

Approved Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Manistee Township Board was held on Thursday, October 13, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Manistee Township Hall. Board members present were Supervisor Dennis Bjorkquist, Clerk Dianne Taylor, Treasurer Connie Jankwietz, Trustee John Dontz and Trustee Guy Finout. Also present were County Commissioner Jeff Dontz, Liquor Inspector Rick Clouse, Heather Taylor, Barry Lind, Arielle Breen, Renee Mallison, Audrey Menninga, and Gary Madden. Zoning Administrator Karen Clouse and Fire Department Chief Joe Cerka were absent.

Supervisor Bjorkquist called the meeting to order. All attending stood and said the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

Minutes of the September 8, 2022 Manistee Township Board meeting were provided. Trustee Dontz made the motion to approve the minutes as written; Treasurer Jankwietz seconded the motion. All in favor; motion carried.

There was no Treasurer's report for October.

Planning Commission meeting minutes for September 7, 2022 were placed on file.

Manistee Township Zoning Board of Appeals did not meet.

County Commissioner Jeff Dontz reported on recent County business. The Medical Care millage will not be allocated this year. Rachel Nelson, County Treasurer, provided information on the tax auction. There were fifteen (15) parcels sold, of which ten (10) parcels were vacant and two (2) were homesteads. The Address Ordinance has been updated. Allocated just under \$40,000.00 for Networks Northwest to update the county's master plan. Update the Dial-A-Ride contract to cover current personnel. Also, agreed unanimously as a Board, to support a No-Fault grant application for \$530,000.00 with a 20% match for the railroad relocation; this a planning grant. Authorized a Veteran's grant for \$59,000.00. Munson ER should be completed around December 14th.

Zoning Administrator Karen Clouse was absent; however, Supervisor Bjorkquist reported on the activities in the Zoning office for September on her behalf. There were five (5) land use permits issued, fifteen (15) requests for construction permits, one (1) new complaint and one (1) ongoing complaint. The Senate Regulatory Reform committee added HB 4722 to their agenda on September 28, 2022. House Bill 4722 is a bill to remove local control over short term rental regulations. The full senate did not vote on the bill; however; according to an email from Mary Reilly, MSU educator, a vote is expected during the upcoming lame duck session. Little Rascals Cat Sanctuary has purchased the property located at 798 Parkdale Avenue located across from Parkdale Auto for their cat sanctuary. Zoning Administrator Clouse spoke with the project manager working on the BiggBy project; the building is connected to sewer and water and they are anticipating opening prior to Thanksgiving.

Fire Chief Joe Cerka was unavailable for report on the Fire Department.

Liquor Inspector Rick Clouse gave the liquor establishment report for September. All Manistee Township establishments were in compliance.

Supervisor Bjorkquist gave an update on the Township. People are getting used to the roundabout. Use caution. There is more lighting and signage coming. It's that time of year that people want to burn their leaves so call the DNR for burn permits. Don't forget to check the batteries in your smoke detectors.

Renee Mallison and Audrey Menninga, from the Manistee Conservation District, gave a presentation on the invasive species Japanese knotweed. They provided an update on the various treatment methods, the process, and pictures to support the progress of treatment from 2016 to 2022 on Veteran's Drive.

Trustee Dontz made a motion for Nickolas Hawkins to be accepted into the Manistee Township Fire Department as probationary fire fighter; Trustee Finout seconded the motion. All in favor; motion carried.

Trustee Dontz made a motion for Ralph Carroll III to be accepted into the Manistee Township Fire Department as probationary fire fighter; Clerk Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor; motion carried.

Snow Plowing Bids – (2) two bids came in for snow plowing for the Manistee Township Hall and Manistee Township Fire Station. The first bid is from Swidorski Brothers Excavating – Loader \$98.00 per hour, Salt Truck \$125.00 per event, Plow Truck \$68.00 per hour and Dump Truck (if excess snow removal is needed) \$100.00 per hour. The second bid is from Forbes – Pickup Truck with plow is \$40.00 per hour, Sander is \$35.00 per hour and a Loader is \$60.00 per hour. A motion was made by Trustee Dontz to grant the snow plowing bid to Forbes. The motion was seconded by Treasure Jankwietz. All in favor; motion carried.

Clerk Taylor gave a report on the upcoming election. There were 754 absentee ballots sent out; which compares to 514 in 2018 and 1327 in 2020. Clerk Taylor is expecting at least another 100 applications to come in, possible more. According to the Secretary of State, ballots were to be available to the voters as of September 29th; however, due to a delay in the testing programming, the Absent Voter Ballots were not available to mail until after the 4th of October. As of today, October 13, 2022, ballots have been issued to all who have requested one. Supervisor Bjorkquist commented it has been quite a task getting them out; they put in very long hours to get the 754 ballots out. Clerk Taylor commented that a resident can still request an Absent Voter Ballot Application; it can be picked up or mailed to the voter for completion.

Resident Gary Madden questioned why the township is slow in getting ballots out to voters and computer issues. Clerk Taylor stated that the computer system is often slow when multiple clerks are using the system at one time. As a security feature, the systems also logs-out a worker automatically if the keyboard is inactive for a few minutes; hence, multiple log-ins during the day. Then every name, address, birthdate, and signature must be verified on the application with the voter file, and then the signature on the returned ballot envelope is verified again upon return. If there is a mis-match, the voter must be called. The system works well, but it does take time.

Mr. Madden also inquired about the recycling station in the township and why is the township not buying into the county recycling program. He stated there are a number of people in the township that would like to have the recycling brought back into the township. Also, in the railroad relocation article in the paper the township was not mentioned as a supporter. Commissioner Dontz responded that the supporters listed were Manistee County and corporate

supporters. Supervisor Bjorkquist mentioned that if the railroad grade was abandoned then it may provide for a trail system in the township. Supervisor Bjorkquist also responded on the recycling that was provided in the past, stating that the township picked up an excessive amount of trash at the recycling center that was not recyclable (truck tops, shower stalls, dishwasher) which cost the township a tremendous amount of money and time to clean up.

The September bill payment detail has been provided. Trustee Dontz made the motion to pay the bills for September as provided and the October bills as they are received; Treasurer Jankwietz seconded the motion. All in favor; motion carried.

Public Accuracy Testing will be held on **Saturday, October 22, 2022 at 10:30 A.M.** at the **Manistee Township Hall.**

Manistee County MTA Meeting will meet on **Wednesday, October 26, 2022 at 7:00 P.M.** at the **Manistee Township Hall.**

Manistee Zoning Board of Appeals will meet **Tuesday, November 1, 2022 at 6:00 P.M.** at the **Manistee Township Hall.** (If there is an appeal).

Manistee Township Planning Commission will meet on **Wednesday, November 2, 2022 at 9:00 A.M.** at the **Manistee Township Hall.**

Next regular meeting of the **Manistee Township Board** will be held on **Thursday, November 3, 2022 at 7:00 P.M.** at the **Manistee Township Hall.**

General Election will be held on **Tuesday, November 8, 2022 from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.** at the **Manistee Township Hall.**

There being no further business or public comment to come before the Board, it was moved by Trustee Dontz, seconded by Clerk Taylor to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 PM. All in favor; motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Taylor
Manistee Township Clerk