

PINE GROVE TOWNSHIP MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 6, 2023 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, Hephner **Also Present:** Atty. Catherine Kaufman
4. **Agenda:** Sell asked to add excess road funds. Hephner asked to add to Old Business the generator and plumbing update and Website update. Meert asked to add a vote for approval for participation in a county wide early voting site. Hephner asked to add the Job Description for Recycle Center under New Business. ***Motion by Hephner, supported by Sell to approve the agenda with the addition of items: Generator/Plumbing, Website, Early Voting Site, Excess Road Funds, Job Description for Recycle/Dump Center. All yes, motion carried.***
5. **Consent Agenda:** Smith stated in the Minutes of August 2, 2023 meeting, under Road Commission heading and in member comments, the EDIT notes were not part of the meeting and do not belong in the minutes. ***Motion made by Sell, supported by Hephner to approve the Consent Agenda with the corrections in the Meeting Minutes. All Yes, motion carried.***
6. **Monthly Bills:** ***Motion made by Hephner supported by Smith to approve the monthly bills for a total of \$55,984.93 All yes, motion carried.***
7. **Correspondence and Reports:**
 - A. **County Commission: Submitted.**
 - B. **Sheriff: Submitted.** Deputy Turner reported 89 calls for service for July 2023. 12 Blight Complaints
 - C. **Road Commission:** Richardson asked if the CR 388 project was a Federal project and Witkowski stated Yes. Richardson asked if any other townships along CR388 contributed township monies to the CR 388 fund and Witkowski stated no. Richardson asked who is taking care of the drains before CR388 gets re paved and Witkowski stated that he would have to check on that. Richardson asked about the 5-year rotation for chip seal because he was previously told that the road commission no longer does that. Witkowski stated that is up to the township to decide what work the Road Commission does in the township regarding chip seal. Meert asked if the PASER rating system was still used and Witkowski stated the Road Commission has to use the PASER rating system, have it certified, and turned into the state, or the Road Commission does not receive any ACT 51 funds. Paser rating is the Gold Standard by which we work. Witkowski stated that he has Pine Grove Township PASER ratings in his files. Smith stated there was not a 5-year plan when he came into office and he had to start from ground zero. Smith stated no 5-year rotation was passed on to him when he took office. Bret stated a 5-year plan can be made for Pine Grove which the Board can review. The Road commission sends the work sheets out and likes to have them back by the end of March every year so they know what materials to buy. Hephner asked if PGT had received a list of recommendations this past year based on the paser system. Witkowski asked Don if he had done the ride along with Greg? Don said he had talked about it to Greg, actually Barry came up and rode with him. Brett stated that usually Barry or Greg come up and do the ride arounds with the Supervisor or designated persons. Hephner stated she was under the impression that had not happened. Sell, Meert, and Richardson stated they were under the same impression. Smith stated yes, one of the engineers and Barry came up, the 3 of us went to ride the roads. Richardson asked if they were the ones that had decided that none of the roads needed chip sealed? Smith stated no, we decided to do 32nd St and then you people decided you did not want to spend the money. Richardson asked why we did not do chip seal at that point. Smith stated it was too late for chip seal. Hephner stated the problem is that whatever was recommended on that ride along was never presented to the Board. No other options for projects from that ride along beside replacing 32nd St. were presented to the board. Smith stated the project was 32nd St, and the Board voted not to do it. Hephner stated she would have liked to have heard the recommendations from the county as to other options. Smith stated he was never given any 5- year plan from Scott Hess or the County.

Smith stated he rode with Greg the first 2 years and this last year, Barry and the engineer, because it was 32nd ST. and a more involved project. They qualified 32nd St the highest of all of them by the passer rating, the highest traveled road, and the worst condition of the highest traveled road and to redo it. Resulting from further discussion, two board members will attend the ride along with the Road Commission. The Road Commission will also send the Clerk the ride along findings and recommendations from spring 2023. The Road commission will also help the Township design a five-year plan.

D. Fire Chief: Chief Kronk reported 151 calls year to date and reported that he has hired 2 new employee's and a cadet. The Fire Dept. Open House will be on October 11, 2023, 6 p.m. Chief Kronk asked the Board to review their burning policy due to several neighborhood complaints recently.

E. Fire Board: Jim Kehoe reported that they have not heard back regarding the grant that the Fire Dept. has applied for.

F. Ambulance: Submitted.

G. Treasurer: As of 7-31-23: Tax: \$23,744.11 General: \$921,369.82 T&A: \$9,968.20

PNC Savings: \$199,914.07 Consumers Xtra Protect: \$250,959.29

Consumers Money Market: \$251,924.86 ARPA: \$310,111.51. Sell reported that she is trying to consolidate some accounts to get a better interest rate and security. The township's resolution is not up to date so Mercantile Bank is requesting a copy of the meeting minutes stating that Sell can sign bank documents on behalf of the township with Mercantile Bank.

Motion by Hephner, supported by Smith that Trena Sell, Treasurer can sign bank documents on behalf of Pine Grove Township for opening accounts with Mercantile Bank. All yes, motion carried. Hephner stated that the Resolution on the townships Investment Policy needs to be on the agenda at the next month's meeting to review and revise.

H. Planning Commission: Richardson stated the September meeting has been moved to the 25th at 6 p.m., to hold a Public Hearing on the Master Plan draft and a SLU Application.

I. KABA: Submitted.

8. **Committee Reports: Building Committee:** Next building committee meeting is September 18th at 6:30 p.m. Hephner commended Pam Visser's continued participation on the Building Committee.

9. **Public Comment (limit two minutes):** Resident complained about M LIVE paper being thrown out by his mailbox and he has called the number provided to discontinue receiving the paper to no avail. He asked if an ordinance could be put into effect that states that you cannot throw papers out onto the ground, that the papers have to be put into a box and the permission of the resident. Attorney Kaufman stated that a civil infraction Littering Ordinance can be adopted by the township and the township can define what is litter. Eric Mathis stated that he left messages for the drain commissioner and has not had a return call and wonders if the drain commission is going to bring in their equipment before the new road is installed, to dig out the drain. Witkowski stated he would call and find out. Jim Kehoe stated that the Road Commission should assist the township in developing a five-year plan for the township roads.

10. **Old Business:**

1. **Tuck Point Bids:** After review and discussion, ***Motion made by Smith, supported by Richardson to accept the bid from Building Restoration for \$12,540.00. Roll Call: Richardson – yes, Meert – yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes, Hephner – yes. All yes, motion carried.***

2. **Cemetery Pump:** Smith stated that he contacted Dells Well Drilling and after inspection, they stated that the current pump has been hit so the pump and well both need work and he has ordered some parts to fix it. Smith stated that there will be a charge but that it will not be all that great and it should be working by next week.

3. **Generator/Plumbing:** Smith stated it will be approx. 3 weeks to get started on the generator install. Smith stated that he has still not heard when they will begin the plumbing work. Smith will contact the company again. Hephner stated that the toilet and sink may need to be replaced.

4. **Website:** Smith reported that there should be an active live website to look at and play with in about two weeks if not sooner. Smith will send all board members the link and then a training session will be set up. Smith stated that the website should be up and live by the end of September.

11. **New Business:**

1. **Map of Township:** Smith reported the company that compiled the new Platte books did a new map of Pine Grove Township and want \$199 for it. Attorney Kaufman suggested working with the county GIS before paying \$199 for this map. The board will take a look at the maps at next month's meeting.
2. **Tire collection in 2024:** Emily from Van Buren Conservation District stated that they are looking at possibly doing a tire/electronics collection in 2024 in Pine Grove Township. Dates to consider are August, 14th, 15th or 21st, or 22nd of 2024. Tire collection days are typically held 3pm to 7 pm and open to Van Buren residents at the Transfer Station. Hephner suggested doing it on a Thursday as the Transfer Station is open on Wednesdays for other business. *Motion by Hephner, support by Sell to do the tire/electronics recycling on August 15, 2024 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Transfer Station. All yes, motion carried.*
3. **E-Mail Policy:** Smith stated the township does not have an email policy and after the new website is live, all members will have township owned email addresses, it would be appropriate to have an email policy. Attorney Kaufman provided a sample from another township. All members will have until the next meeting to review.
4. **Planning Commission Vacancy:** Smith reported that a member of the Planning Commission needed to resign, he had been on the Planning Commission a good long time and thanked him for that. Smith stated that the township will be advertising for that position. Mark Visser stated that he will be interested.
5. **Early Voting Site:** Meert stated there needs to be a motion and vote for the township to participate in a county wide voting center for the 9 days of early voting. *Motion by Meert, supported by Smith that Pine Grove Township agrees to participate in a county-wide voting center in Hartford, Van Buren County. All yes, motion carried.*
6. **Excess Road Funds:** Sell stated looking at the excess road funds and knowing that the one project didn't go through, there are extra monies available. She asked if there are some gravel roads the township could look at paving in the next 5 years. Richardson stated the cost of paving a gravel road is insane and Smith stated that it is almost a million dollars per mile. Witkowski had some ideas for future discussion on road pavement.
7. **Recycle/Dump Employee Job Description:** Hephner asked if there is some type of job description for the two employees at the Recycle/Dump station. If so, she would like it pulled and given to Attorney Kaufman for review and if there is not one, maybe Kaufman could find one that could be adapted for Pine Grove Township. Meert stated there is one and she will find it and give it to Attorney Kaufman.
12. **Member Comment:** NONE
13. **Adjournment:** *Motion made by Smith, supported by Hephner to adjourn. All yes, motion carried.*

Adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Meert, Pine Grove Twp. Clerk