She would like some clarification on what their main role is to serve the board.

Corey Flaska said he has never been so disappointed and understands why the Planning Commission is disconnected with the township board. The township board continually sends stuff to the Planning Commission for them to work on and the township board does nothing with it. To not even discuss the Future Land Use maps is kicking them down the road. There is no point for the Planning Commission to even continue to work on anything. Mr. Flaska also stated the proposed PUD Districts are by commercial zoned property and the Landscape Ordinance has nothing to do with the Future Land Use maps.

Rick Brett asked who is responsible for maintaining the street lights in Cedar because there are quite a few lights that are not working and one of the lamp posts is loose. Shirley Mikowski asked him to send details and pictures.

Julie Kradel said the brick building in Cedar has been deteriorating forever and does not understand why the township board doesn't do anything about it or put something in the ordinance. Unless the whole septic/sewer is

addressed, Cedar cannot grow. This is another example of everything getting kicked down the road. There are grants available and nothing gets done. She said this why the board is elected.

Mary O'Neill agrees with Corey Flaska about the Planning Commission and said this might sound harsh but the township board is reactionary instead of being proactive. We should be exploring more opportunity to grow. Ms. O'Neill disagrees with Mr. Flaska and that we do need the Landscape Ordinance before the maps are approved.

Jim Lautner said we have looked into sewer and we don't qualify for grants because the income is too high in Solon Township. Larry Fleis with Fleis&Vandenbrink looked into this. Cedar would need to become a village to possibly lower the income to qualify for grants.

Corey Flaska said the township paid Fleis&Vandenbrink \$8,000.00 for a feasibility study and he never saw it. He could build a sewer system for \$2 million dollars.

Chris Comeaux said he loves this community if incorporating Cedar into a village will help us move forward, then why are we not doing that? Why are we not moving forward with making Cedar a Village?

Wendy Christiani said that she has been very vocal about keeping the rural character. She understands that this is a slow painful process, but personally appreciates the township board taking the time looking at landscaping and making some conscience decisions in what we want commercial growth to look like before we allow it to start, because once it starts, you can't stop it. If we are going to allow growth then we want it to look like a beautiful rural countryside community.

Donna Kozisek asked what kind of job would a young person or an older person need to afford a \$300,000.00 - \$450,000.00 house. A \$300,000.00 mortgage would have a mortgage payment of about \$2,000.00 a month. What kind of job could pay for this unless you have a high level paying job? She does not understand how we can have growth without the jobs to support it.

Jim Lautner has said it several times that you can build a 400 square foot home in Solon Township. However, young people do not want to live in small homes.

Lisa Rossi said the median house in Leelanau County is closer to \$600,000.00. We have an aging community. The people that are moving here once vacationed here and now they can live anywhere because they can work remotely. Young people would live in small homes; they just cannot afford to live here. This is a 50 plus demographic that is moving here and building 3,000 square foot homes.

Jim Lautner said it is the retirees that live here that have brought enough income with them that has raised the median income which is why we can't get any grants.

Karen Smith asked if those that are moving here, don't they want it to stay the way it is? Didn't they move here because they fell in love with the beauty?

Judy Janosik is afraid the beauty of the area will be lost with having cluster homes. She asked if the Planning Commission would look into short term rentals because they are doing a disservice.

Mary O'Neill said short term rentals are not going anywhere any time soon.

12. Announcements

There was none.

13. Adjournment

Motion by Joan Gauthier and seconded by Shirley Mikowski to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley I. Mikowski

Shirley I. Mikowski
Solon Township Clerk

SOLON TOWNSHIP ZA'S MONTHLY PERMIT SUMMARY

PERIOD: AUGUST 2023

DATE	PERMIT #	NAME	USE	RECEIPT	CK.#	AMOUNT
8/17/2023	LUP 23-25	BLARNEY CASTLE	LAND USE	202325	477401	\$ 250.00
010-359-003&004-00	5101 E. TRAVERSE HWY.	REPLACEMENT PROPANE TANK			603 S.F.	
8/18/2023	LUP 23-26	LARSON	LAND USE	202326	1237	\$ 50.00
010-023-019-10	6445 E. LINCOLN RD	NEW AG BUILDING			918 S.F.	
8/27/2023	LUP 23-27	LARACEY	LAND USE	202327	1339	\$ 50.00
010-011-026-05	9350 S. PARKER RD.	NEW INTERIOR WORKSHOP			504 S.F.	
8/27/2023	LUP 23-28	GALLIVAN	LAND USE	202328	5670	\$ 50.00
010-014-008-50	10601 S. WEISLER RD.	DECK POOL FENCE			1,234 S.F.	
8/3/2023	LUP 22-05	DOUCETTE	LAND USE RENEWAL	202205	33736	\$ 50.00
010-011-011-00	6879 E. BIRCH POINT RD.	RENEWAL & ADDED SWIMMING POOL			608 S.F.	

TOTAL \$ 450.00

SIGNED:

Timothy A. Cypher

DATE:

9/9/2023

TIMOTHY A. CYPHER
SOLON TOWNSHIP ZONING ADMINISTRATOR
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