

**CLARK TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING AUGUST 17, 2023, AT 8AM
AT CLARK TOWNSHIP OFFICE
MINUTES**

Call To Order /Pledge of Allegiance

- Meeting called to order and Pledge of Allegiance at 9:03 am by Clymer.

Roll Call

- Present: Clymer, Fitzgerald, Kozma, Rutledge, Schuster
- Absent: None
- Others Present: Ken Drenth (Les Cheneaux Community Foundation), Lester Livermore (Mackinac County Road Commission), Bob Lohff (Les Cheneaux Schools), Dave Wallace (Les Cheneaux Community Foundation), Dennis Wenzel (Resident)

Inquire if Public Comments are to Address Agenda Items

- Ken Drenth asked if he could speak to an agenda item. Clymer recommended he wait until the topic in the Agenda.
- Dave Wallace stated that he was there to speak about the Hessel Marina / Neal House Enhancement project Agenda item.

Consent Agenda

- Approve minutes from July 19, 2023 Regular Meeting
- Approve Budget
- Approve invoices:
 - General Fund: \$109,009.43
 - Sewer Fund: \$72,382.55
 - Invoices more than \$500
- Service Contracts:
 - Elizabeth Sanderson – Old Timers Game Special Events Application 9/3/23
- Special Events:
 - Islands Wildlife Salmon Derby – Susie – 8/26/23
- Budget Amendments: None
- Approval of Consent Agenda
 - Clymer (Y), Fitzgerald (Y), Kozma (Y), Rutledge (Y), Schuster (Y). All in favor; motion carries

Addition to the Agenda

- Rutledge - Property for the new fire/ambulance hall. Property is available and Ms. Rutledge feels that the location is fantastic between the Hen House and Autore Oil. She has talked to the owner, and he will give us a reasonable price on it. Only a portion of this is wetlands and Rutledge feels we should purchase the property for future use as a fire/ambulance hall. Steve Autore owns the property.
- Voter results in the past election – the Ambulance EMS proposal passed 383 to 88 and the Sewer proposal passed 314 to 167. Only a 25.8% turnout despite lots of advertising.

Approved at Reg. mtg on 9-20-23
Susan Rutledge
Mark Cly

- Mark Wilke – head of St. Ignace Ambulance Corp wanted to know if we were interested in the Chippewa County Ambulance Group. The Board had passed on that previously but if we decide, he would like to be part of that discussion and requests that if we merge with anyone – he asks that it be the St. Ignace Ambulance Corp in order to keep it all in Mackinac County.
- Previously ordering a new ambulance was approved by the Board and we have to order two years out. Susie will investigate when this was approved via the minutes from previous meetings as all Board Members only remember discussing a new firetruck. A new ambulance could be ready in August of 2024. Keith would like to apply for a grant to cover all of the costs of a new ambulance and Susie authorized Keith's research. The grant would come from the State. Kinross received over \$200,000 for a new ambulance.

Correspondence:

- Ken and Colleen Wright – Big LaSalle Island – concerned with the public dock being let go and not maintained. So wobbly – one of the dock posts fell off. Also, the weeds that are present in the boat slips. Very hard to find slips open when the Tipper Room is open. It would be nice if the Tipper Room had their own dock.
- Sharon Henigé – disappointed that the dock is in such poor condition. She feels the same about the Tipper Room. Steve states that many businesses don't have docks and there is not a problem. He states that just because you are on the water does not mean that you have to have your own dock. Mark states that he hopes that the Tipper Room will put in their own dock, but the Township cannot force them to. It is probably worth sitting down with the owners of the Tipper Room as we as the owners of the ice cream shop.
- Lisa states that she did respond that some of the dock issues were supposed to be addressed last week. But they will be addressed during the week.
- Permit applications (can be reviewed with Susie Rutledge):
 - Barb Collins – Park Avenue
 - Wendy Armstrong – Big LaSalle Island
 - Mark Clymer – West State Ave. Peek A Boo Trail
 - John Grenier – other side of Hessel
- Mac. County Road Commission – place 123 cubic yards to fill in a 4,000 square foot of wetland to construction a roadway safety upgrade on 1,000 linear feet on State Avenue.

Old Business & Updates

- Tony Smit – Airport Garage Lease review
 - Interested in leasing the garage at the airport. We have not heard back from the attorney for a review of the lease.
 - Tentatively, Tony has a draft of the lease. The terms are \$200 per month to include utilities not to exceed \$50 per month.
 - Susie asks about insurance.
 - We are waiting for the attorney's review.
- Progress on the new website?
 - Susie presents Deb's correspondence. We are in the mockup stages of the website. There are a few small fixes, and we can proceed to build the website. Deb has sent several photos and changes.
 - Deb and the IT company will be sitting down to review progress.

- Lisa has seen the new website, and it appears much more user friendly.
- Mark requests that he/the Board see the mockup as well.

- AED Update
 - Linda ordered (2) AED's from HeartSmart on March 19, 2023, and they are on back order.
 - Linda also ordered (2) AEDs from Mark Wilke on June 19, 2023, and they are also on back order.
 - (2) AED's that were sent for repair have just been received back. They are for the Hessel School House and Ang-gios.
- Administrative Collective Bargaining Agreement status
 - Going into closed session following the meeting.
- Board of Trustees Bylaws
 - Tabled on June 21 and July 19, 2023. Lisa has not received any changes from anyone.
 - Mark sent them to the attorney and has not heard back.
 - The issue is tabled until the September meeting.
- Performa for Hessel Marina Acquisition & Enhancement
 - Mark states that the acquisition itself is sustainable. He was unable to print the report that he produced but he walked through the costs involved.
 - Ken Drenth suggests moving this discussion to the end of the meeting after new business.
- Lisa makes the motion to move f,g, and h agenda items to the end of the meeting. Schuster seconds the motion. All in favor – motion carries.
 - After new business per motion above:
 - Mark states that the Hessel Marina currently nets about \$56,000 per year depending on the past 5 years. Generally, it is a break even. Looking at the additional income of the Neal House with a crib dock that does not need repair. The family is keeping the floating docks that are there. The current rates for dockage are \$1,200 per year. This would be an additional \$12,000 per year just for the dockage fees if we do nothing else.
 - The cost of ownership from Maureen Neal states that \$4,500 for heat, \$900 for electric and \$600 for sewer, insurance estimated at \$2,000, lost tax revenue is \$1,880. The township only gets a portion of the tax revenue overall as some goes to the county, some goes to the hospital, some goes to Veterans, etc. Kozma states that the township gets about 4% of the tax revenue. That is a little less than \$10,000. This would leave \$2,000 for repair and maintenance when renting out the docks alone. Susie states that she can't believe that the cost of ownership is so little and compares it to her personal home. Kozma compares his home and states that it is a believable number.
 - Kozma states he is generally against this whole acquisition, but is being fair in the mathematical assessment. He does feel that the dock is a viable income source. Would rather see us break more than even.
 - If someone uses the house or we lease it out, the only requirement would be to have one ADA bathroom onsite. The cost of making this happen would be less than

- \$10,000. The cost could come from renting out the building or having the lease holder take on this requirement.
- If we lease it out – we can put the monies into a fund for future improvement. Kozma feels that leasing out the building would be a solid plan. Lisa feels that the Hessel Marina needs something NOW – the bathrooms and showers are crumbling, etc. The longer we wait – the worse it will be. Mark states that if we rebuild the other building – the bathrooms and the showers will not be available during the remodel. The acquisition project gives us more flexibility and the cost is \$0. It is a plus as we can earn additional monies while we put a plan together to either renovate the existing, or utilize the space, or turn the garage into a bath house. Susie thought that the garage attached to the house would be used for our equipment. Mark states that it could be part of an overall lease to somebody, or we would extract that from the lease for our usage. Without owning the home, we wouldn't have that either way. There is no reason we can't lease the house out and rent back part for our storage. There are many possibilities. Steve feels that if we do obtain the building, we should lease out the whole building and just use the docks. He feels that where the marina building is now, it is the most central location to all of the other slips.
 - Ken Drenth asks that he speak on behalf of the acquisition – Mark agrees.
 - Board Members voted to approve a purchase agreement. They asked the Little Traverse Conservancy to help them with the acquisition. They asked the Community Foundation to be the Fiduciary Agent. The Community Foundation agreed. Major potential donors feel that this is a once in a lifetime opportunity that we cannot afford to pass up.
 - Part of the problem is the fact that Island residents have to go someplace else to rent parking spaces. They go to an alternate site and drive to Hessel. If we had more docking spaces by keeping the inside basin of the present facility for those people who come to town and don't have to get into a car, it would help alleviate the problem. Purchasing the lot on 134 and the Catholic church parking – we are addressing the best possible options that we have available. One thing we want to do is encourage island residents to come to shore and do business. It is an economic development issue. The Tipper Room is a great asset, the new bakery is a great asset, the coffee shop is a great asset, The Distillery is a great asset. We have great things here that have enhanced the economic viability of the community. In Hessel, we have The Culinary School, Pickle Point, The Islander....they are all economic development. They all add to the economic viability and enhancement of the community.
 - The mission statement of the Community Foundation is to do things that enhance the economy and the living conditions for those who are here.
 - When the Board asked the Community Foundation to be the Fiduciary Agent, they agreed 100% and donated \$10,000 immediately.
 - Joe Sterns, the Harbor Master in St. Ignace spoke at the meeting in early July expressed that we would be crazy not to take this opportunity.
 - Steve Kozma speaks and says that he was never on board with the purchase. However, he feels that if we are awarded the grant, we should buy the Neal House. He does not think it is the best use of the property, but we are beyond that now.
 - Ken asks Steve what he means about not the best use of the property. Steve feels that it should be used in a commercial capacity. Steve feels like another business or

attraction in Hessel would be a better use of the property and more beneficial to the community.

- Maureen Neal made this property available to the Township. The home is not on the open market at this point. Steve feels that if we get the grant, we should move forward, and nobody should work against it.
- Dave Wallace speaks up. He has dock space for about 20 boats. He has no dog in this fight. He could rent out space to island residents. He states that island residents have nowhere to come with their boat. The Hessel Marina is used by people who live and work here. The Transient boaters bring in money and take nothing with them. The current marina is dominated by everyday people with fishing boats or pleasure boats. The Marina is the heartbeat of the waterfront community. Just like Cedarville, St. Ignace, Alpena, Roger City. Visitors bring their money, and they add to the community. It is unthinkable not to acquire waterfront as an asset to this township. This opportunity will never be available again.
- Lester Livermore states that he puts his boat in Hessel all of the time. He agrees with all of the other issues, but he feels that you have to have discourse. Eventually, you have to argue it out and once agree upon, support the decision.
- Mark tries to tie this together so they can move on. Mark shares some basic numbers as far as income potential. And he offers the opportunity to sit down with anyone, Board Members.
- Mark has talked to several resort owners, they agree that if we were to lease out the property and the garage together, in the in season, we could get approximately \$1,500 per week and in the off-season - \$1,500 a month or more. The storefront could be rented for commercial use for things like coffee shop, etc., Short term rental upstairs. Rent monies would go into the Hessel Marina fund. Mark feels that it should be put into a dedicated fund for future enhancement phases. Maybe take used fingers from the lagoon and acquire more and put more fingers on the crib dock and have \$20,000 more coming in. If we lease out the building – it will create revenue.
- Steve feels that leasing out the entire building is the best idea because this is an actual plan. Any income generated will be utilized for the marina.
- Regardless of how we use the property, the acquisition will benefit the community.
- Steve states that he does not like the idea of really no plan. Leasing out the building, dock spaces, etc., is a more comfortable plan to him. Mark states that there is one concise plan, but Steve has not read it.
- Mark states that we hired an engineering firm with a \$40,000 grant that we got from the waterways commission. They were the funding source for the 10 new electrical pedestals in Hessel. They want to work with us, and they want to see Hessel Marina grow. They are totally supporting the acquisition and building out in whatever way possible. They see the need and demand. They see what is going on in surrounding Marinas. Many boats simply go by us. There are people in the Great Lakes Cruising Club, the waterways board, etc., that have expressed that it would be nice if there were more opportunities to visit Hessel and Cedarville.
- Ken suggests as a conclusion that we schedule a special township board meeting to deal with some of these issues.

- Mark entertains a motion that: if the match is raised with private donations and we are awarded the grant – the Board will proceed with the acquisition of the Neal Home. Steve makes the motion and Pat seconds the motion.
 - Roll Call vote: Kozma (Y), Fitzgerald (Y), Clymer (Y), Schuster (Y), Rutledge (Y).
 - Mark states that people have questions, but the donors look at this as an obvious asset to the community and this motion will help support that.
 - Mark offers to sit down with Steve to go over the plans. Steve states that because there are so many things that are being actively worked on that he has not paid full attention to this project because it has not happened yet. There are two commercial waterfront properties in all of Hessel. He feels that this makes us different from Alpena, St. Ignace, etc., After this acquisition, we will only have one commercial property on the water in Hessel.

- **Update on tribal land acquisition application**
 - The information has been turned into the BIA. Steve states that this is a non-homestead property. The taxes on the golf course are \$16,900.30 as of the last two payments for tax bills. It breaks out 1.473 mills goes to operating and everything else is other stuff and most of it does not impact the township. Although obviously some services can affect the township. Mark understands that they would like us to support their fee to trust transfer to the BIA. All that we received was a three-page notice stating we have 30 days to make a public comment. Mark received it when we were already 20 days into it. Mark went up to the BIA personally and sat down with Esther, who works for the BIA, and is the first review person. Esther could not have been more helpful. She gave Mark copies of the survey, the application, etc., and Mark looked into it. Esther agrees that this is an off reservation acquisition. Esther explains that her review is more of checking boxes off and it will go to a regional review, and they will ask for a business plan. It is a work in progress. What we did at the last meeting, we can't fully support it. However, we do fully support the acquisition by the tribe of the golf course itself.
 - We don't need to pursue this any further at this time unless the tribe comes to us and wants to sit down and talk about it. We gave our response. Cal comments that the tribe is pretty well satisfied. The ball is in their court right now.

- **Sewer Correspondence**
 - The preliminary stuff has been signed off on. We are getting notices of closing. Closing documents are expected next week that mark and Susie will need to sign and send back. Three documents were sent to Mark and Susie and Mark scrambled and made it all happen.

New Business:

- **Bob Lohff – Superintendent of Les Cheneaux Community Schools.** Wanted to bring up a couple of things to the Township.
 - The school board did call for an election for a school bond this November. They are asking for an increase of 1.8 mills – a total of 2.8 which will generate about 12.6 million dollars. One of the big-ticket items is a field house / second gym where the current playground is. They don't have quotes yet for the renovations and new school busses. Also plans to refurbish the track. He wanted to come to the Township to inform them that this field house would be open to the community in the mornings as well. Planning on pickle ball courts, a walking track, basketball court, volleyball court, and a men's and women's locker room and bleachers for 250 – 300 people. The second gym is much needed for practice times. All surrounding schools have second gyms. More information to follow. Bob does have rough quotes for the work, but they are so rough – he does not feel comfortable with them yet.
 - Baseball fields – the Co-Op is looking to expand the baseball program. Next year, middle school baseball program will start. Bob asks if the ball fields in town are available for the teams. The fields in town are only for softball. The Hessel Airport is available for both. Lisa states that something can be worked out for the schools in town to utilize the fields. Lisa will speak with Noel Weaver regarding any changes that may need to be made. Bob may attend the next Board Meeting to share updates.
 - Susie mentions that the Presidential Primary is in February and this would be a good one to get in on as it won't cost the school any money.
 - Susie mentions that the language on the ballot is really quite vague and does not mention the Field House. She feels that this will take a lot of work to help people to understand. Also stated that ballots will be going out 9/28 so all mailings and info should be out before that date as we have a large absentee ballot demand.

Treasurers Report:

General fund \$511,714.50

Sewer fund \$153,094.76

Supervisors Report:

Covered earlier – the Performa for the Hessel Marina Acquisition and Enhancement under old business.

Committee/Commission Reports

- **Airport Committee**
 - No committee meeting. The only thing going on is the garage lease.
- **Ambulance Corp and Fire Department Reports**
 - All have copies of records.
 - Fire Department had a fire on Meridian. 6-8 cars were damaged.
- **Code Enforcement Officer Report**
 - Susie adds to Cal's report but states that there are 22 issues and 21 have been resolved.
 - Ongoing investigations are at 1. Mark and Susie feel that Cal's efforts are fantastic.

- Speaking with Cal, Lisa states that he does not want to go on payroll and Cal does not want to double his salary at this time and Lisa feels that Cal does great and is worth every penny that we pay him.
- Cal's raise of \$250 per month in the Summer has been tabled.
- **Heritage Park**
 - Lisa did not attend the meeting. The plumbing parts have not been replaced. Some parts have been replaced but the repair will require a professional plumber
- **Planning Commission: Mr. Kozma**
 - The meeting was moved by a week due to Boat Show. Meetings that coincide with Snows Fest will also be moved by a week.
 - No cases
 - Calendar will be posted at the beginning of the season.
 - Burn Permits / Burn Ordinance proposal
 - Concerns that have been raised. They have a subcommittee looking at other townships to see what their ordinances are.
 - Right now, if you go to the DNR website, all of the UP in the Northern Lower is only dictated by how the counties are color coated. Color depicting No burning, open burning, some restrictions, etc. From Mt. Pleasant down is up to the local government to determine.
 - They are trying to come up with something that is comprehensive.
 - Solar and Wind suggestions
 - Steve presents the alternate energy zoning requirements which would cover windmills and solar panel placements. This was based on some other townships. They considered waterfrontage, properties that are not on the grid in relation to restrictions.
 - He would like to address it at the next meeting and vote to either kick it down the road or take it to EGLE for review.
 - There is some concern from the County Planning Commission to get ahead of some things like this coming up rather than reacting until something comes up.
 - The issue has been tabled until September. This is a regulatory ordinance.
- **Recreation Committee**
 - Boat Show. Don't need to get into specifics. No accidents or liability issues.
- **Road Committee**
 - Has not met. Budget has been set.
 - Paving the shoulder or Meridian in 2024.
 - Cedar to be paved in 2024 and State to have lift done annually at 1/10 acre segments.
- **Sewer Advisory Board**
 - Has not met but they will be meeting on the 23rd of August.
 - Mark has asked the Sewer Board to come back together for a new that the loan is almost doubled and the millage has passed, we have to look at rare increases.
 - Lisa expresses "you think people are going to hate us for purchasing the Neal House – wait till she increases the sewer rates".
 - Mark offers to go over line by line but all agree that this is not necessary. In round numbers, the sewer rates for the users will be an increase of about \$10 based on the increase in the quote for the project.

- Mark will be talking with the Sewer Advisory Board regarding how the additional cost should be allocated as far as each year, etc.
- Mark and Jim were working on new forms to the customer as far as the rates to install a new system. At the same time, Deb and Jim were also working on some math. Mark will be talking with the Sewer Advisory Board to get approved costs to the customers for the forms.
- Discussions regarding communication and approval process of forms between the Building Inspector, the Sewer Manager, the Clerks Office and the Supervisors Office. The Supervisor needs to be more informed before anything is considered final.
- Lisa makes a motion that we use the new higher forms created by Deb in the customer packets. Steve seconds the motion. All in favor – motion passes.

Public Comment: LIMITED TO THREE (3) MINUTES PER PERSON FOR NON- AGENDA ITEM

- Lester Livermore from the Road Commission speaks on Townships that want to have things done outside of their policies. When he came on years ago, he insisted that everybody gets served under the same policy and nobody diverts from the policy because they are upset, etc. Rather than arguing with individuals, he is implementing a public outreach program and we will be receiving a customer survey.
- Lester would like to be included on the future meeting invites / notifications

10:30 am – Motion to go into closed session to discuss letter from our Attorney concerning Union Contract by Susie. Seconded by Lisa.

10:45 am – Motion to return to open session made by Kozma. Seconded by Schuster.

Adjournment

- 10:50 am - Motion to adjourn made by Pat Schuster, seconded by Fitzgerald – all in favor. Motion carries.

