

**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 11th of March, 2021

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

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

Roll Call was taken with all members present.

PUBLIC HEARING

The Public Hearing for the budget was opened. Supervisor Housler noted that the budget had been put together in January and starting February 24, 2021 it was available for public inspection (by appointment due to COVID-19 restrictions).

Supervisor Housler discussed the payrates for the Deputy Clerk and Deputy Treasurer. He noted that in the previous year we increased the Maintenance Employees pay to \$15/hour, so now they are making more than the Deputies. Supervisor Housler recommended increasing the pay to \$20/hour. Clerk Lightfoot noted that the Deputies need to know a lot of rules and regulations and are responsible for a lot. It's not just about answering phone calls. She concurred with the increase, and noted that the General Appropriation Act that the Board needs to approve would have to make this notation, as it currently reads there are no rate increases in pay in the resolution.

Supervisor Housler also noted that we were able to set aside a little bit of money for cemetery improvements and also some money in the maintenance improvements area for a possible roof replacement down the road.

Motion by Trustee Sable, seconded by Trustee Barnett to adjourn the public hearing and return to the regular order of business. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

REGULAR ORDER OF BUSINESS

A motion was made by Clerk Lightfoot, seconded by Trustee Sable to approve the regular board meeting minutes from February 11, 2021. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Dale Majewski, Clare County Commissioner, was present to give his update on County business. Highlights included: They are rolling along with the 4 new board members; looking at budget early this year as there is already a projected shortfall – had 4 meetings so far; review of IT Department – with COVID, members of the IT Department were off and got behind on quite

a few projects – County is considering adding a person or contracting out to help them get caught up.

TREASURERS REPORT

A motion was made by Trustee Barnett, seconded by Trustee Sable, to approve regular checks #15630-15640. Ayes 5 – Nays 0.

SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS

Supervisor Housler discussed and recommended approval of the General Appropriations Act, including the change to the Deputy Clerk and Deputy Treasurer's hourly wage.

2021/2022 GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT

FREEMAN TOWNSHIP

A resolution to establish a General Appropriations Act for Freeman Township; to define the powers and duties of the Freeman Township Officers in relation to the administration of the budget; and to provide remedies for refusal or neglect to comply with the requirements of this resolution.

The Board of Trustees of Freeman Township ordains (resolves):

Section 1: Title

This resolution shall be known as the Freeman Township General Appropriations Act.

Section 2: Chief Administrative Officer

The Supervisor (Alan Housler) shall be the Chief Administrative Officer and shall perform the duties of the Chief Administrative Officer enumerated in this act. The Supervisor shall have final responsibility for the budget preparation, presentation of the budget to the Township Board and the control of expenditures under the budget and the general appropriations act, unless the Township Board designates some other individual.

Section 3: Fiscal Officer

The Clerk (Julie Lightfoot) and the Treasurer (Janet Lackie) shall be the Fiscal Officers and shall perform the duties of the of the Fiscal officers enumerated in this act.

Section 4: Public Hearing on the Budget

For General Law Townships: Pursuant to MCLA 141.412; MCLA 141,413, notice of public hearing on the proposed budget was published in the Clare County Cleaver (general circulation) on February 25 & March 4, 2021. The Public Hearing was also posted on the Township Website (www.freemantownship.com). The Public Hearing for the proposed budget was held on Thursday, March 11, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

Section 5: Estimated Revenues

Estimated township revenues for Fiscal Year 2021/2022, including all allocated millage, voter-authorized millage and various miscellaneous revenues shall total \$560,535 including: Rubbish = \$147,534; Fire = \$80,579; Roads = \$154,197; General Fund = \$178,225.

Section 6: Millage Levy

The Township Board shall cause to be levied and collected the general property tax on all real and personal property within the township upon the current tax roll, as will be adjusted according to the Headley Amendment for the 2021-2022 Budget Year, an allocated mill of 0.8142 Mill for township operations; and voter authorized Mill of .6105 for fire protection; 1.00 Mill for special millage Fire; 2.9640 Mill for special road construction and maintenance, for a total Mill of 5.3887.

Section 7: Estimated Expenditures

Estimated township general fund expenditures for Fiscal Year 2021/2022 for the various township activities (cost centers) are as follows: General Fund=\$178,225 (Those Funds not included in the General Fund include: Rubbish=\$147,534; Fire=\$80,579 and Roads=\$154,197 and are not included in the General Fund number above.) A complete list of expenditures is attached to this resolution.

Section 8: Adoption of Budget by Reference

The general fund budget of Freeman Township is hereby adopted by reference, with revenues and activity expenditures as indicated in Sections 5 and 7 of this act.

Section 9: Adoption of Budget by Cost Center

The Freeman Township Board of Trustees adopts the 2021/2022 Fiscal Year Budget by cost centers. Township officials responsible for the expenditures authorized in the budget may expend township funds up to, but not to exceed, the total appropriation authorized for each cost center, and may make transfers among the various line items contained in the cost center appropriation. However, no transfers of appropriations for line items related to personnel or capital outlays may be made without prior board approval by budget amendment.

Pursuant to MCLA 41.75 all claims (bills) against the Township shall be approved by the Freeman Township Board prior to being paid. The Township Clerk and Treasurer may pay certain bills prior to approval by the Township Board to avoid late penalties, service charges and interest (primarily utilities) and payroll in accordance with the approved salaries and hourly rates adopted in the appropriations act. The Township Board shall receive a list of claims paid prior to approval at the next meeting (early checks) as noted on the monthly check registers.

Included in the various Activities/Departments are amounts of salary hourly, and per diem rates for the officials and employees of the Township as follows: Supervisor-\$1068.00; Treasurer-\$1566.00; Clerk-\$1566.00; Trustees-\$505.10. Township Hall/Cemetery Work-\$15.00/hr. Building Inspector (Administered by Clare County). Zoning-\$100/month & \$35 for permits; Blight-\$300/month; \$35 for Planning Commission Meeting. Planning Commission Chair & Secretary-\$110/meeting; Members-\$65.00. Board of Review-\$75 for full day & \$40 for ½ day; Additional \$40 for secretary. Board of Appeals-\$35.00. All Election responsibilities – Co-Chairs-\$10.50/hour; Election Inspectors - \$10/hour, except Alternates/Standby-\$25.00 flat rate. Assessor \$590/year. Deputy Clerk/Treasurer-\$20.00/hour.

All officials and employee rates for the 2021-2022 FY are the same as the 2020-2021 FY, with the exception of the Deputy Clerk and Deputy Treasurer, which was increased to \$20/hour.

There are specific appropriations of \$110,000 for the improvement of roads. The roads will be brined three times over the summer months at an approximate cost of \$44,000. The township is in discussion with the road commission regarding road improvements. Cost for these improvements has not been determined at this writing.

Section 10: Appropriation not a Mandate to Spend

Appropriations will be deemed maximum authorizations to incur expenditures. The fiscal officer shall exercise supervision and control to ensure that expenditures are within appropriations, and shall not issue any town order for expenditures that exceed appropriations.

Section 11: Transfer Authority

The Chief Administrative Officer shall have the authority to make transfers among the various cost centers (or line items) without prior board approval, if the amount to be transferred does not exceed \$1000 or 25% of the appropriation item from which the transfer is to be made, whichever is less. The Board shall be notified at its next meeting of any such transfers made, and reserves the right to modify, amend or nullify any such transfers made. Under no circumstances may the total general fund budget be changed without prior board approval.

Section 12: Allotment of Appropriations

No later than February 1st of the Fiscal Year, each department, board or commission of Freeman Township shall submit to the Chief Administrative Officer a statement of proposed allotments of appropriations based on expected periodic requirements. The Chief Administrative Officer shall review, modify or approve the proposed allotment plan for any cost center.

Section 13: Periodic Fiscal Reports

The Township Clerk and the Treasurer will periodically provide to the Township Board a report of fiscal year to date revenues and expenditures as compared to budget amounts in the various funds of the Township. Quarterly reports and summary statements of condition will further be provided. A detailed list of expected revenues by major source as estimated in the budget; actual receipts to date for the current fiscal year compared with actual receipts for the same period in the prior year, the balance of estimated revenues to be collected in the then current fiscal year; and any revisions in revenue estimates resulting from collection experience to date. For each cost center; the amount appropriated, the amount charged to each appropriation in the previous quarter (month) for the current fiscal year as compared with the same period in the prior fiscal year; the unencumbered balance of appropriations; and any revisions in the estimate of expenditures.

Section 14: Limit on Obligations and Payments

No obligation shall be incurred against, and no payment shall be made for any appropriation account unless there is a sufficient unencumbered balance in the appropriation and sufficient funds are or will be available to meet the obligation.

Section 15: Budget Monitoring

Whenever it appears to the Chief Administrative Officer (Supervisor) or to the Township Board that the actual and probable revenues in any fund will be less than the estimated revenues which appropriations from such fund were based, and when it appears that expenditures shall exceed an appropriation, the Chief Administrative Officer (Supervisor) shall present to the Township Board recommendations to prevent expenditures from exceeding available revenues or appropriations for the current fiscal year. Such recommendations shall include proposals for reducing appropriations, increasing revenues, or both.

Section 16: Violations of this Act

Any obligation incurred or payment authorized in violation of this resolution shall be void and shall subject any responsible official(s) or employee(s) to disciplinary action as outlined in P.A. 621 (1978).

Section 17: Board Adoption

Motion made by Trustee Sable, seconded by Trustee Barnett to adopt the foregoing ordinance (resolution). Upon Roll Call Vote, the following voted aye (5) Housler, Lackie, Lightfoot, Sable, Barnett. The following voted Nay (0): (none). The Supervisor declared the motion carried and the resolution duly adopted on the 11th day of March, 2021.

Next Supervisor Housler discussed the Wage list for 2021-2022 and recommended acceptance of the same, with the change of the Deputy Clerk/Deputy Treasurer wage to \$20/hour.

Motion made by Treasurer Lackie, seconded by Trustee Barnett to approve the 2021-2022 wage list with the change of the Deputy Clerk/Deputy Treasurer wage to \$20/hour. Ayes 5 (Housler, Lackie, Lightfoot, Barnett, Sable), Nays 0.

Supervisor Housler noted that by law we need to amend our budget to bring it in line with the revenue and expenses received/spent through the year. We try to do this as close to the end of the year as possible. Clerk Lightfoot asked for it to be March 31, 2021, as she still needed to get the numbers from the old accounting software into the new accounting software. The Board concurred with March 31st, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. for the Budget Amendment Meeting.

Supervisor Housler updated those present on the roads in Freeman Township. Now that the weather is better, he is hoping that the Road Commission can tour our roads and see which ones need to be done yet.

Also, our current mileage expires 2025. We probably should start thinking about what we want to do in the next year or so. The dust control is included in the 3 mills. The dust control price has increased quite a bit over the years. As far as the limestone, we've probably done almost all that need to be done. If this is true, then we should look at a hard surface program. We would like to do a chip and seal on one of our limestone roads as a test. The cost of chip and seal is way less than asphalt. We could do a lot more work that way. The Road Commission and the contractor aren't sure whether it will hold in the winter due to the plows. However, the Road Commission did check with St. Joseph County Road Commission, who did a chip and double seal. It solved a lot of problems for the Road Commission. It solved the dust problems and grading maintenance. The cost of maintenance for the road decreased a lot. So now the Road Commission is going to take a look at it more seriously. Since the Road Commission is more agreeable, we will look into this also.

Supervisor Housler talked with the brine contractor and have the following dates set for bringing our Township roads. Dates are: May 24, June 29, and August 17.

CLERK'S COMMENTS

Clerk Lightfoot noted that anyone looking to get their COVID-19 vaccine can sign up at www.cmdhd.org. You can get the vaccine at the Hayes Township Hall in Harrison.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning – Robert Eckardt: Bob wanted to publicly thank John Phillips for all the work he has done as Chairman of the Planning Commission.

Zoning & Blight – Harold Logan: No zoning permits this month. 10700 W. Ashard did not get a permit. We've contacted the County. He has 10 days to respond or he'll be taken to court.

4411 Ridgeway – situation hasn't changed and is getting worse. Cease and desist work on property. Will contact our attorney on how to proceed again.

Several properties are getting worse in regards to blight and he will be writing them up this week.

Supervisor Housler noted and asked Commissioner Majewski to relay this information to the County Board, that we are very happy with the responses from the County Building Department.

COMMENTS/CONCERNS FROM CITIZENS

None. Supervisor Housler thanked everyone for coming tonight and noted the Board missed seeing people in person.

Adjourn: Motion by Trustee Barnett, seconded by Trustee Sable to adjourn the regular meeting.
TIME: 7:30 p.m.

Alan Housler, Supervisor

Julie Lightfoot, Township Clerk