Westphalia Township

Regular Meeting January 7, 2023

FINAL MINUTES

13950 Pratt Road, Westphalia MI, 48894

Supervisor Thelen called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag at 6:00 p.m. Board members present were Supervisor Thelen, Trustee Thelen, Treasurer Buckley, and Clerk Platte.

GUESTS: Randy Bengel

Larry Shoop

Luke Thelen

A motion was made by T. Thelen supported by Trustee Thelen to accept the minutes from December 5 2022. Motion carried.

T. Thelen made a motion to approve the January meeting agenda as is, supported Trustee Thelen. Motion carried.

Treasurer Buckley presented the financial statements via email to all board members. A motion was made by Treasurer Buckley to approve the financial statements as well as bills presented for the General and FD funds, seconded by Barker. Motion carried.

Treasurer Buckley made some budget amendments. She made a motion to move $6600.00 from liability insurance for the general fund to be distributed as $1100.00 to ambulance and $5500.00 to total elections. Motion was seconded by Trustee Barker. Motion carried. She stated that the fire department funding is good as of this time.

Luke Thelen was asked by Clerk Platte to attend this meeting to discuss a proposal he was asked to write in regards to township obtaining security cameras for the property. Luke briefly went over the choices of cameras he researched and discussed the pros and cons. Supervisor Thelen asked Clerk Platte if she would work with Luke and come up with a plan of action for our February meeting. Clerk Platte and Luke will be working together on this project.

Larry Shoop was in attendance to dispute a $500.00 fire run bill he received. He stated he and his wife are new to the area and that his wife obtained the burn permit but he wasn’t aware that they could not burn at dark. Fire Chief Randy Bengel discussed this with Mr. Shoop and stated that since the fire was large enough to see for miles and the fire department was toned out, he has no other option but to pay for the bill. Mr. Shoop was asked if he read the burn permit policy and he stated he did not as his wife was the one who signed up for the permit. He stated he doesn’t understand why he wasn’t given a warning and if that had happened it would have never happened again. The board discussed Mr. Shoop’s concern and decided that since the fire department was toned out that Mr. Shoop is responsible for the outstanding invoice. Clerk Platte asked Mr. Shoop if he needed assistance in paying the invoice as the township does do a payment plan for persons in need. Mr. Shoop stated it wasn’t a money issue, he just thought a warning was warranted. Clerk Platte handed Mr. Shoop the final invoice before he left the building.

Discussion was had in regards to the Municipal Fire Protection Agreement between DeWitt and Westphalia Fire Department. Trustee Thelen suggested that we sign the agreement starting January 1, 2023 going through June 30, 2023 as June is the end of the fiscal period for DeWitt. Supervisor Thelen made a motion to accept the Municipal Fire Protection Agreement between DeWitt Area Emergency Services Authority and the Township of Westphalia to address the timeframe of January 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023 and at that time revisit the agreement in terms of a possible increase in rates. Barker supported.

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Motion Carried. Clerk Platte to be in contact with Lisa Braska from DeWitt Area Emergency Services in regards to resubmitting the agreement with the above stated dates.

Supervisor Thelen discussed the changes to the hall rental policy. There are two portions of the policy that have changed. The first begins on page 2 #3 of the rental policy stating the insurance change and the purchase of insurance to rent is now in place. This will happen by renters going to the website of **Rating (amerspec.com)**. This will allow renters to purchase insurance that is needed for hall renting. This will take place of the Acord form that has been an issue in the past. The **HOST LIQUOR COVERAGE** MUST be checked for renting the hall. A copy of this purchase **NEEDS** to be emailed to the clerk for proof of purchase before the hall can be rented. At the third page, it will ask for an email address. This is where you will enter [**wtclerk@hotmail.com**](mailto:wtclerk@hotmail.com), not your own email address.

The second change that has taken place is on page 2 as well, Letter N, Clean Up. This change will be new to the renter and include the following duties:

* Sweep/dust mop floor of the main hall and kitchen
* Wet mop the floor of the main hall, kitchen, and bathrooms
* Wipe down kitchen counters with disinfecting wipes
* Empty and remove all trash from Kitchen, Main Hall, and Bathrooms

We had an instance with a renter who cancelled the rental and wanted the money back. The board discussed that in the policy it states that once the reservation is concerned there are no refunds. We did offer this renter a one-time usage. The renter was notified by Clerk Platte of the board’s decision.

Supervisor Thelen addressed the cleaning position for the township. We are looking for someone to clean the hall/office space once a month. We are asking that anyone interested in this position send their bid to Westphalia Township at PO Box 429, Westphalia, Michigan 48894. Any questions about this position, please contact the supervisor, Troy Thelen, either by email [westphaliatwps@outlook.com](mailto:westphaliatwps@outlook.com) or by phone 989-587-3411 ext. 1. We will be accepting bids until January 31, 2023. Supervisor Thelen will get Clerk Platte the list of duties for this position for her to have posted on the website.

Fire Chief Randy Bengel – Fire Chief’s meeting will be held at Westphalia Township Hall on August 8, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Bengel announced the retirement of Richard Thelen from the fire department as well as the hiring of four new firemen, Cameron Trierweiler, Devon Pung, Nathan Smith, and Nathan Wirth. These men will begin on the department January 1, 2023. These four new hires will need new gear as well. Randy also addressed the fire department needing more pagers. The cement floor for the fire department is still trying to get two more bids. Randy addressed the concern for if the fire department is out on a fire for over 4-6 hours that they should have a pay increase for the longer hours. He also asked permission for the usage of the credit card for food and drink when gone so long. The board agreed with that usage.

Clerk Platte mentioned that the rate of milage reimbursement has gone up this year to $0.655 cents.

Next scheduled meeting has been moved to Monday, February 6, 2023 @ 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Supervisor Thelen, supported by Buckley at 7:24 p.m. Motion carried.

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Respectfully submitted

Heather Platte, Clerk Troy Thelen, Supervisor