

## PINE GROVE TOWNSHIP MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 3, 2022 7:00 p.m.

1. **Meeting was called to order** at 7:00 P.M. by Smith
2. **Pledge of Allegiance.**
3. **Roll Call: Present:** Richardson, Meert, Smith, Sell Absent: Hephner Also Present -Attorney Catherine Kauffman
4. **Agenda:** Sell stated that she would like to add to the New Business Agenda, Zoning Ordinance Officer Laptop and Recycling Center Fencing. Richardson stated in the past years Public Comment was on the agenda twice and questioned why that was changed without Board approval. Attorney Kaufman stated that the Supervisor and Clerk set the agenda without board approval. *Motion made by Smith, supported by Meert to approve the agenda with the addition of Zoning Ordinance Officer Laptop and Recycling Center Fencing under New Business. All yes, motion carried.*
5. **Consent Agenda:** *Motion made by Sell, supported by Richardson to approve the Consent Agenda. All yes, motion carried.*
6. **Monthly Bills:** Sell stated that Analytics' is supposed to bill for \$175 but this month's bill is \$213.00. Meert stated that she will contact them and check on the amount. *Motion made by Sell, supported by Smith to approve the monthly bills except for the bill for Analytics for \$213.00 for a total of \$32,944.20. All yes, motion carried.*
7. **Correspondence and Reports:**
  - A. **Library:** Nothing at this time.
  - B. **Sheriff:** Submitted. 44 township complaints. OEO: Working on 14 blight complaints.
  - C. **County Commission:** Submitted.
  - D. **Road Commission:** None
  - E. **Fire Chief:** Submitted. Business as usual.
  - F. **Fire Board:** Kehoe stated that the preliminary estimate on a fire truck is at \$700,000 and that is already 15% higher due to material costs. Once the order is in, that will lock in the price.
  - G. **Ambulance:** None.
  - H. **Treasurer:** T&A: \$9,934.12 Checking: \$641,304.16 PNC Savings: \$199,924.38 Tax: -\$9.67 Consumers: ARPA: \$154,902.54, Extra Protect Savings: \$250,415.37 Money Market: \$250,834.12
  - I. **Planning Commission:** Richardson stated that the August meeting may be cancelled due to lack of business.
  - J. **KABA:** Submitted. Permits for June: 1 Building, 6 Electrical, 5 Mechanical, 3 Plumbing.
  - K. Smith stated that the Board received communication from Van Buren County Farm Bureau inviting board members to their Summer Legislative Dinner on Monday, August 29<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm.
8. **Committee Reports: Building Committee:** Due to COVID, last months meeting was cancelled. August 8<sup>th</sup> is the next scheduled meeting. Smith stated another resident has shown interest in being on the committee.
9. **Old Business:**
  1. **Computer Upgrades:** After some discussion, topic was tabled.
  2. **VBCRC Projects:** *Motion made by Smith to find the funds to pay for 2 projects, 1st - repairs on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue where it keeps washing out for \$27,915.92 and 2nd - 1/2 the project cost on 34<sup>th</sup> St. for the culvert replacement for \$32,331.38.* Finding no support on the motion, Smith opened the floor for discussion. Attorney Kaufman presented her legal opinion on Twp. vs County responsibilities. Kaufman stated that she has been invited to attend the VBCRC Supervisor's meeting with their attorney on August 25<sup>th</sup> and may have more information after that meeting. Smith stated

that even though there is no support for his motion, he called for a Roll Call vote on each project: **1<sup>st</sup> Project: 12<sup>th</sup> Ave Project at \$27,915.92 Roll Call: Richardson – No, Meert – no, Smith – yes, Sell – no. 3 – No, 1 Yes, motion did not pass. 2<sup>nd</sup> Project: 34<sup>th</sup> St Culvert Project for \$32,231.38 Roll Call: Richardson – yes, Meert – yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes. 4 – yes, 0 – no Motion carried.**

**3. Cleanup of Township Offices:** Regarding mold etc., Smith stated that he has had a hard time getting VanDam & Krusinga in the building to check it. Smith stated that they have been here a couple of times but no one has been here. Smith stated that he gave him the hours that someone would be at the office working. Smith stated that he will make an appointment with them and get it taken care of now that his medical concerns are no longer an issue.

**10. New Business:**

**1. Property Behind Township Offices:** *Motion made by Richardson, supported by Sell for the Pine Grove Township Board to go into a close session to discuss the possible sale/purchase of the property behind the township hall. Roll Call: Richardson – yes, Meert – yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes. All yes, motion carried.*

***THE PINE GROVE TOWNSHIP BOARD WENT INTO CLOSED SESSION***

*Motion made by Richardson, supported by Smith to come out of the Closed Session. All yes, motion carried.*

***THE PINE GROVE TOWNSHIP BOARD CAME OUT OF CLOSED SESSION***

*Motion by Meert, supported by Richardson to direct the Supervisor to take the action as discussed in Closed Session. Roll Call: Richardson – yes, Meert – yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes. Motion carried.*

**2. Approve Draft of Audit:** Smith submitted a draft copy of the Audit report. *Motion by Richardson, supported by Sell to accept the draft copy of the audit from Siegfried & Crandall PC. All yes motion carried.*

**3. Private Drive; Eric Matthies:** Matthies stated that he would like to once again ask the Township to have his road re-instated and maintained by the Van Buren County Road Commission. Matthies explained his request in length. Another neighbor spoke. Attorney Kaufman asked Matthies if the VBCRD had sent them a letter stating that they had been maintaining the road but now they were not going to. Matthies stated yes and Attorney Kaufman asked for a copy of that letter. Attorney Kaufman stated that the road is not a township responsibility, that it is the county's responsibility. Attorney Kaufman stated that the board can ask her to read the laws and prepare a written legal opinion.

**4. Recycle Center Fencing:** Sell stated that since the board approved to replace the other half of the gate, the recycle center employees asked if she would take a look at some of the other areas of concern in the fencing. Sell stated that she took some pictures, there are 3 or 4 spots where the joints are actually separated. One of the supporting poles has been hit by some type of vehicle, most possibly the snowplow, and is pushing the chain link fence out and the tops are also leaning out. There are 6-7-foot-tall trees and weeds in the fence line. Sell stated that she would like to see an estimate on cost of repairing the rest of the fencing surrounding the recycle center. Meert stated that she can contact Jeff Gasper to see if he would be interested in doing the weed and tree removal. Smith stated that he has The Wright Fencing out of Plainwell replacing the other half of the gate and will ask them if they will prepare an estimate on the needed repairs.

**5. ZO Laptop:** Sell requested the Zoning Ordinance Officer's laptop be returned to the Township Hall where Board members could have access to it. The issue was discussed at length.

**11. Public Comment (Limit 2 minutes):** Bobbi stated that she participates in Senior Services in Paw Paw. She stated that she understands that the millage passed and that Pine Grove is pulling out of Senior Services possibly, along with Almena and Paw Paw. Bobbi stated that if Pine Grove decides

to pull out, who is going to be administering that millage and who is going to handle the activities and such that the Senior Services would offer. Attorney Kaufman stated that the Pine Grove Board had made a decision to not go from a .25 millage to 1 mil, but did renew the long standing .25 mil. The Board will decide what to do with those monies collected. Kathy Garrett stated that she has witnessed in the park across the street from the store, drug deals, parties from 1:30 am to 3:30 am, urinating in the road, and asked if something could be done, maybe a light. Kathy also stated that the garbage can has not been emptied all year long. A resident stated that it had been mentioned that the township has a building committee in place or was forming one, does that mean that the township is moving forward with building a new building, and has it been voted on? Smith stated that the only thing that was voted on was the possibility of doing it, forming a committee, getting a survey on the property that was owned by the Township and things that are involved in the preliminary processes. A resident asked if the board will be transparent when it comes to the decision of building a new building and the board stated that the decision will be very transparent. A resident stated that he lives on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and understands that the board voted not to proceed with the repairs on 12<sup>th</sup> Ave, but where in the world is this and why is it so much money. Smith stated that it was at the top of the hill by the big dairy farm and going downhill towards CR 388. He stated that he drives it everyday and has not noticed any problem there.

12. **Member Comment:** None

13. **Adjournment:** *Motion made by Smith, supported by Richardson to adjourn. All yes, motion carried.*

*Adjournment: 8:53 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Meert, Pine Grove Twp. Clerk