

TOWNSHIP OF THORNAPPLE

Eric Schaefer, *Supervisor* / Debra K Buckowing, *Treasurer* / Cindy A. Willshire, *Clerk*
 Curt Campbell, *Trustee* / Ross DeMaagd, *Trustee* / Kim Selleck, *Trustee* / Sandra Rairigh, *Trustee*

269-795-7202 - Fax 269-795-8812 - thornapple-twp.org
 PO Box 459 - 200 E Main St. - Middleville, MI 49333



REGULAR MEETING ZOOM MEETING & IN PERSON June 14, 2021

1. INVOCATION
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ROLL CALL

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL:	Buckowing: Present Campbell: Present DeMaagd: Present Rairigh: Present	Schaefer: Present Selleck: Present Willshire: Present
OTHERS PRESENT:	Catherine Getty, Chief Randy Eaton, Amy Brown, Rachel Frantz, Clayton Kruisenga, Rachael Kruisenga, Rob Raney, Sarah Nelson	

4. APPROVAL OF PRINTED AGENDA:

MOTION STATED:	Campbell – Approve the printed agenda as amended by Schaefer with the addition of 2 items. 12 A. Treasurer’s Report 2020 PPT Reimbursement and 10 B. Unfinished Business Amend budget of GL# 101-265-970.000 from \$10,000.00 to \$11,000.00.
MOTION SUPPORTED:	Willshire
MOTION STATUS:	Approved by voice vote. 7 ayes and 0 no’s.

5. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

MOTION STATED:	Buckowing – Approve the consent agenda as presented.
MOTION SUPPORTED:	Willshire
MOTION STATUS:	Approved by voice vote. 7 ayes and 0 no’s.

6. FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT: Rob Raney, resident on Noffke Dr. with a vacant lot across the street. Introduced Rachael and Clayton who have plans to build on the lot across the street. Recently found that the Sewer Authority recommended and had approved an increase the sewer hook up fee from \$8,400.00 to \$25,000.00. He would like to wait until after the sewer authority report to make further comment on that.

7. COUNTY REPORT:

County Commissioner Catherine Getty:	An ARPA Task Force has been created to advise townships and help them prioritize needs and where to invest money coming in. There is plenty of time to make decisions and the treasurer has done a good job staying on top of the processes for the township and begun setting up accounts to prepare to receive the funds. In other business the equalization rates have been approved for summer taxes. Broadband expansion in the area is moving forward but there are
---	---

	<p>still more discussions to be had. Questions to be answered are: where has fiber been laid already and where is it still needed? Can it be set down along with work of road commission? Are there grant funds available. How do we leverage funding? Could a consultant firm be hired to assist with moving forward? Getty stated she had been attending Regional Planning Commission meetings where economic development and long-range plans have been discussed. The Barry County Parks & Recreation board is planning on holding the Annual Father's Day Car Show this year at Charleton Park. However, they, like so many employers, are having trouble hiring seasonal workers. Also, they just contracted for a County Wide Trail Plan involving the Blue Zone, Trail Association and TAPRC to review the North Country Trail and the Paul Henry Trail to plan how to connect schools, places of work and local businesses to the existing trail system.</p>
<p>Board Response:</p>	<p>Rairigh asked Getty if she had heard anything more about making broadband an essential service? Getty answered that there has been talk about that being done and there is a lot of funding coming down the pike, but the budget there hasn't been established yet. Being a committee without funding makes it very difficult to get things done. Everyone is eligible for the funds, so there will be shortages so want to be ready when funds become available.</p>

8. RESERVED TIME: None

9. CLERK'S REPORT: Included in the Consent Agenda.

10. TREASURER'S REPORT:

A. Township has been in contact with the Treasury Department at the State of Michigan to find out why the PPT reimbursement funds haven't been received for 2020. There was a clerical error on a form which resulted in another entity receiving the township's funds. This is a report that isn't filled out by the township nor does it see the form. The treasurer has been in contact with that entity and the township will have those funds repaid very soon but are just checking everything to ensure that the amount matches up correctly. The township will have approximately another \$30,000.00 that is all due to emergency services and they will work with the auditor to get those funds posted to the 2020 fiscal year.

11. EMERGENCY SERVICES REPORT:

A. Garage Door Safety Switch Repairs (NTE \$6,700.00) – Last month at the EMS committee meeting talked about the bottom pressure sensors not working. They had Zylstra Door come out and review the situation and provided some options. They would like to go with the Lift Master Light Curtain. It scans the 3 ft. distance so that if there is a bumper or a foot in the way, it will go back up. This will be placed higher than residential because the bumper on the ambulance and trucks is higher. Willshire asked to which GL account this expenditure would be assigned. Eaton answered that he would like it to come out of Buildings and Grounds

with a 50/50 split to EMS and Fire. DeMaagd asked why it is less money. Eaton explained the \$3700.00 put on the agenda was actually the most expensive unit. Schaefer added it was prior to knowing if it was going to detect in the final 6 inches. Campbell asked if it was within budget. Eaton stated yes.

MOTION STATED:	DeMaagd – Motion to approve the upgrade of the safety system for all six garage doors for a cost of \$3,150.00.
MOTION SUPPORTED:	Rairigh
MOTION STATUS:	Approved with a roll call vote of 7 yes's and 0 no's.

ROLL CALL VOTE:	Buckowing:	Yes	Schaefer:	Yes
	Campbell:	Yes	Selleck:	Yes
	DeMaagd:	Yes	Willshire:	Yes
	Rairigh:	Yes		

B. Hiring of two people – Eaton explained that he had two applicants that he would like to hire. The first is the son of a former fire fighter and he is currently working second shift in maintenance and working towards an electrical apprenticeship. The second applicant just recently graduated and took her EMT class through KCTC. She is going to retake the test but is also interested in the Fire side so would like to go ahead and start there. DeMaagd asked if the motion is to move ahead with the screening or if that is already complete. Eaton explained the motion he is asking for is to hire them pending the screening. One has already completed their screening but the other one hasn't.

MOTION STATED:	Motion by DeMaagd to hire two new applicants for paid on call fire.
MOTION SUPPORTED:	Buckowing
MOTION STATUS:	Approved by voice vote. 7 ayes and 0 no's.

C. Chief's Run Report Summary – Typical monthly report given to EMS committee but there are a few highlights to talk about. Turn over from's and turn over to's. There were 5 turn over to other agencies in May but took 21 calls for other services. This trend has happened month after month. This is due in part to the staffing issues that other agencies are having. Had five mutual aid fire calls in May to other agencies. Two of them were actual house fires in Hastings, not just calls where they thought they could be something. May ended with 110 calls and 499 calls for their year to date total, which is 111 more than last year at this time. One day with 9 calls. Four days with 6 calls and another with 5 calls, 30 of 31 days had at least one call, 12 double hits, 5 transports lost on the 12 double hits. Biggest turn over from's are from Mercy Health in Hastings. Last Tuesday on the 8th, Barry County Medical Control Authority met at the TTES building with Julie Calley and Luke Froncheck to talk about the shortages of EMS workers. EMS is not considered an essential service by the State of Michigan due to some legislation passed back in the 1940's. However, during the 1940's, Fire Departments were designated an essential service which means that the township has to provide fire protection to its residents. Therefore, the funding is not as dedicated towards EMS. The Michigan Ambulance Association is trying to get some legislation passed which does designate EMS as an essential service but have not been able to do so as of yet. They also talked about the overall situation in the county regarding ambulance coverage. ALS

has 4 ambulances on standby at any given time, Nashville has one and Mercy has two in Hastings. The south end of the county relies on coverage from Mercy from Hastings or Life Care from Kalamazoo or Calhoun County. The response time has been upwards of 40 minutes. So, if you think about a person cutting their arm or having a heart attack when the first hour is critical, that 40 minutes is waiting for an ambulance. Nashville was in the newspaper recently because they lost a couple of paramedics because they don't offer health insurance to their employees. Because of the shortages that causes more strain on other agencies to cover other areas. About 10 years ago there were about 1200 paramedics entering EMS from the classroom, but now there are about 220. Willshire asked Eaton why. Eaton explained because of the low wages. With just two or three semesters more they can become nurses with better pay and better work schedules. Willshire asked if they had any solutions. Eaton explained this meeting was to give information to Julie Calley. Eaton explained part of the issue is Medicaid. For example, if they charge a patient with Medicaid \$700.00 for services, they will only be paid \$233.00. That is the most they pay back on any ALS call. Thornapple Township is in a payor landscape with Medicare and corporate insurance and not a lot of Medicaid which is better than many other places where 40 to 50% is Medicaid. The state also charges about \$3 in taxes for each transport they take. Barry County Central Dispatch statistics show that ambulance requests went up 18.1% from 2019 to 2020. MFR requests went up 22.88%. In 2016 dispatch sent all ambulances 6953 times, last year ambulance calls were 7850. 11 individuals completed the swift water rescue. It was very educational, and they learned a lot. Rairigh asked Eaton about the new ambulance. Eaton said it was held up due to COVID, but it is expected to arrive in the first week of July or so.

12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. IVS Comm Phone Quote – Schaefer explained that IVS strongly suggested that the township rewire the network cabling for an additional \$2500.00. This brings their quote in line with what was budgeted as the cost of updating the phone systems. The old cables were installed in 1991. The TTES building is still state of the art even though it was opened in 2004. Their quote comes in at \$9,630.00. There is an additional item that Schaefer asked them about which is a point to point service. This would allow the township hall to get rid of internet service and tie into the TTES building's internet service. This would mean getting rid of the \$600 to \$700 monthly cost of internet that is currently being spent, so getting rid of that would save a lot of money. Schaefer explained that pretty much everything is in place right now, but not up to date. This would bring the point to point up to current technology. DeMaagd asked if it was like Wi-Fi. Schaefer said similar but its just from one location to another so it's more secure. Rairigh asked if 3,000 outbound minutes per month would be enough. If it isn't, how much are the additional minutes? Schaefer explained that it goes in buckets of 1500 minute buckets and it is \$75. It is only outgoing minutes. The owner of the company guaranteed that it's likely never going to go over. Schaefer acknowledged it is a possibility because he is a salesman, but Schaefer thinks it will be enough. Campbell said this looks better than what the current rate is. Schaefer said it will be \$150 per month. Rairigh asked if the cell phones have a cap. Buckowing stated no, there are unlimited minutes so that is another possibility for outgoing calls. Buckowing thanked the committee of Piering, Campbell and Schaefer on their work. Schaefer admitted that the 3 lines at \$50 a piece will be ported over to IVS. Buckowing asked when this would take place. Schaefer said it would likely be in two to three months. Rairigh asked if it would be done over a weekend. Campbell said yes, the actual cutover would happen on a Friday or weekend but the set up would happen weeks in advance. Selleck stated he has had VOIP at home for years and the only problem is that he doesn't have 911 service. Will this be an issue here? Schaefer said he also has had Spectrum internet at home

for years and does have 911. He just had to go through some extra steps to have that in place and the township would do the same. Campbell said they had talked about that with IVS and confirmed it is available.

MOTION STATED:	Willshire - Motion to approve both the IVS phone service quote and the point to point quote for a total amount of \$10,380.00.
MOTION SUPPORTED:	Buckowing
MOTION STATUS:	Approved with a roll call vote of 7 yes's and 0 no's.

ROLL CALL VOTE:	Buckowing:	Yes	Schaefer:	Yes
	Campbell:	Yes	Selleck:	Yes
	DeMaagd:	Yes	Willshire:	Yes
	Rairigh:	Yes		

B. Budget Amendment Request – Schaefer stated he would like to amend the budget for the phone system upgrade at \$10,000, but with the point to point upgrade that brought it up just over that amount. Therefore, Schaefer would like to amend GL# 101-265-970.00 from \$10,000 to \$11,000.00.

MOTION STATED:	Rairigh – Motion to amend the budget for GL# 101-265-970.00 from \$10,000 to \$11,000.00.
MOTION SUPPORTED:	Buckowing
MOTION STATUS:	Approved with a roll call vote of 7 yes's and 0 no's.

ROLL CALL VOTE:	Buckowing:	Yes	Schaefer:	Yes
	Campbell:	Yes	Selleck:	Yes
	DeMaagd:	Yes	Willshire:	Yes
	Rairigh:	Yes		

13. NEW BUSINESS:

A. 7% Insurance Undercharge (11/20/2019 Special Meeting Minutes) – Rairigh stated that when the medical insurance was discussed in November of 2019, there was supposed to be a 7% premium share. However, when the rate went up last December 1st, the dollar amount stayed the same rather than going with the So the question is, do we want to go back and collect that and if so how do we want to do that? Schaefer stated that he had added into the agenda a calculation sheet put together by Amy Brown that shows how much it would be per person if they went back to April or December. DeMaagd said it was his understanding it was to take effect April 1. Is that, not right? Rairigh said that it did on April 1 of 2020. DeMaagd said he missed a year. The additional rate increases at the renewal time of December did not take effect. Willshire said she thought the idea was for it to increase in April when the potential for pay raises occurred. Rairigh said she didn't know how everyone feels about it. Also, Rairigh said she asked several times about how the renewal came to be. She asked Jelsema as well and no one seems to remember. Willshire said she couldn't find it either. Buckowing said she

had looked back as well, and her guess is it was part of the October budget meeting, but it wasn't detailed there. Rairigh said none of the four trustees ever remember doing it. Jelsema did not remember voting on the renewal. Rairigh thought the original plan was for the township to look at ways to reduce the cost of insurance. However, with the additional increase in the rate from 2019/20 to 2020/21 policy and taking the 7%, the overall cost to the township is still going up, not down. Rairigh asked the board if they want to go back and collect it or throw it to the wind? Schaefer said he would only want to pay his portion, not Bremer's part. Selleck asked if the employee is in arrears by about \$12. Selleck said part of him is saying that it's our mistake so how do we go back and charge them for it, but he thinks it should be adjusted so they are paying 7% going forward. Buckowing said that it is taxpayer monies and that is the first thing to remember. Selleck said he is open to adjusting it going forward and to rectifying it going back. Buckowing asked if the total amount going back was the \$30.07 for a person who had family coverage. Willshire said yes. Buckowing said so we aren't talking about tons of money. She didn't think that was enough to break anyone, so she thinks it's worth clearing it up. Rairigh asked for a one-time occurrence? Buckowing said yes. Buckowing asked Eaton if that would hurt anyone on the TTES side. Eaton said if they knew about it ahead of time, they would be ok with it. Willshire stated that it did not have to be on the next payroll, but it could occur in August or at another time as well to give employees prior notice. Rairigh asked what we have to do about the renewal of the medical insurance vote that didn't happen. Buckowing asked Rairigh if she would like one of us to check with the MTA or legal counsel to clarify and bring that to the July meeting? Schaefer asked the board if they were comfortable with tabling the discussion until then. No response was returned so Schaefer said he would table it.

MOTION STATED:	Buckowing – Motion to have employees make a one-time payment of the insurance payroll deduction arrearages owed due to the premium increase beginning on December 1 and pending notification of employees prior to it being processed.
MOTION SUPPORTED:	Campbell
MOTION STATUS:	Approved by voice vote. 7 ayes and 0 no's.

B. Amend GL 804-000-702.000 to \$13,440.00 – Schaefer stated he would like to amend the budgeted amount for Bryan Finkbeiner's salary as he had a typo and forgot to add a zero. Campbell explained that Bryan was being paid correctly, this just amends the budget.

MOTION STATED:	Willshire – Motion to approve the budget amendment of GL# 804-000-702.000 to \$13,440.00.
MOTION SUPPORTED:	Campbell
MOTION STATUS:	Approved with a roll call vote of 7 yes's and 0 no's.

ROLL CALL VOTE:	Buckowing: Yes	Schaefer: Yes
	Campbell: Yes	Selleck: Yes
	DeMaagd: Yes	Willshire: Yes
	Rairigh: Yes	

C. Oak Opening Committee – Schaefer explained that he would like to form a committee with himself, Sarah Nelson, Randy Eaton, Elaine Denton, Laura Bouchard and Catherine Getty. Kim Selleck said he would like to also be on the committee. Sarah Nelson commended the board for the good job they have done with preserving the grasses and wanting to take care of the sassafras and supporting the educational opportunities and community opportunities. Nelson just wanted to thank the board for inviting her to join the committee. DeMaagd stated that when you have a committee but don't have resources you can't do much, so what are we going to do with this committee? Will it obligate the committee to take a certain action? Getty explained that Nelson said there could be grant funds available depending on what was determined. Nelson said she wouldn't look at the formation of the committee as a way to generate funds for the site because a lot of it could be grants, donations or community volunteers. Since the site is already being managed this isn't likely to create further expense but rather just a way to look at the big picture and make strategic long-range management plans.

MOTION STATED:	Buckowing – Motion to establish an Oak Opening Preservation Committee with the caveat that the committee would present to the board prior to making any expenditures.
MOTION SUPPORTED:	Willshire
MOTION STATUS:	Approved by voice vote. 7 ayes and 0 no's.

D. Barry County Fair Booth Costs & Volunteer Sign up- Schaefer requested the board approve the purchase of koozie cups and his idea is to provide fair goers with an ice-cold bottle of water with a koozie cup with the Thornapple Township logo on it. They are .45 cents a piece and he would like to order a 1,000. Schaefer found that a few years ago the township had purchased fans at .47 cents apiece. DeMaagd asked what the chances are you will need 1,000. Schaefer thought with the heat, that many people would be coming by the booth during that week. DeMaagd stated he wasn't much into silly purchases like a koozie cup. Schaefer reminded the board that there was a sign-up link for volunteering. Buckowing also reminded the board that the purpose of the shared booth is it is a way to network with counterparts at the county and the village as well as meeting with residents. Rairigh asked when the T-shirt orders would be due. Schaefer answered that it is due tomorrow and that each person was paying for their own T-shirt.

MOTION STATED:	Willshire – Motion to approve an expenditure not to exceed \$900 for the purchase of promotional items and booth.
MOTION SUPPORTED:	Rairigh
MOTION STATUS:	Approved with a roll call vote of 6 yes's and 1 no's.

ROLL CALL VOTE:	Buckowing: Yes	Schaefer: Yes
	Campbell: Yes	Selleck: Yes
	DeMaagd: No	Willshire: Yes
	Rairigh: Yes	

E. DLSA Rate Study 2021 – Schaefer explained they had paid \$4,300.00 for the rate study. DLSA has a meeting scheduled for July 6. Buckowing asked about the current revenues on page 4 what the \$25,000 would be? Campbell explained that would be one person hooking up to the system. Buckowing asked where the DLSA is in regard to reviewing the rates. Campbell said they would be looking at the rate study at that meeting. Selleck explained that the revenues listed in the rate study are just scenarios to help determine the action for the board to take. Buckowing stated she wanted to wait until the DLSA met and brought a recommendation to the board. Buckowing has concerns about the hook-up rate increase as the auditor asked about how the hook-up fee was derived at because the township should not be making any money on the fees, but they should only cover the costs. Selleck said that the rate was set based on an educational guess, but they did not have the rate study at that point. Selleck said the DLSA does want to be fair to all those who already live on the lake as well. Rairigh asked Campbell if short term rentals would be brought up at this same meeting? Campbell said that would be a different meeting in the fall.

14. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Administration (Schaefer, Buckowing, Willshire) Nothing

B. Cemetery (Willshire, DeMaagd, Rairigh) They have met and are working on the road repairs. Willshire thanked everyone for the work done to help prepare for the Memorial Day ceremony that took place.

C. Middleville DDA Report (Schaefer) – The market and river bank music series are up and running every Friday. There will be refreshments from local groups such as the Lions or Rotary. The movies are held the second Sunday of the month. The DDA and Lion’s Club are working on an Independence Day celebration.

D. Elections (Willshire, Buckowing, Schaefer) Nothing

E. Emergency Services (DeMaagd, Schaefer, Rairigh) Already covered.

F. Finance (Buckowing, Willshire, Rairigh) – There is an MTA webinar coming up this Thursday from 2 pm to 3:30 pm regarding the ARPA funding. It is really important to prepare for this.

G. Parks and Recreation Representative (Getty) – T-ball is done but 8 youth through 14 youth are still playing games through today’s rain. They are still doing Covid testing for 13 and older athletes.

H. Personnel – Compensation (Willshire, Campbell, Schaefer) Nothing

I. Property and Public Utilities (Selleck, DeMaagd, Campbell) Nothing

J. Roads and Highways (Campbell, DeMaagd, Selleck) Dust control has been put down on all the gravel roads now. Schaefer explained that the contractor was about a month late due to employee shortages.

K. Duncan Lake Sewer (Campbell, Selleck, Schaefer) This has been covered.

15. SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

A. Rob Raney – A Barry County resident of 21 years living on Duncan Lake and he bought a lot across from him in 2007. When he went to the DLSA meeting it was very informational. He got a copy of the rate study recently. At best guess estimates there are 23 residences that own lots. He bought it not to build on it, but more as extra space. However, now his daughter Rachael and her husband Clayton are looking for a house, but the cost of buying is extra high, so the alternative is construction. That is also very high. As a career banker, he knows that when people look at buying a vacant lot, the first question they ask is if it perks. If it doesn't, they won't buy it so the value of the lot goes way down. He feels a good estimate of cost for placing a septic is \$35,000 to \$40,000, but on top of that it's another \$10,000 to \$12,000 to get a well so you \$45,000 to \$50,000 to flush a toilet. He understands that right now the system needs to be updated. If no one builds at that cost, then there would be more revenue coming in. The prices are just egregious. Also, in the township they are only collecting taxes on a pole barn, but if you put a home for two professionals the taxes on that property would be much higher. He said he would likely be at the next board meeting because controlled development is ok. So even though this case is personal, it is also as a concerned resident for those who may want to sell a lot in the future.

B. Rachel Frantz, Barry County Conservation District – New recycling coordinator for Barry County so wanted to meet the board and learn more about the recycling opportunities in Thornapple Township. Also plans to help out at the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Days. DeMaagd asked when that would be. Frantz stated that the next one is tentatively scheduled for September 18 at the Barry County Fairgrounds. DeMaagd asked if they had already had one this Spring. Frantz stated that they had. Schaefer thanked Frantz for coming in.

16. POLL OF MEMBERS:

Kim Selleck (Trustee) – Nice to see faces again.

Sandy Rairigh (Trustee) – Nothing.

Ross DeMaagd (Trustee) – I think we're done.

Curt Campbell (Trustee) – I'm good, thanks.

Deb Buckowing (Treasurer) – I have nothing.

Cindy Willshire (Clerk) – Nothing from me.

Eric Schaefer (Supervisor) – Glad to see faces and get back to normal.

18. ADJOURNMENT:

TIME: 8:37 P.M.

MOTION STATED:	Campbell
MOTION SUPPORTED:	Willshire
MOTION STATUS:	Approved by voice vote. 7 ayes and 0 no's.



Amy Brown, Recording Secretary

Approved 7/12/2021