

PINE GROVE TOWNSHIP MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 06, 2024 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. **Consent Agenda:** *Motion made by Hephner, supported by Richardson to approve the Consent Agenda. All yes, motion carried.*
5. **Monthly Bills:** *Motion made by Smith, supported by Meert to approve the monthly expenditures for a total of \$17,664.34 All yes, motion carried.*
6. **Public Comment:** None
7. **Correspondence and Reports:**
 1. **Road Commission; Greg Brucks:** Brucks presented two maps, orange map showing what roads have had seal coating in the last 4 years and the yellow map showing what roads have NOT. Brucks stated that he researched traffic counts and connectivity routes for the remaining roads. 32nd Street hit all the boxes, the busiest road in the township, it rivals CR 388 in traffic counts and has not been touched in the last 4 years. Brucks presented a Boom Mowing map and Contract Gravel map. Brucks stated that the remainder to CR 388 would be completed this year. Hephner stated she met with the Road Commission and they explained the difference in dust control applications. Hephner stated the dust control the township has been using in the past, is three applications. For the roads this year, it would be around \$35,000.00. Hephner stated if the township went with a different application which is only 1 application per year, it is approx. \$32,500.00. Hephner recommended the township move away from the 3-application dust control to the once-a-year application. A resident asked if there is a time frame for working on the issues resulting from the CR 388 project last fall. VBCRC stated the punch list would be worked on later in the spring, the asphalt companies are not back in business yet. It is high on the priority list. Smith asked when the North Lake Drain would be fixed and he stated “very soon” as it was approved last year but the road commission ran out of time and money. VBCRC stated they are working on renting an excavator for that job as they do not have the right equipment in house.
 2. **VBC Library; Dan Hutchins:** Hutchins stated that on the May 7, 2024 Election, the Van Buren District Library will be asking for a .4 mil for 11 years, that would be \$32.00 per year or \$2.67 per month additional for the average home in the library service area with a market value of \$160,000.00, which is less than a fill up at the gas station. Inflation has diminished the library budget, library material, computer equipment and professional services.
8. **Committee Reports:**
 - A. **County Commission: Submitted.**
 - B. **Road Commission:** CR388 project is waiting on a permit for a culvert, once that comes through it can be advertised for bids. VBCRC has identified a bunch of trees for removal this year, letters will be going out to home owners soon. VBCRC has three projects that are not written up yet but may be presented at a later date, ditching on 12th Avenue, tree work on Paulson Road, and tree and ditching on 29th Street and if the budget that is presented tonight is accepted, there will be approx. 80—90 thousand left for special projects such as these.
 - C. **Sheriff's Report:** 99 complaints for February 2024.
 - D. **KABA:** None – did not meet last month.
 - E. **Fire Chief:** 46 calls to date, confirmed receipt of a FEMA Grant so radios can be purchased. Working with a local State Farm agent to get a JAWS purchased for the station. The new fire truck chassis is in and the check needs to be cut.
 - F. **Fire Board/Fire Budget:** Kehoe stated that the budget was presented. After some discussion, *motion by Smith, supported by Sell to approve the Fire Dept. Operating Budget for the next fiscal year as presented. All yes, motion carried.*
 - G. **Ambulance: Submitted**

H. **Treasurer:** As of 1-31-2024: Mercantile Tax: \$.01 Huntington General: \$432,839.12
T&A: \$9,950.70 Mercantile General: \$173,090.22 Mercantile Cash: \$600,545.13
Huntington Tax: \$4,467.12
PNC Savings: CLOSED Consumers Xtra Protect: \$251,212.30
Consumers Money Market: \$252,433.04 ARPA: \$78,792.74

I. **Planning Commission:** Meeting on 3-18-24 with a Public Hearing on a SLU Application

9. **Old Business:**

1. **Speed Sign:** Sell will contact ESPER Electric (Seth) to schedule repair on the Speed Sign.
2. **Transfer Station Attendant:** Hephner stated due to unforeseen circumstances, the township is in a position where another attendant needs to be hired in case the Transfer Station becomes understaffed. Hephner proposed one of the previous applicants, who has been contacted to see if he was still interested in the position and he is, Mr. Houston, gets hired and working as soon as possible. Hephner stated it is important to talk to the current person that was hired 4 months ago as he is not able to do the job on his own. A letter should be sent and a date set to meet with him and decide what the next steps are. ***Motion by Hephner, supported by Richardson to send Transfer Station employee Robb Rynd a Notice of Hearing letter and advise him of a special meeting hearing on March 12, 2024 at 6 p.m. here at the Township Office. All yes, motion carried.***
3. **MEC Contract:** Smith stated he had the \$10,187.98 figure now and he will finish the contract tomorrow.
4. **Blight Up:** Blight update has already been addressed earlier in meeting with Deputy Tarner.
5. **Street Lights:** Sell stated she looked into replacing all street lights to LED, 9 that would need to be upgraded at a cost of \$10,800.00, upgrading them all to 70 watts. Pam Wescott and Richardson stated all the lights are now working. Smith stated when the lights go out, Consumers Power will upgrade them to LED at no cost to the Township.

10. **New Business:**

1. **Road Projects/Budget:** Total of budget is \$232,327.34. \$30,063.00 for Gravel, \$32,554.00 for Dust Control, \$18,300 for De-burning, \$147,910.34 for Sealing and Fogging of a section of 32nd Street, and the boom mowing that was previously approved for \$3,500.00. ***Motion by Hephner, supported by Sell to approve the Program Sheets from the Road Commission in the amount of \$228,827.34. Roll Call: Richardson – yes, Meert – yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes, Hephner – yes. All yes, motion carried.***
2. **Resolution for 2nd Ave Bridge:** Hephner reported that the VBCRC puts in an application every year for federal and state monies to fix bridges and VBCRD has put in the same request for the bridge on 2nd Avenue several years in a row. VBCRC is asking for a board resolution stating Pine Grove Township supports VBCRD's application, which would require the board to share with them, 5% of the total amount. The anticipated total amount for that bridge would be in 2027 and cost approx. \$1.6 million dollars. The resolution would include that Pine Grove would split 5% of cost with the road commission. 5% is \$80,000.00, so that would be \$40,000.00 from Pine Grove Township. A 10% or even 15% match could possibly make the chances better to be selected for the grant. ***Motion by Meert, supported by Sell to adopt a resolution to support the VBCRC's application for funding the replace the bridge on 2nd Avenue at a 10% split, which would be an \$80,000.00 commitment from Pine Grove Township. Roll Call: Richardson -yes, Meert -yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes, Hephner – yes. All yes, motion carried.***
3. **Hazardous Waste Collection Contract:** ***Motion by Smith, supported by Richardson to renew the contract with the VBCD for Hazardous Waste Collection for 2024-2025 for \$1000.00. Roll Call: Richardson – yes, Meert – yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes, Hephner – yes. All yes, motion carried.***
4. **BCI Video Franchise Agreement:** ***Motion by Smith, supported by Meert to sign the BCI Video Franchise Agreement. Roll Call: Richardson -yes, Meert – yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes, Hephner – yes. All yes, motion carried.***

Motion by Smith, supported by Richardson to approve BCI Metro Agreement. Roll Call: Richardson – yes, Meert -yes, Smith – yes, Sell – yes, Hephner – yes. All yes, motion carried.

5. **Appointments to BOR:** *Motion by Smith, support by Meert to appoint Tom Hephner for a two-year term on the Board of Review. Hephner abstained. 3 yes – 0 nays. Motion carried.*

Motin by Smith, supported by Hephner to appoint Ed Hill for a two-year term on the Board of Review. All yes, motion carried.

11. **Public Discussion:** Pam advised that the church is going to do its annual local business appreciation dinner on Wednesday, March 20th. Sell stated that she attended the supervisor's meeting last week in Lawrence and learned under PA 233 of 2023, it allows large renewable energy projects to no longer have to go through local zoning review, but to straight to the MPSC (Michigan Public Service Commission). MPSC will be allowed to decide about siting of these projects where normally they would have to go through local zoning and possibly get a special land use that the township could apply standards or conditions too. There are petitions to have this put on the November ballot to repeal this legislation. The new legislation goes into effect November 2024. The petitions are by Citizens for Local Choice, email citizensforlocalchoice@gmail.com.
12. **Adjournment:** *Motion made by Smith, supported by Richardson to adjourn. All yes, motion carried. Adjourned at 9:01p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Meert, Pine Grove Township Clerk