

WAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
NOVEMBER 7, 2023, 5:30 PM

Clerk Ahonen called the regular Wakefield Township Board meeting to order and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Jennifer Ahonen, Clerk; Denice Laessig, Treasurer; Robert Drier, Trustee; Michael Heikkila, Trustee; and Michelle Wasielewski, Deputy Clerk. ABSENT: Mandy Lake, Supervisor.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion was made by Laessig, supported by Heikkila, to approve the Agenda with the addition of Agenda Item J.5. Credit Cards. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: Motion was made by Laessig, supported by Drier, to approve the regular board meeting minutes from October 3, 2023, as presented. Motion carried.

BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA: Public attendee asked to be included on Agenda Item J.3. Highland Copper Resolution of Support.

APPROVAL OF BILLS: Motion was made by Drier, supported by Heikkila, to accept the bills and payroll as presented for payment. ROLL CALL vote showed all those present voting YES. Motion carried.

REPORTS AND APPEARANCES:

1. GOGEBIC RANGE WATER AUTHORITY: Treasurer Laessig discussed the meeting of October 12th. Nine members were present with Dale White presiding as the chair. All regular items were approved. The temporary administrator, Mary Segalin is working on tying up loose ends from the previous administrator. The financial reports were not ready for presentation. Anderson Tackman has been approved as the auditor. Two applications were received for the administrator position. It was approved to hire Mary Segalin as the new administrator. A meeting was scheduled for October 30th to work out the details of her contract. However, Treasurer Laessig was not able to attend.
2. SUPERVISOR/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: Clerk Ahonen shared Supervisor Lake's updates provided via email.
 - Xcel Energy is working on the street lights. They do not have all that is needed in inventory. If you see any that are out, please let Supervisor Lake know.
 - Snowriver has been approved to keep the billboards. They are working with MDOT and their attorney regarding the payment for new permits and catch-up amounts.
 - Supervisor Lake has a meeting with Highland Copper on Wednesday to meet the new CEO.
 - Supervisor Lake has a meeting scheduled with the Road Commission on Thursday to discuss the projects for next year. Please let her know if there is anything you would like to add. Currently is Puumala Road and Indianhead subdivision are on the list.
 - Supervisor Lake received an email from a Wiitanen Road resident expressing concern regarding the City of Wakefield side after the County had graveled. Recently, the resident emailed again and stated the City has been out and has taken care of the potholes and they are pleased with the work.

- Clerk Ahonen read an email received by Supervisor Lake regarding the Tax Tribunal which is still under dispute. More information to come.
3. TREASURER'S REPORT: As of October 31, 2023, the General Fund #101 had a beginning balance of \$167,376.24 with receipts totaling \$6,454.24; expenditures of \$13,741.97; payroll of \$5,252.68, leaving an ending balance of \$154,835.83. Motion was made by Heikkila, supported by Drier, to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented and place on file. ROLL CALL vote showed all those present voting YES. Motion carried.
 4. SECTION 32: Trustee Drier shared that the work looks to almost be completed. Application has been submitted for the next two phases. The next regular meeting is in January.
 5. SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY: Trustee Heikkila shared there was not a meeting as there was not a quorum as the last meeting. Next meeting is November 16th.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Gogebic County Board of Commissioners: Supervisor Lake has emailed the correspondence.
2. Gogebic County Board of Commissioners/Gogebic County Fair Document: Clerk Ahonen read the document as shared by the Commissioners.
3. MTA Legislative Updates: All members receive this correspondence.
4. City of Wakefield Property Owner/Water Main Letters: The City of Wakefield sent letters to township residents regarding the water main break as well as requesting access to properties to assess for beaver activity along the Little Black River.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Industrial Park Sign: This item will be tabled until next meeting when Supervisor Lake can provide more details about the bid received.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Acquiring Steve Tinti Law Firm: Attorney Tim Dean has recommended Steve Tinti as the attorney to navigate the Highland Copper site plan review and application process. Motion was made by Heikkila, supported by Drier to approve Steve Tinti Law Firm at the rate of \$200 per hour to navigate the Highland Copper site plan review and application process. ROLL CALL vote showed all those present voting YES. Motion Carried.
2. Budget Amendments: Clerk Ahonen reviewed Budget Amendment #2 for 2023-2024. The overall budget amount of \$265,790 is unchanged but line items changed are as follows:
 - Line 29: 101-101-900 Print/Publish increase from \$600 to \$650 (+\$50)
 - Line 32: 101-101-957 Dues increase from \$100 to \$600 (+\$500)
 - Line 93: 101-265-930 Repairs & Maintenance increase from \$1,400 to \$3,000 (+\$1,600)
 - Line 111: 101-449-805 Contract Roads decrease from \$40,700 to \$37,550 (-\$3,150)
 - Line 128: 101-722-801 Contract-Bldg Inspector increase from \$2,000 to \$3,000 (+\$1,000)

Motion was made by Laessig, supported by Heikkila to approve the budget amendments as presented. ROLL CALL vote showed all those present voting YES. Motion Carried.

3. Highland Copper Resolution of Support: Clerk Ahonen read the resolution for approval. Highland Copper site manager, Mike Foley, was present and discussed the progress, history and future of the project. Motion was made by Drier, supported by Heikkila to approve the Resolution as presented. ROLL CALL vote showed all those present voting YES. Motion Carried.
4. City of Wakefield/Little Black River Property Access: Clerk Ahonen read the agreement allowing the City of Wakefield access to our property along the Little Black River to check for beaver activity. Motion was made by Laessig, supported by Heikkila to allow Supervisor Lake to sign the agreement. ROLL CALL vote showed all those present voting YES. Motion Carried.
5. Credit Card: Clerk Ahonen researched credit cards that would be available for nonprofit municipalities. First National Bank of Wakefield and Incredible Bank in Ironwood both provided the exact information. After discussion, motion was made by Heikkila, supported by Drier to approve Clerk Ahonen to apply for the Visa Community Card through the First National Bank of Wakefield with zero annual fee and no rewards in the names of the clerk, treasurer and supervisor. ROLL CALL vote showed all those present voting YES. Motion Carried.

EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT: Public attendance had a question regarding the Section 32 project as well as the State of Michigan initiative for going green. Trustee Drier was able to answer both questions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/ADJOURNMENTS

1. REGULAR MEETING: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.
2. MTA MEETING: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., Wakefield City Hall.
3. PLANNING COMMISSION: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion was made by Laessig, supported by Heikkila, for adjournment at 6:43 p.m. Motion carried.

Jennifer Ahonen, CLERK OF WAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP

Typed by: Michelle Wasielewski, DEPUTY CLERK