

**FREEMAN TOWNSHIP BOARD  
CLARE COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

At a meeting of the Freeman Township Board of Clare County, Michigan, held at 7280 Mannsiding Road, Lake, Michigan on

**Regular Meeting, Thursday, the 9<sup>th</sup> of July, 2020**

Present Board Members: Supervisor Housler, Treasurer Lackie, Clerk Lightfoot, Trustees Barnett & Sable.

**TIME: 7:00 p.m.** Call to Order and Pledge to the Flag

Roll Call was taken with 5 members present, along with 11 citizens.

**REGULAR ORDER OF BUSINESS**

A motion was made by Trustee Barnett, seconded by Trustee Sable to approve the regular board meeting minutes for June 11, 2020. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

**GUEST SPEAKERS**

County Commissioner Dale Majewski gave the following highlights: The Gypsy Moth is a hot topic right now. Lots of damage. The Conservation District can look at your property if you have problems. Please ask for Melissa. They have a form you can fill out. There is a discussion to put the Gypsy Moth on the November ballot with possibly .5 or .75 mills. Clerk Lightfoot asked where the slush fund went pertaining to the Gypsy Moth. Commission Majewski noted that 7 years ago they stopped taking the money for the Gypsy Moth, but they were still spraying, so the money has been used up and only about \$40,000 is left.

The Courthouse is now open. You need to answer questions when you enter and you must have a mask on.

They are starting 2021 budget discussions. Not sure about making additional cuts. There were lots of cuts made this year that got them within \$20,000 of where they needed to be, but then the Supreme Court mandated they keep security because of COVID-19 which means \$100,000 had to be added back in.

Merle Harmon, Road Commissioner gave the following highlights: He was appointed by the County in February/March and is asking for your vote this year. Road Commission is now recording meetings on YouTube. (Search for Clare County Road Commission). Their audit is now complete for 9-30-19, however it was late, which caused the County's audit to also be late. Have some personnel issues and 2 employees have left. They have a new system when you call in. A ticket will be made for the phone call which will be given to the Foreman and then he will close out when completed. They are now recording phone calls. He feels our residents are our customers and they should be treated accordingly. He noted that Bill Simpson, Terry Acton and he are not running against each other, but more as a team.

Clerk Lightfoot noted that she had spoken with the new foreman, Brian Coon, and was very impressed with him. She had given him some issues in the Township that she had asked the previous Foreman to look at about a year to year and half ago, and he took care of them within a day! She also asked about the mowing for the secondary roads as she heard most of the mowers are down and they aren't sure whether the grass will get mowed this year. Road Commissioner Harmon said he would look into this.

Bill Simpson, Road Commissioner gave the following highlights: He worked at the Road Commission for 28 years. He is working with the Manager to learn everything he can about the budget. There is projected to be a \$475,000 shortfall in the budget due to the decrease in MTF funds (due to people not driving as much during shutdown), but hoping it won't be that much. They have already amended the budget to reflect this decrease. We now have a Superintendent over the 2 Foremen. He also noted that our experiment to put some type of pavement on Ashard (between M-115 and the old dump) is still not off the table. The Manager is currently researching solutions. In closing he asked for your vote this year.

John Cottenham, Census Representative gave the following highlights: He represents the Census Bureau and is a recruiter. They are still hiring and the pay is \$16/hour. You can set your own schedule. They need about 50 people and only have 22. Must be 18 or older. Michigan is third in the nation in responses. Clare County has about a 45.7% response rate. Freeman Township is about 35.9% response rate, with an internet response rate of 13.88%. For every person counted in Clare County, we receive \$1800/year in Federal Dollars. He also applauded the Board Members and said they are the heart of America. If you have an event that you would like the Census Bureau to be at, please call the Tri-City office at 231-944-7700. As a final note he said the work entails visiting people (6 feet away) and trying to get them to fill out their census form.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

A motion was made by Trustee Sable, seconded by Trustee Barnett to approve early check numbers 15464-15469 and regular check numbers 15470-15487. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

### **SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS**

Supervisor Housler gave an update on the road projects noting that we have finally been billed for last year's Ashard Road project and the bill is paid.

We had an approved list of road projects several years ago, but most of them were cut. We have been contacted about chip sealing Hemlock Road. As you know the Board isn't a fan of Chip and Seal. We held back and would rather pave with asphalt as it gives better sustainability and fills the cracks better. However, after talking with others and looking at the price, the 3 miles of Hemlock Road (price split with Lincoln Township and the Road Commission), our cost to Chip and Seal would be \$23,000. This is significant enough that we would like to proceed with this project and have notified Lincoln Township and the Road Commission.

Supervisor Housler noted he met with the Road Commission this morning and had a very productive meeting. There are suggestions to limestone Havenwood with the side runs off of it and also Evergreen and all it's connectors. That would finish that section of Lake of the Pines. The total for Hemlock Chip and Seal project, along with Havenwood, Evergreen and the off shoots would be approximately \$112,040. Treasurer Lackie has checked the budget and we have enough road funds to cover this. If the Board is ok with this then we will follow up with a

contract. The Road Commission is very busy so we don't have any contracts yet, but we have been assured everything is ok and we'll get the paperwork in the near future.

A motion was made by Treasurer Lackie, seconded by Trustee Sable to proceed on these projects, contingent on the signing of the appropriate contracts. Ayes 5 (Lackie, Housler, Barnett, Sable, Lightfoot), Nays 0.

Supervisor Housler further noted that we have accomplished almost all of our roads with limestone, except very small ones or those with maybe 1 or 2 houses on them. The cost for these little areas would be approximately \$50,000. Since most of the limestone goals have been accomplished, then do we want to chip and seal some of the limestone roads. This would cost approximately \$30,000/mile. He has been talking with the Road Commission about possibility of putting Chip and Seal on top of the limestone roads. The advantage to this would be potholes in limestone would be gone, the dust would be gone and you'd save on brining costs. Disadvantage would be that it's not as nice as asphalt. The Manager of the Road Commission is in touch with Fahrner Asphalt about the possibility of putting Chip and Seal on limestone roads and will let Supervisor Housler know the outcome of their conversations.

Supervisor Housler noted that last meeting we had a discussion on some noise issues and we were going to check with our attorney on how to solve these. The Sheriff's Department is not enforcing the noise ordinance because it isn't high on their priority list compared to accidents and other calls. The attorney has prepared two ordinances - - a Noise Ordinance and a Civil Infractions Ordinance - - for the Board's approval. A motion was made by Supervisor Housler, seconded by Trustee Barnett to adopt both ordinances (Ordinance #39-Ordinance for the Regulation of Noise and Ordinance #40-Civil Infractions Ordinance). Ayes 5 (Housler, Lackie, Sable, Barnett, Lightfoot), Nays 0.

Supervisor Housler noted we have another addition to the Special Assessment District.

Laura Rundel – 3159 Greenbriar

As noted in the past, we will have additions during the course of the year. Ms. Rundel has paid the prorated amount for this year and has requested to be on next year's tax roll. Motion by Trustee Sable, seconded by Trustee Barnett to add Laura Rundel, 3159 Greenbriar, to the Special Assessment District. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

Supervisor Housler then discussed the situation with the current recycle bin. Waste Management delivers the bin on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month and picks it up on Sunday (or sometimes Monday). The problem right now is the usage in the summertime is extremely heavy and tends to fill up on Friday. However, people are still leaving their bags, etc. on the ground. Lincoln Township has some of the same problems and has to call every time to send a truck out and come get all the extra baggage. However, when Supervisor Housler called, they said they don't do that. We need to get this settled because a mess is being left all over. He asked the board how we are going to handle this if it doesn't straighten out.

There is also a problem with cross contaminating. If residents put recycling in the wrong container, this contaminates the bin and then everything in the bin will be put in the trash and not recycled. Dorothy Burdo asked about getting a larger one, but Supervisor Housler noted these are the ones that were set up when Northern Oaks came into the County and this one is free. (Otherwise it is \$425/month and we don't have the funds for that.)

Another problem we are having is residents are just dumping trash bags into the bins and not emptying out the contents of their bags. Bags need to be emptied, otherwise they take up

additional space that could be used for more recycling. Also, boxes need to be broken down and plastic jugs, etc. need to be collapsed. All of this will help make more room in the container.

If anyone is interested, Merle Harmon-Road Commissioner said that Mid-Michigan Industries in Mt. Pleasant has special needs people that take the items out of your vehicle and sort it. There is a fee for it however. It is definitely getting recycled and won't take bad things. Merle will get us the phone number for them.

Supervisor Housler discussed the Waiver of First Right of Refusal for properties in Lake of the Pines. We've checked the properties and none of them would be of use for us. Motion by Supervisor Housler, seconded by Treasurer Lackie to waive our first right of refusal to the parcels that were foreclosed on by the Clare County Treasurer. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

### **CLERK'S COMMENTS**

Clerk Lightfoot noted that she has been receiving Absentee Ballot Applications that have not been filled out correctly. Residents are forgetting to choose which election they want a ballot for and then she has to try and chase them down to get confirmation. We also have had people whose signatures aren't matching the signature on file. This causes more work because there has to be clarification so we make sure there isn't any fraud. Clerk Lightfoot encouraged residents to fill out the forms completely and make sure your signature is your normal signature. Clerk Lightfoot also noted that she has had almost 100 more people ask to be on the permanent absentee ballot list.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Planning Commission – John Phillips: The meeting for August has been cancelled. The next meeting is September. He will pass on the new Ordinance #39 and #40 to Secretary Maas.

Zoning & Blight – Harold Logan: 7 zoning permits. 2 variances in process. 7320 Ashard has been taken care of. 4011 Ridgeway – gentleman is running a business out of his home. He has been sent citations. Tahoe Trail eaves problem and a citation has been sent. 3 blight has been cleaned up. Supervisor Housler noted he received a call on 6121 Timberlane about 3 abandoned vehicles.

Dorothy Burdo asked how long a camper with awning can be on property. There is one on Stephen Court that has been there for years.

### **COMMENTS/CONCERNS FROM CITIZENS**

Dorothy Burdo asked who does brining. Michigan Chloride. Supervisor Housler noted the first time was substandard. He called them and complained. Second time was a little better, but still some were bad. He mentioned this to the Road Commission and they said they would call Michigan Chloride. They've received some of the same complaints from other Townships. Bill Simpson noted everyone is mad. Some Townships they missed roads too.

Marlana Terrian from 911 Dispatch spoke about the proposal they have and that it will be discussed at the Public Hearing (part of the County meeting) in August. It would be an increase of 75 cent increase. The current surcharge on your phone ends June 30, 2021. If the proposal doesn't pass, then they would also lose the current surcharge funding which is about \$279,000. The last increase was 2016. The amount on your phone bill would go from \$1 to \$1.75. If it

doesn't pass it would go on the May 2021 election, then also lose years revenue. A lot of equipment needs to be updated in the next 5 years to keep up with technology.

There were no further citizen comments; however, Supervisor Al read a note he personally received from Roger Diederich that was in his payment for taxes. "Al, do us a favor and yourself, Don't Run! " (smiley face).

**Adjourn:** Motion by Trustee Sable, seconded by Trustee Barnett to adjourn the regular meeting.  
**TIME: 7:32 p.m.**

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Alan Housler, Supervisor

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Julie Lightfoot, Township Clerk