

FIFE LAKE TOWNSHIP

**Fife Lake Township Hall, 134 Morgan Street, Fife Lake, MI 49633
231-879-3963 Phone / 231-879-3146 Fax**

Regular Meeting
APPROVED MINUTES

Thursday, January 25, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER: Supervisor Lisa Leedy called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Present:

Supervisor Lisa Leedy, Clerk Leigh Gifford and Treasurer Cathy Sorrow. A quorum was established.

Absent:

Trustee Dawn Zimmerman
Trustee Nicole Gibson

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Amendments to Agenda:

- Correct the year in the Agenda heading from 2023 to 2024
- Add "Weed Committee" and "Lake and Access Committee" to Old Business section
- Add "Election" section to Board Comments

Board Action:

Ms. Sorrow made a motion to accept the Agenda as amended. Ms. Gifford seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

No conflicts.

GUEST REPORTS – SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS:

Audit Presentation

Auditor Ryan Howell of UHY, LLP, CPA (formerly Baird, Cotter & Bishop), delivered a presentation to the Board and members of the public regarding the most recent Township audit.

Mr. Howell discussed the issues and deficit status of the Milfoil Special Assessment District this past year. Ms. Leedy stated the Township's Deficit Reduction Plan was approved by the State Department of Treasury.

Mr. Howell referenced specific funds and PPT reimbursements/distributions, Restricted Funds and the General Fund.

Remaining ARPA funds were noted; Ms. Leedy responded those funds have since been allocated.

Mr. Howell's Management Letters identified deficiency areas. There was Board discussion with Mr. Howell regarding deficiencies and suggestions for improved processes and consistency.

The Audit is available for public viewing. The Board thanked Mr. Howell for his time and presentation.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Supervisor Leedy read the purpose of the Consent Calendar to include:

- Fife Lake Township Special Meeting Minutes of 12/13/23.
- Fife Lake Township Regular Meeting Minutes of 12/21/23.

- Correspondence
- Transfers
- Financial Report
- Committees with no written report in packet (these will only be discussed if pulled from the Consent Calendar)
 - Policy - Lisa Leedy (last meeting cancelled due to weather)
 - Civic Center South
 - Zoning – Lisa Leedy
 - Planning Commission – Dawn Zimmerman (last meeting cancelled due to no quorum)
 - Roads/Lakeshore Drive – Lisa Leedy
 - Board of Review Minutes – Lisa Leedy
 - FLAUA – Leigh Gifford (last meeting cancelled due to no quorum)

Items to be pulled:

Transfers pulled – move to Items Not in the Consent Calendar.

Amendments to 12/13/23 Special Meeting Minutes:

None.

Amendments to 12/21/23 Regular Meeting Minutes:

None.

Board Action:

Ms. Sorrow made a motion to approve the Consent Calendar as amended. Ms. Gifford seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Leedy-Y, Sorrow-Y, Gifford-Y. 3-Yes, 0-No. Motion carried.

Items Not in Consent Calendar (but typically would be):

Transfers:

Supervisor Leedy is uncertain whether the previous budget was approved by line items or budget centers. She noted there are four line items over budget: Insurance, Buildings & Grounds, Supplies and Milfoil. There was Board discussion to assess the redistribution of funds to balance accounts. Supervisor Leedy recommended the transfer of \$10,000 to the overage accounts.

Board Action:

Ms. Leedy made a motion to move \$10,000 from Fund Balance to cover the following:

- \$1,346 to Insurance account ending #840
- \$1,000 to Wages under Buildings and Grounds account ending #702
- \$1,000 to Supplies account ending #752
- \$1,000 to Boat Landing account ending #802
- \$5,654 to Buildings and Grounds in the General Budget Center Account #26500

Ms. Gifford seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Gifford-Y, Sorrow-Y, Leedy-Y. 3-Yes, 0-No. Motion carried.

Bills to be Paid:

The Ask Clerk & Ask Treasurer report questions were cleared. Ms. Leedy would like the Grand Traverse County ARPA Grant monies specifically identified in the Chart of Accounts as County provided funds to avoid confusion with Federal ARPA monies received by the Township. There was Board consensus for her to ask H&R Block to make this change.

Supervisor Leedy recommended removing Fife Lake Village fees from the Bills to be Paid as it was previously agreed to approve a lump sum payment per the contract in place.

Withhold the Shoreline Power invoice as a final inspection is still needed once the work is completed.

Board Action:

Ms. Gifford made a motion to pay bills as amended. Ms. Sorrow seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:
Sorrow-Y, Gifford-Y, Leedy-Y. 3-Yes, 0-No. Motion carried.

Items Removed from Consent Calendar:

CITIZEN COMMENT:

Mr. Shane Lewis, 11744 East State Street, Fife Lake, MI 49633

Mr. Lewis expressed concern about marihuana in the area and the effect on children. He cited a Colorado case. He asked the Board to provide education to high school level students. He is willing to participate in this effort.

Mr. Lewis referred to spot zoning in the Zoning Ordinance and believes the park exemption may be considered illegal and should be further addressed.

REPORTS:

County Commissioner, Mr. Darryl Nelson:

Absent – No Report.

Sheriff Department - Grand Traverse County Deputy Whetstone, Fife Lake Township Community Police Officer (CPO):

Last meeting cancelled due to no quorum. Deputy Whetstone's Citation, Accident and Arrest Statistics Report is in the meeting packet.

Deputy Whetstone reported Michigan State Police have been assisting in traffic enforcement including warrant arrests. There has been a reduction in larcenies. He advised that lake ice is not thick. He possesses an inflatable boat, equipment and deployable drone in his cruiser for lake rescues.

Ambulance/Fire/Emergency Planning – Ms. Nicole Gibson:

Absent. Report and Minutes in Consent Calendar.

Supervisor Leedy reported EMS had 34 calls for service in Fife Lake Township and two in Springfield Township in December. The report also outlines training programs planned.

Supervisor Leedy met with Kalkaska Memorial Hospital regarding previously discussed billing to residents for ambulance service. They discussed the language and services provided under the contract. It was determined the hospital is allowed to bill for the co-pay. It was noted the Township receives service in the range of \$800k/year and pays \$100k.

Fire Chief Scott Tinker:

Chief Tinker reported there were nine calls for service during the month of December. These included structure fires, motor vehicle accidents and a downed power line. Several calls included mutual aid received and provided. His full report is in the meeting packet.

Chief Tinker stated the Department was awarded a \$189k FEMA Grant for the purchase of 20 air packs. Fit tests and training have been completed. The air packs will be installed in February.

The Fire Department was also awarded a \$30k grant from the State of Michigan for flash lights/personal seek imaging cameras, eight new sets of gear, two sets of extrication gear and a new instant command system.

He is on a committee with Crawford, Kalkaska and Roscommon Counties to pursue a regional grant with a focus on communications equipment. The Fife Lake Department will be asking for new radios; currently, radios are borrowed from Grand Traverse County.

Supervisor Leedy stated Chief Tinker is working on the Fire/EMS Board Capital Improvement Plan and Equipment Replacement Schedule.

Chief Tinker noted concern about parking at the Township Hall on the evenings FLAUA holds meetings at the building. The Fire Department meets and trains at the Township Hall every Wednesday. Clerk Gifford has spoken with FLAUA about exploring a different location for their meetings (third Wednesday of the month).

Fife Lake Village – Village President Mr. Tom Hempsted:

Absent. Minutes in Consent Calendar.

Fife Lake Chamber of Commerce – Ms. Deb McCool:

Absent. No report.

Fife Lake DDA – Ms. Linda Forwerck:

Absent. No Report.

Cemetery Report – Sexton Lisa Plamondon / Cathy Sorrow:

Treasurer Sorrow noted the Cemetery Fee Schedule is an Agenda item in this evening's meeting.

Supervisor Leedy reported that Sexton Plamondon and Ms. Sorrow developed a Cemetery Lot Ownership form. Ms. Leedy will post it to the website for public data input to cross-reference with cemetery records.

NEW BUSINESS:

Garage Door Replacement (1 door):

A previously authorized RFQ was posted for a new garage door on the fire barn. Four vendors conducted site visits; one sealed bid was received. Clerk Gifford opened the bid submitted by Mr. Matt Beattie of Wexford Door Service. She read aloud their bid and specifications:

\$5,463.87 (door)

\$1,000.00 (install new door and remove/dispose old door)

\$6,463.87 total

Terms are 50% down; 50% completion.

Supervisor Leedy stated the remaining Grand Traverse County ARPA Grant funds (approximately \$7,000) would be used for this expense.

Board Action:

Ms. Gifford made a motion to accept the bid from Wexford Door Service in the amount of \$6,463.87. This expense will be paid from the Grand Traverse County ARPA Grant funds. Ms. Sorrow seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Leedy-Y, Gifford-Y, Sorrow-Y. 3-Yes, 0-No. Motion carried.

Clerk Gifford will advise Wexford Door Service of the acceptance of their bid.

Poverty Rate Resolution:

The proposed 2024 Poverty Exemption Policy & Guidelines, with Federal and State poverty income level data, was in the meeting packet. This information is utilized by the Board of Review for use in considering poverty exemptions.

Board Action:

Ms. Sorrow made a motion to adopt the 2024 Poverty Exemption Policy & Guidelines, Resolution #2024-01 as presented. Ms. Gifford seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Leedy-Y, Gifford-Y, Sorrow-Y. 3-Yes, 0-No. Motion carried.

Marihuana License Renewal – JNN Properties:

A marihuana license renewal application was received from JNN Properties, a grow operation. The application has been reviewed by the Township; all renewal requirements were met. Supervisor Leedy confirmed with the State of Michigan there were no outstanding issues with this applicant.

Board Action:

Ms. Gifford made a motion to approve the Marihuana License Renewal Application for JNN Properties as submitted. Ms. Sorrow seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Update Schedule of Fees:

A proposed updated Fife Lake Township Permit Fee Schedule was in the meeting packet. There was Board review and discussion.

Board Action:

Ms. Sorrow made a motion to approve the revised Fife Lake Township Permit Fee Schedule as submitted. Ms. Gifford seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Zoning (Update from MSUE/MAP):

Ms. Leedy reported she was asked to explore any mentorship programs or support services that may be available through the MSU Extension (MSUE) or Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) to aid in the Township's search for a Zoning Administrator.

Ms. Mary Reilly of MSUE has offered to provide guidance to individuals who have completed Zoning and Planning Training. MAP does not appear to have support opportunities outside of their sponsored training and education programs.

Ms. Leedy stated there are currently five Zoning vacancies in Grand Traverse County and several in Kalkaska County. She spoke with MSUE educators on how to attract candidates to pursue training and education. It was suggested municipalities invest in Zoning in order to attract qualified applicants.

She researched the Ordinance Enforcement Officer role as previously discussed. An Ordinance would need to be adopted by the Board. She is reviewing Ordinance examples prior to presenting options to the Board. She is also investigating budget applications. Clerk Gifford noted in the past, there was an Ordinance Enforcement Officer.

Supervisor Leedy noted the Zoning Report was inadvertently not included in the meeting packet. She received numerous calls regarding Zoning. No Land Use Permits have been issued in the past month. There are multiple land division, land accommodation and re-zonings anticipated. She has also received many Ordinance questions.

Grant for Lake Study:

The Lake Study grant application previously discussed was not completed; however, Supervisor Leedy is working on a different Lake Study grant application. More information will follow.

Committees seeking members/appointments:

Appointment to Fife Lake Area Utility Authority (FLAUA):

Fife Lake Township Clerk Leigh Gifford's term on the FLAUA Board has expired; she is seeking reappointment.

Board Action:

Ms. Leedy made a motion to reappoint Ms. Leigh Gifford to the Fife Lake Area Utility Authority (FLAUA) for another term. Ms. Sorrow seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Appointment to Fife Lake Area Planning Commission (FLAPC):

There are two vacancies for the FLAPC; one is a joint placement for the Township/Village and one is for the remainder of a Township seat term. Two applications have been received.

Ms. Tiffany Ely applied for the Township seat.

Board Action:

Ms. Sorrow made a motion to appoint Ms. Tiffany Ely to the Fife Lake Area Planning Commission, representing Fife Lake Township. Ms. Gifford seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Ms. Brenda Wyatt applied for the joint FLT/FLV seat.

Board Action:

Ms. Gifford made a motion to appoint Ms. Brenda Wyatt to the Fife Lake Area Planning Commission's joint Fife Lake Township/Fife Lake Village seat. Ms. Sorrow seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

This approval will be forwarded to the Village for their authorization for this joint seat.

Appointment to Board of Review (BOR):

There are no applicants at this time.

Appointment to Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA):

There is a vacancy due to Ms. Jayme Werner's appointment to Fife Lake Township Deputy Supervisor. Ms. Chanda Allen has applied for this seat.

Board Action:

Ms. Sorrow made a motion to appoint Ms. Chanda Allen to the Fife Lake Township Board of Appeals. Ms. Gifford seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Status Update on Joint Oak Wilt Committee with Fife Lake Village:

It remains unknown whether the Village established the Oak Wilt Committee which will be in partnership with the Township. The Township has one application for this Committee. This will be submitted once the Village forms the Committee.

Weed and Lake & Access Committee Candidates:

Mr. Nick Newell has applied to the Weed Committee.

Board Action:

Ms. Leedy made a motion to appoint Mr. Nick Newell to the Fife Lake Township Weed Committee. Ms. Sorrow seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Lake and Access Committee:

Ms. Deb Newell has applied to the Lake and Access Committee.

Board Action:

Ms. Leedy made a motion to appoint Ms. Deb Newell to the Lake and Access Committee. Ms. Sorrow seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Outstanding Task List:

The Outstanding Task List was reviewed. New tasks were added throughout the meeting and completed items removed.

YouTube / Livestream Meetings:

The Board previously approved livestreaming public meetings on YouTube. YouTube has approved the Fife Lake Township channel; however, requires a minimum of 50 subscribers before allowing livestreams. The channel name is: "Fife Lake Township". Everyone is encouraged to subscribe; there is no fee. Once the minimum subscriber count is met, live meetings can be streamed. Previously recorded videos can be viewed by anyone at any time.

Certified Zoning Services Request:

Supervisor Leedy reported former Fife Lake Township Zoning Administrator Bob Hall submitted correspondence requesting full payment for his last month of employment. Mr. Hall is requesting a balance due of \$357.97 by February 1, 2024.

The Board previously addressed the issue that he did not work all of the scheduled days and approved pro-rated payment for actual time worked. This Board action is outlined in the September 28, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes.

The Board will prepare a written response to Mr. Hall and accompany it with the September 28, 2023 approved Minutes.

CITIZEN COMMENT:

Ms. Mary Ellen Dilley, 8611 East Sparling Road, Fife Lake, MI 49633:

Ms. Dilley attended the Grand Traverse County Road Commission meeting earlier this evening. She stated after a costly, 2.5 year fight, the Road Commission voted in a Public Hearing to formally return East Sparling Road's status to an all-season, county-maintained road in their records. Ms. Dilley asked for this information to be entered into the public record in these Minutes.

Mr. Jeff Berthiaume, 8945 Wil-Pet Drive, Fife Lake, MI 49633:

Mr. Berthiaume stated in attempting to pay taxes during the winter storm, the parking lot did not look as though it had been plowed for the emergency vehicles. He inquired if the Township was receiving the contracted service from the new plow provider. Clerk Gifford stated the lot has been plowed when it has snowed. Treasurer Sorrow reported Mr. Stocking had plowed at 3:30 a.m., is aware of the tax collection schedule and that the emergency building is a priority.

Supervisor Leedy noted after the initial plow, there wasn't additional snowfall; however, much snow had blown off the roof. Mr. Stocking was contacted, responded immediately and checked the lot several times thereafter throughout the storm.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES/COMMENTS:

Election:

Clerk Gifford stated mandatory training for Election Workers is scheduled for 1/29/24 for the new nine-day early voting process. The Public Accuracy test will be held 2/7/24; she will publish this. She presented the proposed list of Election Workers. The Clerk has applications for any candidate wishing to run for an office.

Board Action:

Ms. Leedy made a motion to amend the Agenda to add the list of 2024 Election Workers for approval. Ms. Sorrow seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Treasurer Sorrow reported she is working with Express Pay for online credit card payment of property taxes.

Supervisor Leedy attended the Capital Conference in Lansing and met with numerous departments (EGLE, DNR, USDA, Treasury, Cannabis) and legislators including Mr. John Roth. They discussed statutory and constitutional revenue sharing. The MTA is attempting a constitutional budget amendment for Townships to receive revenue sharing in a more equitable way. She also learned more about local control on the solar issue. She will email the Board information she received regarding state elections and changes from the Department of Treasury.

Ms. Leedy announced the MTA Chapter meeting will be held at Mulligan's at noon on 2/1/24.

The next Supervisors' Meeting with the Grand Traverse County Road Commission is scheduled for 2/14/24 from 9-11 am. The meeting packet includes a letter from the Road Commission to the Conservation Resource Alliance requesting it be included in their funding application for grant money regarding the Ramsey Road Bridge for bridge repair and culvert replacement.

Grand Traverse County sponsored a meeting with Supervisors and Traverse Connect to announce creation of a County Economic Development and Community Development position. Roles and responsibilities were discussed.

Ms. Leedy also met with the County on 1/25/24 regarding Epic GT online permitting. Issues with the User Dashboard have been resolved. She expressed interest in Fife Lake Township participating with this program. She recommended they explore a broadband digital equity grant to aid in funding, training and public education.

Ms. Leedy also met with TART Trails to discuss ways to improve trail connectivity.

2024 Election Worker List:

Board Action:

Ms. Leedy made a motion to approve the list of 2024 Election Workers as presented by Clerk Gifford. Ms. Sorrow seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Gifford-Y, Leedy-Y, Sorrow-Y. 3-Yes, 0-No. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

Board Action:

Ms. Sorrow made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Gifford seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Submitted by: Kay Z. Held, Recording Secretary