

Liberty Township Regular Meeting Minutes
February 14, 2024
Liberty Township Hall
7478 N 41 Rd, PO Box 334
Manton MI 49663

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by Supervisor Monroe.

Present: Supervisor Beverly Monroe, Treasurer Cynthia Deibert, Clerk Amanda Kimbel-Sparks, Trustee/FOIA Coordinator Joe Hurlburt, Trustee Jim Heady

Absent: None

Employees Present: Deputy Treasurer Lee Deibert

Employees Absent: Deputy Supervisor/Hall Manager Mabel Barnes, Deputy Clerk Tanja McCane Clark, Sexton O'dell Outdoor Services

Agenda: Addition to Agenda: Under heading Correspondence: EMS meeting report and WJCP report. Under the heading New Business: Add Fire Contract Ordinance. Under Unfinished Business: Add Cost of recording equipment. A motion to approve Agenda made by Hurlburt, 2nd by Heady. All in favor.

Public comment: A member of the public spoke.

Guest Speaker: NONE

Minutes:

- Motion to approve January 10, 2024, Regular meeting minutes by Hurlburt, 2nd by Heady. 4 yes, Kimbel-Sparks no

Clerk's Report

- Motion made by Kimbel-Sparks, 2nd by Heady to accept the clerk's expense report and pay bills. Roll Call: Deibert yes, Kimbel-Sparks yes. Heady Yes; Monroe Yes; Hurlburt Yes.
- Motion to pay Municipal Underwriters of Michigan Invoice 15629 for \$5113.00 for policy renewal by Kimbel-Sparks, 2nd by Deibert. Roll Call: Deibert yes, Kimbel-Sparks yes. Heady Yes; Monroe Yes; Hurlburt Yes.
- Motion to pay Board of Review members, Diane Waite, Mable Barnes, Linda Stewart, Beverly Monroe and Judy Heady for mandatory Board of Review training from January by Deibert, 2nd by Hurlburt. Roll Call: Deibert yes, Kimbel-Sparks yes. Heady Yes; Monroe Yes; Hurlburt yes.
- Clerk reported that the election computer is 20 years old and recommended an upgrade or at the least taking the computers in for repairs and maintenance at the Computer Store. Clerk also reported that this could be included in reimbursement grants available. Monroe stated that the rumors are that reimbursement may not occur. The email Monroe shared with the board from MTA clearly stated that things related to holding an election would be covered or reimbursed through the Michigan Bureau of Elections for this year. Clerk has reached out to the Bureau for clarification but had not received a response by the time of this meeting.
- Motion by Kimbel-Sparks, 2nd by Deibert to take computers in for repairs for no more than \$300. Roll Call: Deibert yes, Hurlburt no; Kimbel-Sparks yes. Heady no; Monroe no. Motion failed.
- Motion by Kimbel-Sparks, 2nd by Deibert to take computers in for repairs for no more than \$200. Roll Call: Deibert yes, Hurlburt no; Kimbel-Sparks yes. Heady yes,; Monroe yes. Motion passed.
- Motion to send Kimbel-Sparks to the MTA Conference at the Grand Traverse Resort at the cost of \$532 and Monroe to the MTA Conference at the Grand Traverse Resort for no more than \$532 made by Hurlburt, 2nd Kimbel-Sparks. Roll Call: Monroe Yes Deibert yes, Kimbel-Sparks yes. Hurlburt yes; Heady Yes;
- Motion to send Kimbel-Sparks's MAMC Clerk's conference in June made by Kimbel-Sparks. No second.
- ~~Roll Call: Monroe Yes Deibert yes, Kimbel-Sparks yes. Hurlburt yes; Heady Yes;~~
- Clerk report on the many additional duties added to the clerk's office due to Proposal 2 passing. Trustee Hurlburt announced that he was the only member of the Salary Committee, and he presented his recommendations to the board in August. When I asked for the copy of the report he presented, he then

announced that since I was not at the meeting, I do not get access to any documents that are in the board packet unless I am present. He also could not remember that date of the meeting he would have had to hold as a member of the Salary Committee. The timeline goes as follows. In July, Monroe appointed herself, Joe Hurlburt and Jim Sherburne to the Salary Committee. Jim Sherburne declined the appointment. In August, Hurlburt presented his recommendations for salary resolutions. Only the supervisor and treasurer received a raise. ~~In September, Hurlburt was appointed to the board after Robert Fountian's resignation.~~

- Motion made by Kimbel-Sparks to raise clerk's wages to \$14,316.00 or \$1,193.00 monthly based on a 30% increase in cost of living since last raise and numerous responsibilities have been added to the clerk's position due to the passing of Proposal 2 to include:
 - New requirements for sending Absentee Applications and new procedures for processing Absentee Ballots.
 - Additional forms to be prepared and sent out.
 - Mail out party selection forms for primary elections with pre-paid envelopes.
 - Mail out Absentee Voter's application with pre-paid envelopes.
 - Must call all permanent voters to verify party selection during primary elections that have not returned the paper application.
 - The former clerk did not maintain a permanent absentee voter list as it was not required but it is required now due to proposal 2 passing. The Qualified Voter File is a mess and will take many days to clean up which includes issuing at least 60 cancellation notices that must be tracked.
 - New requirements for video surveillance and ballot box upkeep.
 - Work with municipalities for Early Voting requirements.
 - Attend numerous training sessions while the state is deciding how this new law will affect different aspects of the clerk's responsibilities.
 - Treasurer's Current Salary is \$11,150.68 or \$929.22 raised Sept 23
 - Supervisor's Current Salary is \$7836.71 or \$653.06 raised Sept 23
 - Clerk's Current Salary is \$8316.00 or \$693.00 **No raise since 2013**

No Second. Motion fails.

- Motion by Monroe and seconded by Deibert to raise the clerk's salary by 5%, or . Roll Call vote: Heady no; Hurlburt yes; Kimbel-Sparks yes; Monroe yes; Deibert yes.
- Clerk reported on security camera installation issues with board assigning the clerk the key to the wrong closet at the hall. Clerk reminded the board of its responsibilities and legal requirements to have the equipment installed before the election. Discussion was had. Monroe was concerned that the public would not have access to the recordings. Hurlburt recommended going with a different camera set-up all together.
- Motion made by Kimbel-Sparks to get the key to the mop closet for security camera installation. No second. Motion fails.
- Clerk Deputy item was added to the Agenda by Monroe. Clerk had nothing to report on said item.

Public Comment:

- Hurlburt requested moving public comments up in the meeting so his guest could talk to the board. Aaron Sogge, EMS Director of Cherry Grove Fire Department presented a copy of Liberty Township Contracted Ambulance Services. He was joined by his fire chief. Some discussion occurred.
- No other public member was given an opportunity to make other public comments at this time.

Treasurer's Report:

- Motion to approve Treasurer's report made by Monroe, 2nd by Hurlburt. Roll Call: Deibert yes, Kimbel-Sparks yes. Heady Yes; Monroe Yes; Hurlburt, yes. Motion passed.
- Motion to authorize Treasurer, Cynthia Deibert to move \$15,000.00 from General Fund Checking account at Huntington Bank to highest yield offer on a 90-day CD made by Kimbel-Sparks, 2nd by Hurlburt. Roll Call vote: Heady yes; Hurlburt yes; Kimbel-Sparks yes; Monroe yes; Deibert yes.

Hall Manager Report:

- Not present. Monroe reported one rental.

Sexton Report:

- Not present. Hurlburt will reach out to sexton about cemetery water line repair and locating the gate locks.

FOIA Coordinator Report: One FOIA from the clerk answered.

New Business

- ~~Legal Report No report given~~
- Fire Contract Ordinance-Discussion on why an ordinance and not a policy. Tabled
- WJPC- Monroe reported that Cherry Grove is no longer leaving the commission. Commission is currently working on new policies for blight and short-term rentals.
- Board of Review upcoming schedule will be March 11, 3-8; March 15, 9-3; March 18 at 10am (optional)
- Motion to run advertisement with the MTA on their website and in Focus Magazine for two months FOR AN ASSESSOR at \$60 per month for a total of \$120 made by Monroe, 2nd by Hurlburt. Roll Call vote: Heady yes; Hurlburt yes; Kimbel-Sparks yes; Monroe yes; Deibert yes.
- Draft budget distributed by Monroe. Announced the Annual Budget meeting to be held March 13, 2024 at 6:30pm to be directly followed by the regular board meeting.
- Monroe announced that the assessor informed her that we will have to get OUR own website. Document distributed.
- Township Clean-Up will be May 4, 2024 from 9am-1pm.
- Motion to hire Double D Disposal to provide clean up services for the annual clean-up by Kimbel-Sparks. No Second.
- Hurlburt requested the board collect bids from Manton Disposal, Double D, and GFL. Monroe said she would reach out to the companies.
- Mick Sparks has agreed to speak at Memorial Day service.

Correspondence:

- MTA Conference

Unfinished Business: (New, Old and in-progress)

- Policy Updates – Monroe reported that we need to reassess our policies and add more. No individual policy was mentioned.
- Policy on surveillance recordings and access. Clerk explained the information provided in an email from Monroe which laid out the requirements for Absentee Ballot Box, Ballot Box security. Monroe and Hurlburt expressed concerns over record keeping and storage. Kimbel-Sparks explained that the clerk is charged with maintaining the records of the township, especially the records pertaining to elections. Monroe mentioned a concern that the general PUBLIC didn't have access to the security recordings. Kimbel-Sparks and Deibert explained that it would be accessible to the public through FOIA requests. Monroe and Hurlburt would prefer to create a policy for the storage of said files. Discussion tabled for Monroe and Hurlburt to further investigate.

Public Comment: Member of the public requested more information on the property development on 12 RD. Deibert offered to assist with more information. A member also asked the board to assist them in contacting the Wexford County Road Commission on plowing schedule, in particular, the paved section of 12 rd. Hurlburt offered to reach out to the Road Commission.

Adjourn:

- Motion by Heady and 2nd by Hurlburt to Adjourn. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.