

Benton Township Board Meeting

September 8th, 2021
7616 E State Road 45, Bloomington, IN, 47468

Attendance

- Joe Husk, Chair
- Lynn Stevens, Board Member
- Michelle Bright, Township Trustee

Meeting called to order at 6:32 PM

Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve July Minutes as presented: Stevens
Second: Husk
Approved Unanimously

Reports

Financial Report

Rainy Day Fund

- YTD Expense: \$214,328.35
- Budget Remaining: \$10,671.65
- Cash Balance: \$11,296.76

Township Fund

- YTD Expense: \$39,516.37
- Budget Remaining: \$23,483.63
- Cash Balance: \$27,071.12

Township Assistance Fund

- YTD Expense: \$6,254.98
- Budget Remaining: \$33,745.02
- Cash Balance: \$96,996.82

Firefighting Fund

- YTD Expense: \$374,806.45
- Budget Remaining: \$180,193.55
- Cash Balance: \$164,620.01

Cumulative Fire Fund

- YTD Expense: \$165,000.00
- Budget Remaining: \$34,069.00
- Cash Balance: \$34,069.22

Recreation Fund

- YTD Expense: \$4,451.40
- Budget Remaining: \$548.60
- Cash Balance: \$43,803.51

COVID Donation Fund (Restricted)

The State Board of Accounts has advised that donation funds be separated into restricted (donor-specified purposes) and unrestricted (general) funds.

- Deposits: \$0
- Cash Balance: \$510.68

COVID Reimbursement Fund

- Deposits: \$0
- Cash Balance: \$0

Township Donation Fund (Unrestricted)

- Deposits: \$0
- Cash Balance: \$620.00

Deposits

- Local Income Tax: \$12,557.41
- Trust Indiana: \$9.63

Approval

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

Trustee's Report

2022 Budget

- Per Indiana Law, an elected official cannot approve a salary that is lower than the salary at the beginning of the previous term of office. (January 2015 - December 2018)
- Trustee Bright has reduced the salaries of the Trustee and Board Members to 2015 levels for the 2022 budget.

Additional Appropriations

- One reason for our additional appropriations this month is that we really need an air conditioner in the Township Office.

Senior Center

- Since the flooding in June, Trustee Bright has been contacting multiple landscaping firms to see how we can prevent that from happening again. Thrasher Landscaping was the only company to respond in a timely manner, and they have quoted around \$5,000 to improve drainage around the Senior Center. This is the other portion of today's additional appropriation.

Representative Payee Program

- Monroe County Prosecutor Erika Oliphant reached out to Monroe County Township Trustees to talk about the Representative Payee Program.
- This is operated by Adult Protective Services.
- This program exists to manage bills and finances for people who are unable to do so.
- Per Indiana Law, Township Trustees are allowed to take on this responsibility. There are so many people who need this service that the Prosecutor has asked Trustees to assist with the case load.
- The Board would need to sign a resolution to put this into effect.
- We are able to charge a fee for this service, and it would require some training.
- Bloomington and Van Buren Townships are moving forward with this.
- Trustee Bright asked the Prosecutor's office how many people in Benton Township need this service, and has yet to hear back.

Fire Department

- Our Plymovent system is being installed in the remodeled building.
- Using money from the unrestricted donation fund, Trustee Bright was able to purchase a display case for some of the historical items we have from the Fire Department. She plans to put that up over the weekend following this meeting.

Cemeteries

- Stepp Cemetery:
 - Trustee Bright has ordered “No Trespassing After Dark” and “Security Cameras In Use” signs for Stepp Cemetery.
 - No updates from Pursell Monument.
- Brock Cemetery
 - Trustee Bright discovered that vegetation was around chest-high. We will add Brock Cemetery to our mowing contract for next year.
 - Trustee Bright and her husband cut the vegetation back to an acceptable level.

Next Meeting

- Our next meeting is on October 13th.
- At that meeting, we will conduct our Budget Adoption.

Approval

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

Township Assistance Report

- Two requests for applications:
 - Someone called from Bloomington Township for Rent Assistance. This person was directed to the Bloomington Township Trustee.
- One person called for hearing aid assistance, which we can't provide. We provided phone numbers for four different hearing aid companies that can take Medicare.

Approval

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

Fire Reports

- Monroe Fire Protection District provided two reports for us for runs in Benton Township or that Station 24 responded to.
- This month, there were 20 runs in Benton Township:
 - EMS: 14
 - Fire: 1
 - Hazardous Condition, no fire: 1
 - Good Intent Calls: 2

- Service Calls: 2
- False Alarm: 1
- These reports only include runs that take place in the township. Our station also responds to runs outside the township, which helps cut down on the district's average response time.
 - This month, our station responded to 7 such runs to locations outside the township.

Approval

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

Old Business

Division of Assets Discussion

- In preparation for a Type E Administrative Plat Line Shift, Our septic tanks were both inspected the week before this meeting. Both were approved, and the inspector recommended that we have the front tank pumped, which has now been done.
 - Trustee Bright has submitted the inspection results to the Monroe County Planning Department. She has also sent the results to the Fire District for their records.
- Trustee Bright has made contact with the Indiana Department of Transportation to renew our Right of Way Waiver for a second driveway.
- No updates yet from Eric Deckard.

New Business

Food Stamp Benefit Increase

- President Biden has ordered an increase in SNAP benefits to go into effect in September.
- Trustee Bright has updated the food purchase order guidelines in our Township Assistance Guidelines to match this.

Approval

- Motion to Approve SNAP Benefit Increase: Stevens
Second: Husk
Approved Unanimously

Resolution of the Township Board of Benton Township regarding Local Income Tax deposits

- Local Income Tax can, by law, be deposited into any fund.
- Trustee Bright has already had some money deposited into our Recreation fund rather than our Rainy Day fund, in order to pay for work done at Danny Smith Park earlier this year.

- When this work was done, money was spent from the Rainy Day fund. Trustee Bright feels that it would be more appropriate to use money from the Recreation fund instead.
- May, June, and August distributions of Local Income Tax have now been deposited into the Recreation fund in order to do an additional appropriation today.
- If the board does not accept this, these deposits can be reversed.

Approval

- Motion to Approve Resolution of the Township Board of Benton Township regarding Local Income Tax deposits: Stevens
Second: Husk
Approved Unanimously

Additional Appropriation to the Township Fund

- Trustee Bright has requested an Additional Appropriation to the Township Fund in the amount of \$10,000.00.
 - \$5,000 of this is to pay for drainage work around the Senior Center building, and the other \$5,000 is to pay for a new air conditioner for the Township Office.
- Motion to Approve Additional Appropriation to the Township Fund in its full amount: Stevens
Second: Husk
Approved Unanimously

Additional Appropriation to the Firefighting Fund

- Trustee Bright has requested an Additional Appropriation to the Fire Fund in the amount of \$20,836.00.
 - Trustee Bright requested (and was granted) an Additional Appropriation to the Firefighting Fund in the maximum amount allowed earlier this year. This is a followup to that, which is now allowed due to the fact that we have received our June Local Income Tax Distribution.
- Motion to Approve Additional Appropriation to the Fire Fund in its full amount: Stevens
Second: Husk
Approved Unanimously

Additional Appropriation to the Recreation Fund

- Trustee Bright has requested an Additional Appropriation to the Recreation Fund in the amount of \$30,000.00.
 - \$28,000 of this is to be able to move expenses from our project with Danny Smith Park from the Rainy Day fund to the Recreation Fund.
 - The other \$2,000 is to allow for any further expenses this year, and because Trustee Bright prefers round numbers.
- Motion to Approve Additional Appropriation to the Recreation Fund in its full amount: Stevens
Second: Husk
Approved Unanimously

Budget Hearing

- Trustee Bright presents the following budget:
 - Rainy Day Fund: \$0.00
 - Firefighting Fund: \$0.00
 - Cumulative Fire: \$0.00
 - Township General: \$63,000.00
 - Township Assistance: \$20,000.00
 - Recreation: \$5,000
- An official notice of this meeting was sent to taxpayers in advance of the meeting via an online portal.
- The Township currently has no debt.
- This coming year, the Township will receive our full Local Income Tax distribution as we have in previous years. However, after we consolidate with the Fire District and the Firefighting Levy and Cumulative Fire Levy are no longer used by the Township, our portion of the Local Income Tax will decrease dramatically. Trustee Bright estimates that we will have enough money saved to sustain township operations for seventeen years, during which time we can work with state legislators to get our LIT distribution increased.
- Our Budget Adoption will happen at the next meeting.

Public Comment

- There was no public comment at this meeting.

Adjournment

- Motion to Adjourn: Stevens
Second: Husk
Meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM.