

PENINSULA TOWNSHIP

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Township Board Regular Meeting

Township Hall

March 26, 2019

7:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Corrections Made May 7, 2019, by Clerk Becky Chown

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call:** Achorn, Sanger, Wahl, Bickle, Manigold, Mielnik
Absent: Chown, Wunsch, Attorney Meihn
Also present: Robin Noval, Deputy Clerk
4. **Brief Citizen Comments (for items not on the agenda):**
Former township clerk Joanne Westphal spoke during the public comment period and requested that the invoice to pay the attorney for the settlement agreement with Akerley, Piehl, and Deering be removed from the edit list of invoices for further discussion at the next board meeting
5. **Approve Agenda:**
Manigold: explained that the township attorney was in court in Grand Rapids but sent two things to be read into the record:
 1. With regard to the completion of the issues regarding Akerley, Piehl, and Deering, in pursuant to our prior motion, Mr. Meihn has prepared the settlement agreement for us to review; we will do this at the next meeting.
 2. Mr. Meihn has provided a draft of the resolution regarding the HSR A. That will be put into the board packet next month so we will take it off agenda for tonight.**Moved by Bickle to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Sanger**
Pass unan
6. **Conflict of Interest:** None
7. **Consent Agenda:** any member of the board, staff, or the public may ask that any item on the consent agenda be removed and placed elsewhere on the agenda for full discussion.
 1. Invoices (recommend approval)
 2. Summary of Billing from Gourdie-Fraser & Associates
 3. Reports
 - A. Peninsula Community Library
 - B. Grand Traverse County Road Commission
 - C. 2018 Annual Report for the Peninsula Township Planning Commission
 - D. Ordinance violation summary through February, 2019 (Sanger)
 - E. Gourdie-Fraser Engineer Report
 4. Minutes from February 19, 2019 special township board meeting; minutes from February 26, 2019, township board meeting; minutes from March 12, 2019, special

- township board meeting (~~recommend approval~~) and minutes from March 12, 2019 board meeting (~~recommend approval~~)
5. Waive the special meeting fee for Bower Harbor Vineyard
 6. Correspondence
 - A. John DeSpelder regarding road conditions at Birchwood/East Shore and Timberland and follow-up efforts
- Achorn:** referencing the minutes from Feb. 19, 2019, page 3, wondered if there is a typo in amounts as there are only three years left to be refunded.
- Bickle:** clarified that the amount should be \$150,000.
- Achorn:** referencing the minutes from Feb. 26, 2019; page 4, meeting #10, noted there are questions from the secretary: should be citizen or board comments.
- Manigold:** we have already agreed to pay the settlement. For clarification, agreed to put in on the next board meeting when Mr. Meihn will be here to clarify.
- Sanger:** on March 12 minutes, it was moved by Bickle, seconded by Wunch, and it was unanimous, to authorize Meihn to present settlement agreements as discussed in closed session to Deeren, Akerley, and Piehl to release claims of wage and hour and hostile work environment.
- Westphal:** explained that she went through the minutes of the past three months' meetings, and when that motion came up, there was no clarification on what the board was voting on: a \$7,398.00 bill for numerous sessions between the law firm and Akerley, Deeren, and Meihn. Believes at least twelve meetings took place when staff should have been working; believes the public deserves to know what the board is voting on.
- Manigold:** a lot of it was in closed session; the attorney will discuss it next month.
- Moved by Wahl to approve consent agenda as amended, seconded by Sanger**
- Roll call:** Pass unan

8. Business

1. Update on location of third fire station (Manigold)

Manigold: we used a map from the ISO gentleman to determine the best location for the third fire station. The best is between Swaney Road and Tompkins Road on M-37. Jane had an article in the *Gazette*; we got feedback from that. Cannot put it on PDR land. Mr. Edmondson's land did not work, Graham Kelly is possibly interested, considered Mr. Voight's land, on the corner of Swaney and Center, but that land is deed restricted. Ellison's parcel off Old Mission would take a lot of work. Mr. Lagina has two large parcels. Don Switzer (Switzerland Tree Farm) has a 48-acre tree farm just before Tompkins Road with eighteen acres and it looks like it has everything we need. Asked Steve Nichols to give us an appraisal as to what one or two acres is worth.

Sanger: do we have to meet the five-acre lot size?

Manigold: no, this falls under essential services in the ordinance for police and fire

2. Building demolition request for bids (Manigold)

Manigold: this came out of our discussion about possibly putting the new fire station at Haserot Beach. The new parks committee is considering taking the old building down and using the ground for overflow parking. We had a bid for \$6,700.00 for demolition that will include asbestos and lead. Requested a bid from Gourdie-Fraser to survey the four corners for \$1,000.00, bid packet \$875.00, and \$450.00 in contract form.

Moved by Achorn to have Gourdie-Fraser contract for the survey of the four corners and the bid opening for \$2,325.00, seconded by Bickle

Wahl: two potential functions, fire station and parking?

Manigold: only parking; strictly overflow.

Roll Call:

Pass unan

3. Township board 2018-2019 budget amendment (Bickle)

Bickle: looking at our 2016–2018 audits, our total net position increased from \$3,500,000.00. That's 21 million to 24 million. We have paid down debt and restructured. Investment tools are working well. Money is in FDIC-insured accounts gaining 2.1% interest. They are set up to allow us to draw upon and sweep money from our insured account into our regular checking account. It is seamless. We work with Independent Bank. Not only do we have seven million for operations, we have a revenue stream of about \$200,000 from cable and tower. The cable fund is \$599,000.00 and the tower is \$752,000.00. The budget is amended by line item. I will recommend to the town board for Thursday approval of the budget to do it by department or cost center. You will see what the budget was and activity regarding what was spent and what is under or over. In the future, we will do it by budget or total department. We will be able to make adjustments within that department.

Moved by Bickle that the town board approve and authorize the amendment as proposed to the 2018–2019 township budget, seconded by Wahl

Roll call:

Pass unan

4. Public hearing on proposed township general fund and other funds annual budget for fiscal year 2019-2020 with no action to be taken at this time (Bickle)

Manigold closed regular scheduled meeting and opened public hearing.

Monnie Peters, 1425 Neahtawanta Road: I looked over the budget and spoke to Randy about the budget for planning activities for coming years, areas where we don't know amounts, and you have decided it will be picked up in amendments later on. We have ambitious planning activities such as getting our survey done.

Bickle: realizes the planning commission will need more money. Explained that needs will have to be fully vetted regarding their budgetary requirements.

Mielnik: we have discussed our needs; it is hard to know where the costs will fall and for what.

Bickle: noted that the planning director and planning commission have reshaped the operation and will have the town board's support.

Carol Raphael, 14826 Mallard Drive: talked to Becky about a second tabulator for the election.

Bickle: we put in about \$7,000.00 for this purchase. Marilyn Elliot and Nancy Davy came in and talked about it as well.

Raphael: we only have one tabulator between precincts one and two. Absentee count will increase. The last election had a bit of trouble because the machine tabulator grabs slower and the ballots are folded; will need two teams and two tabulators.

Bickle: we have had dialogue and are in support of this.

Peninsula Township
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Beth Chan, Recording Secretary

Nancy Heller, 3091 Blue Water Road: thanked the treasurer and fire chief for spending time with her to go over the budget; said there should have been more effort to get the budget out earlier.

Manigold: read aloud the letter from Monica Hoffman addressed to the township board; that letter follows.

March 26, 2019
Peninsula Township Board,

I am not even sure where to start ...

The Township Board is having a public hearing for the yearly budget tonight March 26th, when copies of the budget were just provided to the public yesterday at 4:00 p.m. this is the first that it has been available. I have been asking for a budget for a while now.

Your little "RED BOOK" page 72 ... states that when you publish for the public hearing ***'The notice must include the hearing time and place and state where a copy of the budget is available for public inspection'*** The notice states that the budget would be available for public inspection after 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday March 19th. Now while it is after Tuesday March 19th ... having the budget available for the first time to the public 2 days prior to the hearing is not adequate. After all you have had months to prepare the budget ... and it does come around the same time each year. I do not feel that this board is giving ample time to its residents to review this ... especially since your plan is to also have your year-end meeting March 28th, at 9:00 A.M. in the morning when most people are at work. Remember this is how the board back in the early 90's passed the long-term health plan (just an FYI, I was not a board member at that time).

I would like the township board to justify their very large double digit 12+% increase in their wages. At least that is the way that I'm reading the budget since last years budget is not included in the info. While some of the board is new, four of you are part of the "7" who ran as a "TEAM" and complained about the increases of the previous board. Which were not even close to this. Mind you I am not talking staff I'm talking about the elected officials.

I think at the very least you should hold off in approving your huge wage increases for board members, until the next regular meeting in April....and not make them retroactive.

Regards,

Monica A. Hoffman

Bickle: explained that the budget process began in February. Said the budget is the last thing he wants to send out and then have substantial changes to. Explained that we need to get all expenses in so that we can close out the financial year. Noted that Monica built the foundation. That the new clerk said Monica had called and that we were to be done by a certain date that she, Becky, had published in the paper. The date wasn't communicated and the budget wasn't done. Urged all concerned residents to come in or call.

Manigold closed the public hearing and opened the matter up to the town board for discussion.

Manigold: explained that, regarding the proposed salary adjustment, we looked at comparable townships and what they pay. Did our due diligence as to the proposed pay. Looked at and averaged comparable townships.

Bickle: called the county clerk's offices, which gave him the salaries in all the townships for the last three years. The clerk is typically paid more because the clerk has heavy lifting, as does the treasurer, and the supervisor; the discussion is about moving the salary to a living wage.

Manigold: invited residents to come in to talk if they have any concerns. Agreed to honor Hoffman's request to put elected officials' proposed wage increase on hold until the April meeting.

Sanger: was initially concerned about the increases but then realized that several members of the staff make more than their supervisors. Reviewed how the township has grown. We now have planning, accessor, fulltime zoning administrator and fire chief. We need to create fairness.

Manigold: noted that it is apparent that we need qualified people, as is the case with the fire department. We wanted a leader. We have done a lot to change things and have come a long way. Has been here for 27 years. We now have 50 employees.

Bickle: explained that we have to take care of the budget on Thursday, the last township business day of the month before the new fiscal year begins, but that we wouldn't have a full board. Noted that he wants the full board present to discuss the proposed salary adjustment.

Manigold closed the regular scheduled meeting and opened the public hearing.

5. Second public hearing for the fire special assessment district for fiscal year 2019-2020 with no action to be taken at this time (Bickle)

No citizens spoke. Manigold noted that we will approve this matter on Thursday with the other budgets.

Manigold closed the public hearing and opened the regularly scheduled hearing.

6. Bids to retain a consultant to assist with conducting a community survey: (Mielnik)

Mielnik: explained the two proposals, one from Ady Advantage and one from Epic MRA. Cost is higher with Ady Advantage. Epic MRA is more focused and experienced with political campaigns. The city of Plymouth and a township near Flint both gave high recommendations to Epic MRA, which is also the less expensive bid. Recommended Epic MRA, which will do things a la carte including the phone and mail survey. Explained the importance of statistical validity, as you need to make sure you control responses and have multiple survey responses so the results are not slanted. Explained that we need a survey done via a random phone call method and a survey answered by everyone so that everyone can participate. Asked the town board to approve Epic MRA for \$12,500.00 for online and direct mail and the telephone survey.

Moved by Wahl to use Epic MRA for the phone and mail survey, seconded by Bickle

Roll Call:

Pass unan

9. Citizen Comments:

Nancy Heller: do you have a total amount on that last motion?

Bickle: the minimum was \$11,500.00 for the phone survey, \$12,500.00 for the survey and stair steps up.

Achorn: I added that the maximum \$12,500.00 and came up with \$28,350.00.

Bickle: for phone and mail and maximum phone time.

Meilnik: that is the highest.

Board and audience discussion on the length of the survey.

Wahl: we could amend not to exceed the maximum \$28,000; leave that open, because I do not want to promote shorter conversations since this only happens every fifteen years. Amend that it is not to exceed.

Sanger: your motion was to approve.

Bickle: we voted.

Bob Bolick, 1790 Peninsula Drive: on this survey, I think a telephone call is a waste of time. How can you get a hold of cell phone numbers?

Mielnik: there is mention in the proposal on how they deal with cell phones; the phone and mail will reach everyone.

Manigold: we will put the information in the newsletter informing the citizens of the survey.

Bob Bolick: I think the township web and mail cards is enough.

Wahl: the reason that the phone calls are important is to ensure that if they are away, they have a chance to answer. I would like a complete survey from everybody.

Monnie Peters: I went through these proposals and was impressed with the details. I have been through one of these (surveys); Epic MRA hit all the buttons; they can do the job. You can get cell phone numbers, not to exceed \$28,000, based on the number of survey questions.

10. Board Comments: none

11. Adjournment:

Moved by Wahl, seconded by Alcorn

Pass unan

Adjournment time: 8:01 p.m.