Montcalm Township Board Meeting Minutes

1880 S. Greenville Rd Greenville MI 48838

August 11, 2021

**MEMBERS PRESENT**: Douglas Crowley Supervisor Rosemary Hyde Treasurer, Jessica Shearer Clerk, Edward Hansen Trustee, Brian Cousineau Trustee

**MEMBER ABSENT:**  None

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Supervisor, Douglas Crowley

Pledge to the Flag

**● Approval of Agenda**

A **motion** was made by Hyde to approve the agenda, Hansen Second **Motion Carried.**

• **Approval of Minutes from July 14, 2021**

A **motion** was made by Hansen to table the minutes, Cousineau Second **Motion Carried**.

• **Treasurer’s Report:** The report was distributed to the audience and Board Members. A **Motion** to approve the Treasurer’s report was made by Shearer, Second Hansen. **Motion carried.**

• **Payment of Bills**:

A **Motion** to approve the Payment of Bills was made by Hyde, Second Hansen **Motion carried**

**• Supervisor’s Comments:** Crowley informed the board that he was working on updating the phone system within the township. Crowley informed the board the Township has applied for the Federal

Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund.

**Reports:**

* **Planning Commission:** Karnatz reported that the Planning Commission will be holding a Public meeting for Natural Rivers Act on September 1, 2021 at 7 pm with a regular meeting following. Karnatz asked the board to allow the Planning Commission more meetings.

A **Motion** to allow the Planning Commission more meetings was made by Cousineau, Second Hansen. **Motion Carried.**

* **Zoning Board of Appeals:** No Report
* **Library Board:** The Library Board meeting agenda and report is posted on the Township bulletin board.
* **Cemeteries:** None
* **Zoning Administrator:** Zoning Administrator, Mike Nelson informed the board that he issued 2 permits for the month of June which included a short term rental application. Mike Nelson addressed that complaint against a short term rental at 611 Oak Drive. Mike informed everyone that it wasn't a short term renter; it was friends of the owners that were staying there.
* **County Commissioner**: Adam Petersen gave a report on what was happening at the county level.
* **Fire Department:** Chief Dickinson read his report. Chief Dickinson asked the board permission to send one of his Cadets to fire school. Crowley informed Chief Dickinson that it was in his budget. Chief Dickinson explained to the board about the quotes he had received for 2 broken windows. One at the fire station (in which he believes was shot with a BB gun) and the other one in the township hall.
* **Trustees:** Hansen thanked everyone for coming and for showing support. Cousineau thanked everyone for coming.
* **Clerk:**  Shearer asked the board to approve the edited minutes from the June 9, 2021 meeting.

A **Motion** was made by Hansen to approve the edited minutes from June 9, 2021 meeting Second Hyde **Motion** Carried.

**Public Comment –** Concerning Reports:

* A resident asked about turning the quote for the new windows into the insurance company to see if they would pay for them.

**Public Comment-** Concerning Old Business

* A resident asked the board to look into using the Covid Funds to buy a recorder for the meetings and hall rentals.
* A resident asked about police protection.

**Old Business**

* **Update concerning the proposed ordinance to amend the Montcalm Township Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the State’s Natural River Zoning Requirements**

The Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing September 1, 2021 at 7 pm

* **The Planning Commission Chairman Richard Karnatz**

Cosuineau commented: “At last month's meeting I know some people were commenting back and forth about the government and how every single government Appointed or Elected, you have bylaws that you have to follow. But for the Planning Commission they are little more detailed than normal typical bylaws, which require you to make sure that you don't have conflict of interest. When it comes to Mr. Karnatz, he went out and decided to participate in the Apex Lease which is fine because It's his personal choice to sign the lease. Then we had the attorney determine that this is a conflict-of-interest situation. The attorney gave him guidance to recues himself and not be involved in wind conversations. However it was brought to my attention that on July 28th Mr. Karnatz went to another township meeting and spoke. It's not the fact that he speaks openly about wanting wind, the issue is that at this meeting he stated that he was a Montcalm Township Planning Commission member. When you're using titles in your comment for public use and you're saying you're a Montcalm Township commissioner, any commissioner or any board member, you're using that position of authority to influence all potential decisions that another board or our boards can make. So I kind of want to use some visuals here. The Planning Commission Bylaws on this piece of paper and Apex lease is on this other piece of paper. When you're going out and you're speaking openly to two other boards and using your position of Authority you're taking the Planning Commission Bylaws and you're ripping it apart. You're throwing this in the trash, and you're saving the Apex Lease and saying the only thing that I care about is my financial benefit. So with that, I would ask that the board would entertain a proposal to have a public hearing to discuss the removal of Mr. Karnatz as a board member. Obviously we said that people have made mistakes in this process and I understand that yes we're humans and we may not be aware of certain things, but I got to say, give me a break to that because Mr. Karnatz has been on the Planning Commission by my understanding for more than 5 years and if you haven't read the bylaws and are an elected official then you probably shouldn't be an elected official. So I make a motion that we entertain a public hearing to discuss the removal of Mr. Karnatz.”

A **motion** was made by Cousineau to hold a public hearing to discuss the removal of Mr. Karnatz.

**Motion Denied.**

Cousineau commented: “I just want to say, with that, that you guys by not motioning and supporting this and allowing this behavior to occur there's no point having our government because we're not holding each other accountable to the rules that we have established. So as a trustee in an elected official makes me feel like I should resign but “I’m not going too” but it makes me feel like I should because I don't want to be part of the corrupt governmental system. I ran to make a difference here.”

Crowley Commented: “I talked to the attorney concerning Mr. Kranatz mentioned in his preparatory comments, that he was a member of the Montcalm Township Planning Commission. This could have been construed any other way even though we know that was not the case. He has a right to the public comment as a resident of the County to go to any meeting and express his feelings.”

* **Lawn Care of the Cemeteries**

The board discusses the lawn care in the cemeteries.

* **Police Protection**

Crowley explained that he has talked with Sheriff Williams about a Deputy.

**Public Comments- Concerning New Business:** None

**New Business:**

* **Violation of a special use permit issued for parcel number 50-014-025-01300 4771/4772 Lake Rd, Greenville Mi 48838**

A **Motion** to send information to the lawyer to write up a letter to the property owner at parcel number 50-014-025-01300 was made by Hansen Second Hyde **Motion Carried.**

**Public Comments:**

1. A resident thanked Brian Cousineau.
2. A Resident read an article from the State Tax Commission deals blow on wind turbine tax cash.
3. A Resident complained about a noise complaint. This resident asked about the Planning Commission looking into a noise ordinance.
4. A Douglas resident commented on things that Wind Energy would bring into the community.
5. A resident commented that they were impressed with how the Planning Commission meeting was run when Mr. Karnatz was running it but when the chairman Jeff Dolphin stepped in the meeting turned into a disaster. Comments were made after the meeting that we need someone strong to lead the Planning Commission. The resident said we have a strong chair person but when he has to recues himself, we need somebody who can step in to lead. He did not take care of the agenda and didn't get anything done with the ordinance.
6. This resident commented that they don't want to attend another meeting like that again. This resident also commented that this board is weak. This resident also commented that no one who sits on this board has anything to say or be proactive about anything. Brian is the only one that I have heard that wants to address issues outside of the agenda.
7. A resident agreed to the comment that was said before them. They also commented I don't know what the rules are about being able to appoint additional members officially, especially now that they've had someone that had to recuse themselves. It might be beneficial for adding another member. I would be willing to volunteer myself because I'm very interested in this.
8. A resident commented that they think that other people on the Planning Commission have conflict of interest.
9. A resident commented that someone on the Planning Commission Board said that they haven't had time to look into the Proposed Wind Ordinance.

A **Motion** to adjourn was made by Hansen, Second Hyde. **Motion Carried**. Meeting Adjourned at 8:21 pm.

Submitted By:

Jessica Shearer

Montcalm Township Clerk