

## PINE GROVE TOWNSHIP MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 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:** Attorney Catherine Kaufman
4. **Agenda:** Additions to Agenda: Treasurer's Investment Policy and Digital Records under Old Business. *Motion by Hephner, supported by Sell to approve the agenda with the additions to Old Business. All yes, motion carried.*
5. **Consent Agenda:** *Motion made by Hephner, supported by Meert to approve the Consent Agenda. All yes, motion carried.*
6. **Monthly Bills:** *Motion made by Smith, supported by Meert to approve the monthly expenditures for a total of \$775,746.15 All yes, motion carried.*
7. **Correspondence and Reports:**
  - A. **County Commission:** Submitted.
  - B. **Sheriff:** None
  - C. **Road Commission:** None
  - D. **Fire Chief:** 194 calls for service to date for 2023
  - E. **Fire Board:** Kehoe stated that there was nothing to report
  - F. **Ambulance:** Submitted.
  - G. **Treasurer:** As of 10-31-2023: Tax: \$976.25 General: \$818,088.79 T&A: \$9,959.45  
PNC Savings: \$199,910.10 Consumers Xtra Protect: \$251,085.82  
Consumers Money Market: \$252,178.94 ARPA: \$220,804.55.
  - H. **Planning Commission:** Richardson stated that the December PC meeting is cancelled for December but will meet in January.
  - I. **KABA: November 2023: 1 Building Permit, 10 Electrical Permits, 3 Mechanical Permits, 5 Plumbing Permits**
8. **Committee Reports: Building Committee:** Hephner reported that the Building Committee reviewed all the projects that had been completed and what direction to proceed. The Building Committee decided to look at improving and renovating the current building for the benefit of the township and the township citizens because this building has historical significance and has been the seat of Pine Grove Township for many years. Pam Visser proposal to the board is that in today's economy, as well as the issues that have plagued the construction/building industry during COVID and since then, renovation and expansion of the current site is the more fiscally responsible path. Pam Visser talked about the procedures going forward. *Motion by Hephner, Supported by Richardson to follow the Building Committee's recommendations to renovate the existing Township Hall. All yes, motion carried.* Next meeting will be January 8, 2024 at 6:30p.m. Sell stated that the GFI has been tripping and needs to be looked at. Sell stated since the plumbing has been completed and the water heater was moved to the basement from under the kitchenette sink, the base board of the cabinet needs to be replaced. Mark Visser stated that he will do the repair.
9. **Public Comment (limit two minutes):** Eric thanked everyone involved for all the projects that have been completed the last 12 months regarding cleaning the township up.
10. **Old Business:**
  1. **E-Mail Policy:** Tabled until next month.
  2. **Filling Vacancy at Transfer/Recycle Attendant:** Completed at a 6:30 PM Special Meeting.
  3. **Security Camera System:** Meert stated that the security camera system is installed and operational. *Motion by Hephner, supported by Richardson to get a strike lock installed on the entrance door to the meeting room. All yes, motion carried.*
  4. **Job Description Transfer Station Attendants:** The job description was reviewed and changes identified. Tabled until next month with a new draft.
  5. **Litter Ordinance:** *Motion by Hephner, supported by Sell to adopt the Litter Ordinance as presented. Roll Call: Richardson – yes, Meert – yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes, Hephner – yes. All yes, motion carried.*

6. **E-Mail Devices:** Sell stated that she received quotes for iPads and Droids, basic packages. **Motion by Hephner, support by Sell to purchase 4 Droid devices without a mobile plan at \$350.00 each. Roll Call: Richardson – yes, Meert – yes, Smith – no, Sell – yes, Hephner – yes. 4 yes, 1 no, motion carried.**
7. **Investment Policy:** **Motion by Meert, supported by Richardson to adopt the Investment Policy Resolution as presented. Roll Call: Richardson – yes, Meert – yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes, Hephner – yes. All yes, motion carried.**
8. **Digital Records:** Hephner presented Data Guardian's scanning digital scanning prices. After a discussion it was decided that Smith will check with the Assessor to see what needs to be kept and scanned and Meert will list what needs to be retained permanently.
11. **New Business:**
  1. **Ethics Ordinance:** **Motion by Sell, supported by Meert to adopt the Principles of Township Government Excellence. All yes, motion carried. Motion by Sell, supported by Hephner to adopt the Pine Grove Township Ethics Ordinance. Roll Call: Richardson -yes, Meert – yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes, Hephner – yes, motion carried.**
  2. **Mold/Asbestos Bids:** Smith reported that two bids were received for mold/asbestos abatement. Smith stated VanDam & Kruisinga's bid was only for mold at \$19,000.00 and Taplin's bid was for both at \$11,000.00. After reviewing and discussing, the board decided to hold off on asbestos abatement and get bids for only the mold abatement at this time. Tabled until next meeting.
  3. **Road Construction Complaints:** There were many residents in attendance and also board members with complaints regarding the road construction and the Pine Grove Township Deputy. Kathy Garrett stated she had Brett come out and look at the store because the Road commission had literally destroyed her property. She has a mud hole by her dumpster, she has a stream of water by and under her handicap ramp, all the water flows to her deck and if it freezes someone is going to slip and fall there. Her driveway is now sand, if someone had to get to her front door with a gurney, they would not be able too. I did not get any kind of driveway to my warehouse. The Road Commission had told her the road would never be completely closed at one time unless they had to put a culvert in. Kroehn Excavating said people could drive down the road but then as soon as they did the police officer was setting there and gave them a ticket. I called the State police and also called the Sheriff because anything that moved on the road he would stop and issue a ticket. There are several people in this room he stopped not once but three times trying to get to their homes. We got tongue lashings, we were told we were not above the law, and I am here asking the Board to consider relieving him of his duties. I feel the officer has done nothing but harass this community. I am asking to please help me save my business. Pam Wescott stated her sister had a similar incident that involved the officer and would put it in writing for the Board. After all parties were heard, Attorney Kaufman suggested that the board make a motion to have a special meeting and have the Road Commission Director and Managing Director in attendance as well as the County Sheriff and the Pine Grove Township Deputy to discuss the issues surround the road construction of CR 388. Attorney Kaufman advised that all the residents have their complaints written to provide to the Road Commission personnel as well as the Sheriff. **Motion by Hephner, supported by Sell to hold a special meeting with the Road Commission and the Sheriff's Office. All yes, motion carried.** Meert will reach out and find a date and time that is most compatible with all.
  4. **Election Workers Wage Increase:** Meert provided the board with all the new election laws and rules. Meert stated that the Pine Grove Township election workers are getting \$12.00 an hour and would like to see a \$3.00 increase for all election workers. The workers work from 6 a.m. until 3:30 a.m. sometimes. **Motion by Meert, supported by Hephner to increase the election workers wages by \$3.00 per hour. All yes, motion carried.**
  5. **2024 Road Projects:** **Motion by Hephner, supported by Sell to request the assistance of the Road Commission in developing a 5-year plan and the 2024 road projects. All yes, motion carried.**
  6. **Christmas Decorations:** Sell stated that she would like to see some Christmas decorations for Kendall Park and the Township Hall. Meert stated that there is a company, NAYLOR, that will decorate for the season. Attorney Kaufman stated that the township cannot promote a certain religion, under the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment, for holidays, not specifically Christmas. Meert and Sell will work on that for next year and bring in a quote to submit.

7. **Employee Complaint:** Motion by Smith, supported by Hephner to move the board meet in a closed session under Section 81-H of the Open Meetings Act, pursuant to Section 13-1-G of the Freedom of Information Act to consult with the township attorney regarding a written legal opinion. Roll Call: Richardson – yes, Meert – yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes, Hephner – yes. All yes, motion carried.

**8:40 p.m. CLOSED SESSION**

**9:15 p.m. RESUMED OPEN SESSION**

Motion by Smith, supported by Hephner for the board to have the attorney hire a 3<sup>rd</sup> party investigator to look into the complaint. All yes, motion carried.

12. **Member Comment:** None

13. **Adjournment:** *Motion made by Smith, supported by Sell to adjourn. All yes, motion carried.*  
*Adjourned at 9:17p.m.*

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Michelle Meert, Pine Grove Township Clerk**