

**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 12th of December, 2019

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 all members present, along with 13 citizens.

A motion was made by Trustee Barnett, seconded by Trustee Sable to approve the regular board meeting minutes of November 14th, 2019. Ayes 5 Nays 0.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Dale Majewski, Clare County Commissioner was present and gave the following highlights: This coming Wednesday will be the 2nd public hearing for the possibility of taking over the Road Commission; new hardware/software for Register of Deeds – this will also be available for Township Assessors; Board of Canvassers appointed Jean Gasko; The ID cards for Vets are now available for a cost of \$10 – you can get them at the County Building – 2nd floor; in 2020 there will be a lot of items on the ballot – We already have 6 possible items for March (not all of them may be on Freeman’s ballot though) – in March there will be an additional .2 mills for Transit, an additional .62 mills (\$1.2 mil) for Mid-Michigan Community College. (Commissioner Majewski noted that Clare County residents tax dollars built Mid-Michigan Community College – now they have the branch in Mt. Pleasant. It seems that the dollars being taken in are being spent there, which doesn’t necessarily serve the residents of Clare. – In March or November MSU Extension will be on the ballot and they are asking for 2/3 more than what Clare County gave them; Also, a possibility of Road Patrol going for 1 mill; Commissioner Majewski asked how this road patrol would affect the Townships that already have extra patrol. Also, a chance on the August ballot to have a millage for Gypsy Moth because they are coming back with a vengeance – need to build up the fund.

Supervisor Housler noted that the County Board just passed the budget and now already asking for millages. County Board didn’t cut as much as they could have. Commissioner Majewski noted that County Treasurer Beemer said that \$500,000 in revenue didn’t come in. The State requires you to carry a certain amount as fund balance. Commissioner Majewski recommended hefty changes. We need to reevaluate what we are doing and what people want. Non-mandated things we’re doing we just can’t afford anymore. He’s not even sure we can keep security in the Courthouse. Not getting as much revenue – foreclosed properties, more crime so courts need more money, veteran’s exemption for taxes, costs going up, etc.

Supervisor Housler asked how the County can be \$500,000 off after 60 days. Commissioner Majewski said they took \$250,000 out of fund balance (approved by Board except

Commissioner Majewski and Commissioner Pitchford). For the last 3 years have spent more than taken in. Some revenue line items were overinflated. He wanted to make some cuts but he is only 1 of 7 commissioners. More cuts will be coming. We have lost 6 key deputies. Why are they leaving? Some is for pay but some are for other reasons. We need to focus on keeping seasoned people.

Geri Shaw asked about the comments at the Road Commission Public Hearing. Commissioner Majewski noted that some want to go to a 5 member board. They are still pushing for taking it under the County Board and having an advisory board instead of the elected board.

Donald Kowalski asked if other counties are having financial problems and Commissioner Majewski said yes. He noted Gladwin County 3 years ago started reducing. They have less inmates at the jail and put a max on it.

Lori Coito asked about the money owed for crimes that County Clerk Martin spoke of in the past. Yes, we are still receiving those, but the majority of it goes to pay restitution and to pay for court costs. Very little goes to Clare County.

TREASURERS REPORT

A motion was made by Trustee Barnett, seconded by Trustee Sable to approve early check numbers #15338 and regular check numbers 153339(PR), 15340-15354. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS

Supervisor Housler spoke on the recycling program. When we converted to curbside pickup, we researched that recycling was available to Freeman Township at Lincoln Township's site in Lake George. We advertised that it was available and have used for October and November. Unfortunately, this has created some problems. (1) the volumes has exceeded the container and (2) some Freeman residents are irritated and tried telling Lincoln Township how they should run the recycling program. We have spoken with Lincoln about these issues and Lincoln has informed us they will be putting up signs that the recycling located in Lake George is for Lincoln Township residents ONLY. There was a proposal to put 2 containers there and Lincoln Township said no. One barely fits on their parcel.

This became uncomfortable for Freeman Township and we don't blame Lincoln Township, so we're taking another look at recycling. People that come into the hall have a general acceptance and enthusiasm for curbside pickup. He doesn't remember hearing anyone against it, but they still complain about not having recycling.

The Board needs to look at recycling, ON A TRIAL BASIS. If misused, then the service will be gone. People abused it so badly at the transfer station. Items that shouldn't be in recycling were going in the recycle bins. Supervisor Housler contacted Waste Management. They have a contract with Northern Oaks to provide, at no cost, recycle bins. Commissioner Majewski will get Supervisor Housler a copy of the contract. Supervisor Housler noted he tried getting a hold of Waste Management, but they didn't get back to him by today's meeting.

As an option until Waste Management gets back with us, there is an option to have American Waste bring in a bin for a cost of \$450 for the weekend.

A suggestion was also made to have a security system put in place to monitor what is going on. It would be at the back of the hall.

Donald Kowalske is opposed to have to pay \$450 every month. We should get it free. If people abuse the recycling system, then get rid of it.

Lori Coito noted we could use Community Service people to monitor but people could still abuse.

Treasurer Lackie noted that we need to do something.

Trustee Sable asked what happens if people dump once it's full. Hopefully cameras should pick it up.

Motion made by Clerk Lightfoot, seconded by Treasurer Lackie, to allow the Board to proceed with free dumpster and security system. Ayes 5 (Lightfoot, Lackie, Housler, Sable, Barnett), Nays 0.

Supervisor Housler noted that due to the March 10th Presidential Primary, we would have to reschedule the normal March-Monday/Tuesday schedule for Board of Review. The revised schedule was approved by the Board of Review at their December meeting. This is allowed, but must also be approved by the Township Board.

Treasurer Lackie moved to approve the following new Board of Review schedule:

Revised Board of Review Schedule for March, 2020:

Organizational Meeting – March 3, 2020 @ 10:00 a.m.
Board Meeting – March 9, 2020 – 1-4 p.m. and 6-9 p.m.
Board Meeting – March 11, 2020 – 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1-4 p.m.

Seconded by Clerk Lightfoot. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

CLERK'S COMMENTS

Clerk Lightfoot noted that the Board needs to approve the Board Meeting schedule for 2020.

Trustee Barnett moved to hold the Freeman Township Board Meetings at the Freeman Township Hall, 7280 Mannsiding Road, Lake, Michigan 48632, with meetings starting at 7:00 p.m. local time.

The monthly meeting schedule is as follows:

January 9, 2020, February 13, 2020, March 12, 2020, April 9, 2020, May 14, 2020, June 11, 2020, July 9, 2020, August 13, 2020, September 10, 2020, October 8, 2020, November 12, 2020, December 10, 2020.

Special meetings of the Board will be scheduled as needed and noticed in accordance with State Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the above meeting schedule, time and place be adopted.

Seconded by Trustee Sable.

Ayes 5, Nays 0.

Clerk Lightfoot informed the public about the new Absentee Voter Ballot Envelopes. She noted that there has been research done on this and these new envelopes are the result of the research. They are hoping this will make the mailing process smoother and faster for the absentee voter ballots. She also noted that the BLUE envelope will be the one going TO the voter and the GREEN envelope will be the one the voter sends back to the Clerk. There's also a change of where the resident needs to sign the envelope. This is now on the back of the envelope. They moved it here with the thought that you are sealing the envelope on the back, so you would pay more attention to the signing area if it were on the same side. The downside to all of this is the Clerk's are not allowed to use any of their old envelopes and secrecy sleeves, so we were forced to buy all new. Just another additional expense to our Township!

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning – John Phillips – Absent

Building – Werner Mantei – Absent

Zoning & Blight – Harold Logan: No zoning permits this month although he's received a few phone calls. 1 zoning issue on Grass Lake. – Checking 8 properties for blight. Has sent out notices. For the 3 properties on Norway, 2 have been cleaned up.

Lori Coito discussed his problems with 2801 Grass Lake (Sean Wiseman). He has 3 6' panels – a trailer – debris goes in his yard – burns awful stuff in barrel – shoots high powered pistol – bullies me – shines spot light on my house – truck not registered.

Supervisor Housler noted that if we have a violation – can't we write a violation? Monday Harold will send letter and if no movement after 2 weeks, then he'll give him a fine.

Adjourn: Motion by Trustee Sable, seconded by Trustee Barnett to adjourn the meeting.
TIME: 8:00 p.m.

Alan Housler, Supervisor

Julie Lightfoot, Township Clerk