

# Benton Township Board Meeting

February 16th, 2021  
Meeting held virtually over Zoom due to travel restriction

## Attendance

- Joe Husk, Chair
- Hans Kelson, Secretary
- Lynn Stevens, Board Member
- Michelle Bright, Township Trustee
- Sara Farmer
- Pat Butcher

**Meeting called to order at 6:33 PM**

## Approval of Minutes

### Amendment of Submitted Minutes

- The date was corrected
- Language around Township Fund cash balance was clarified

### Approval

- Motion to Approve Minutes as amended: Kelson  
Second: Kelson  
Approved Unanimously

## Reports

### Financial Report

#### Rainy Day Fund

- YTD Expense: \$0
- Budget Remaining: \$0
- Cash Balance: \$225,633.12

**Township Fund**

- YTD Expense: \$2,847.96
- Budget Remaining: \$60,152.04
- Cash Balance: \$80,057.38

**Township Assistance Fund**

- YTD Expense: \$354.99
- Budget Remaining: \$39,645.01
- Cash Balance: \$96,475.24

**Firefighting Fund**

- YTD Expense: \$27,241.38
- Budget Remaining: \$377,758.62
- Cash Balance: \$268,292.41

**Cumulative Fire Fund**

- YTD Expense: \$545.00
- Budget Remaining: \$159,455.00
- Cash Balance: \$111,365.33

**Recreation Fund**

- YTD Expense: \$209.48
- Budget Remaining: \$4,790.52
- Cash Balance: \$7,096.61

**Shelter Insurance COVID Fund**

This is from money donated by Jenny Burton of Shelter Insurance for COVID-19 relief food boxes.

- YTD Expense: \$489.32
- Cash Balance: \$510.68

**Deposits**

- Trust Indiana: \$47.42
- Donation Fund: \$600.00

## **Approval**

- Motion to Approve Financial Reports: Kelson  
Second: Stevens  
Approved Unanimously

## **Recorded Statement from BTVFD Chief Charley Powers**

- Chief Powers was in Houston, TX, and was without power. Therefore, this statement was delivered via voicemail which Trustee Bright played over Zoom.
- The Benton Township Volunteer Fire Department has voted to disband as of March 10th.
- BTVFD as an organization did not feel that they were able to provide service deserving of their \$20,000 contract.
- Our volunteers will have the opportunity to join the Monroe Fire District's Volunteer Department.
- Chief Powers personally thanks Trustee Bright and the Township Board for supporting him and the department.
- Chief Powers will write a letter to Trustee Bright dictating how BTVFD's remaining funds are to be spent in service of the Benton Township fire station.
  - This will include items such as new appliances for the living quarters and a new lawn mower.

## **Trustee's Report**

### **Legislative Update**

- Indiana House Bill 1476 was defeated in the House. This is a good thing for townships.

### **Township Office**

- HVAC went out twice at the township office, and there was an electrical issue which has now been resolved.

### **Fire Department Updates**

- Trustee Bright will work with Chief Powers and Attorney Jeff Bellamy to modify the 2021 BTVFD Contract.
- Trustee Bright talked to Chief Powers about a public thank you to our volunteers, but he said he didn't think it was necessary.
- ISO will be coming out to reassess Monroe County fire departments who have joined the Fire District. Since we are going to have full time staff at the station going forward, it is likely that we will be able to obtain a better ISO rating as well.
- We now have two surplus vehicles: Squad 14 and Support 14-8. Support 14-8 will likely continue to be used by Charley Powers in his new role at the Fire District. The District would pay for insurance, fuel, and maintenance, and may offer to purchase it once they get their tax draw in June.
- Since we no longer have a viable Volunteer Organization, we can consider transferring surplus equipment to the Fire District.
- Also due to the Volunteer Organization dissolving, we will need someone to work on behalf of the township to organize gear, take vehicles to be repaired, etc. Trustee Bright proposes creating a part time position which would be filled by Charley Powers during this transition. It would be \$18/hour on an as needed basis.
- Trustee Bright attached a copy of the Fire District Truck Check reports. There have not been many checks performed yet, as people are not consistently at the station at this time.

### **Fire Station Remodel**

- The Fire Station Remodel is due to be completed on Friday, February 19th. Building and Associates have a firm March 31st deadline to "Substantially Complete" the project or incur a \$100/day penalty.
- We have purchased a new washer/dryer for the Fire Station.
- White River Co-Op has taken away our old/broken gas tanks. We will use fleet cards going forward.
- Initial costs for the remodel project came in at \$548,000. However, we have had to issue a few change orders, which have increased the total price.

## **Township Assistance Report**

- One application for Burial Assistance. Pam never heard back after reaching out to give them the application process, but did notice that they had set up a GoFundMe.
- One person called from Brown County. Pam directed them to the correct trustee.
- One request for Rent and 2 Utilities. Was approved for Utilities, but not Rent.
- One person was finally able to get their voucher for wood from SCCAP.
- We distributed food from the office to an outside pantry due to COVID.

## **Approval**

- Motion to Approve Trustee Report and Township Assistance Report: Stevens  
Second: Kelson  
Approved Unanimously

## **Fire Reports**

### **BTVFD Report**

- Chief Powers was unable to log in to the Dispatch system to get an official record of runs, due to the Fire Department's internet connection being disconnected. This report is based solely on BTVFD's run reports.
- Motion to Approve BTVFD Report: Kelson  
Second: Stevens  
Approved Unanimously

### **NMFT Report**

- Since NMFT merged with the Fire District, we no longer get reports from them.

## **New Business**

### **Danny Smith Park Contract**

- Sara Farmer and Pat Butcher came to our meeting to give a presentation on what the park has been able to accomplish with the money we provided, and what they would like to do in the future.
- Their plans include:
  - Repairs to bleachers
  - Conditioning of sports fields
  - Purchase of Utility vehicle for trash services and maintenance
  - Mowing services for the 2021 season
  - Repairs to lighting on Field 2
  - Purchase of Ice machine
  - Replacement of mulch in the playground

- Benton Township will provide funding for these and any additional mutually-agreed upon expenses incurring between February 16, 2021 and December 31, 2021, not to exceed \$20,000 to be distributed at the time of or after procurement or services rendered.
- As part of this contract, Danny Smith Park will give us a report on their operations and services next March.

#### **Approval**

- Motion to Approve Danny Smith Park Contract: Stevens  
Second: Kelson  
Approved Unanimously

#### **Annual Report**

- The board reviewed the 2020 Annual Report.

#### **Approval**

- Motion to Approve Annual Report: Kelson  
Second: Stevens  
Approved Unanimously

#### **Additional Appropriation to the Rainy Day Fund**

- The Trustee requested an Additional Appropriation to the Rainy Day Fund in the amount of \$225,000.00.

#### **Approval**

- Motion to Approve Additional Appropriation to the Rainy Day Fund in its full amount: Kelson  
Second: Stevens  
Approved Unanimously

#### **Additional Appropriation to the Cumulative Fire Fund**

- The Trustee requested an Additional Appropriation the to Cumulative Fire Fund in the amount of \$40,000.00.

#### **Approval**

- Motion to Approve Additional Appropriation to the Cumulative Fire Fund in its full amount: Kelson  
Second: Stevens  
Approved Unanimously

#### **Additional Appropriation to the Firefighting Fund**

- The Trustee requested an Additional Appropriation to the Firefighting Fund in the amount of \$140,000.00.

## **Approval**

- Motion to Approve Additional Appropriation to the Cumulative Fire Fund in its full amount: Kelson  
Second: Stevens  
Approved Unanimously

## **Public Comment**

- There was no public comment at this meeting.

## **Adjournment**

- Motion to Adjourn: Kelson  
Second: Stevens  
Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.