

Benton Township Board Meeting

June 9th, 2021
7616 E State Road 45, Bloomington, IN, 47468

Attendance

- Joe Husk, Chair
- Hans Kelson, Secretary
- Michelle Bright, Township Trustee
- Mary McInerney

Meeting called to order at 6:38 PM

- Board Member Lynn Stevens was absent from this meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Amendment of May Minutes

- A spelling error was corrected.
- The section on Township Form 17 was clarified.
- The Attendance list was corrected.

Amendment of March and April minutes

- As discussed in our May meeting, the March and April minutes have been amended to clarify the wording of a line describing our Donation fund.

Approval of Minutes

- Motion to Approve March, April, and May minutes: Kelson
Second: Husk
Approved Unanimously

Amendment of Agenda

- Trustee Bright requests that we amend the Agenda to include a discussion of our Division of Assets with the District.
- Motion to amend Agenda as requested: Kelson
Second: Husk
Approved Unanimously

Reports

Financial Report

- Trustee Bright has been cleaning up the accounts and shifting which fund certain purchases were charged to. Therefore, the YTD Expense figure has actually decreased for certain funds.
- Trustee Bright contacted our budget software vendor to clean up some stagnant line items. In the process of doing that, they broke other parts of the budget as well. Therefore, the detailed budget report this month has errors, but the summary (from which this section is read) was correct. Trustee Bright is working with the software vendor to resolve this situation.

Rainy Day Fund

- YTD Expense: \$56,735.02
- Budget Remaining: \$168,294.98
- Cash Balance: \$168,917.91

Township Fund

- YTD Expense: \$25,808.70
- Budget Remaining: \$37,191.30
- Cash Balance: \$115,694.40

Township Assistance Fund

- YTD Expense: \$3,593.08
- Budget Remaining: \$36,406.92
- Cash Balance: \$93,249.99

Firefighting Fund

- YTD Expense: \$283,175.96
- Budget Remaining: \$271,824.04
- Cash Balance: \$18,273.26

Cumulative Fire Fund

- YTD Expense: \$110,000.00
- Budget Remaining: \$89,069.00
- Cash Balance: \$2,763.65

Recreation Fund

- YTD Expense: \$3,876.07
- Budget Remaining: \$1,123.93
- Cash Balance: \$15,989.11

Shelter Insurance COVID Fund/Donation Fund

This is a combination of anonymous donations and money donated by Jenny Burton of Shelter Insurance for COVID-19 relief food boxes.

- Cash Balance: \$1,130.68

Deposits

- Local Income Tax: \$12,557.41
- Special Local Income Tax Distribution: \$11,134.00
 - These funds are from 2019, and were therefore split evenly between the Township Fund and the Firefighting Fund.
- Insurance Payment for Stepp Cemetery Sign: \$2,650
- Trust Indiana: \$16.61

Approval

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

Trustee's Report

Annexation

- Monroe County's Township Trustees are meeting as a group with Mayor John Hamilton to discuss how to best answer questions about possible annexation by the City of Bloomington.
- We have the same six parcels being considered for annexation as we had the last time.

Danny Smith Park

- Our Fire Trucks have been invited to the Danny Smith Park end-of-year Ice Cream Social on June 19th.
- Due to the age of the quote from Duke Energy for lighting, Danny Smith Park had to get a new quote. They are also looking closely at possible light pollution issues.

Cemeteries

- A new sign has been ordered for Stepp Cemetery. It will be a ground granite stone, which should look like limestone, but be much harder.
 - While that stone is being installed, the company will also fix the other stones that were vandalized.
 - The Indiana DNR will be putting up additional trail cameras around the area.
 - Private citizens had also put up trail cameras, but discovered that they had been damaged, and couldn't get any images from them.
- At a meeting of the Monroe County Trustees, Trustee Bright asked if anyone else allowed burials in their abandoned cemeteries.
 - Dan Combs mentioned that the Indiana DNR will not allow townships to reopen anything classified as a Pioneer Cemetery.
 - Two trustees did say they allow burials in their cemeteries, but also said they have records in order.

Fire Department

- Still no response from Charley Powers on the last Volunteer Fire Department reports.

Hybrid Meetings

- The board has decided to discontinue hybrid meetings for now. We haven't had very many people join, and the hardware required to do it correctly is expensive. We may reconsider this in the future, if people are interested in joining our meetings virtually.

Next Meeting

- Our next meeting is on July 21st.

Approval

- Motion to Approve Trustee Report: Kelson
Second: Husk
Approved Unanimously

Township Assistance Report

- One phone call, asking for Burial Assistance. They shared with us that they had received over \$3,000 in donations, and were therefore not eligible to receive assistance.
- We are still cleaning out the food pantry.
- Our office reopened this month.

Approval

- Motion to Approve Township Assistance Report: Kelson
Second: Husk
Approved Unanimously

Fire Reports

- Garage doors should be delivered on June 21st.
- Repairs on the Brush Truck should be completed by the weekend after this meeting.

Runs in the Township

- EMS Calls: 16
- Fire Calls: 5
- There were two occasions when two or more calls happened at once in the Township.

Approval

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

Old Business

Division of Assets

- The board continued a discussion of Division of Assets with the Fire District. Specifically, we talked about how to possibly split up the Township's parcels of land.
 - Rachel Oser discovered that the township actually has two parcels, not three. Two of the three are actually merged.
 - It may be possible to do a Type E Line Shift (Administrative) to move the boundary of one parcel over, then give one parcel to the Fire District. However:
 - * Currently, the Township and Fire District share a septic system. The parcels involved are too small to create an easement for that system.
 - * The two buildings share a driveway.
 - * The process could trigger a task to create new site plans, creating an expense for either us or the Fire District.

- * This may not even be possible- we would have to start the process before the Planning Department could even look at it.
- * All the parcels along this portion of the south side of Highway 45 are incorrectly surveyed, which could lead to complications when we try to get the lines moved.
- If we can't or don't split up the parcels somehow, then we will have to somehow lease the Fire Department property to the Fire District. Historically, they have not been supportive of that route, due to the possibility of a future Township Board or Township Trustee being hostile to the Fire District.
- Chairman Husk wondered if it would be possible to transfer all the property to the Fire District, then lease the Senior Center and the Township office back from them.
- Board Member Kelson would rather move the parcel line and transfer the larger parcel to the Fire District. However, in that situation, would we have to add another driveway at our end of the parking lot?
- Chairman Husk feels that it would be problematic in multiple ways to keep a shared septic system.
- The Senior Center was built using a grant which required the building to remain in Township hands.
- Chairman Husk suggests asking the County Commissioners for guidance on this issue.

Public Comment

- Mary McInerney mentions that the potential for hostile leadership exists both on the Township side and the Fire District side, when talking about the division of assets and future-proofing an agreement about real estate.
- Mary McInerney wonders what would happen to Township real estate issues if the Indiana General Assembly ever does vote to abolish Townships.
- Mary McInerney also mentions that if we're going to put in money to have a new driveway and septic system installed for the Senior Center Building, it might be worthwhile to also add a shower. That way, it could be used as an emergency shelter by the Red Cross.
- Mary McInerney recommends buying a simple conference telephone for allowing remote participation in meetings.

Adjournment

- Motion to Adjourn: Kelson
Second: Husk
Meeting adjourned at 7:47 PM.