

Synopsis  
Milton Township  
Draft Meeting Minutes  
August 14, 2023

Members present: C. Weinzapfel, S. Ball, L. Atkinson, and B. Pharo

Members absent: J. Renis, excused.

Also present: Attorneys B. Derman, Sheriff Dan Bean, Undersheriff Kevin Hoch, Bill Hefferan, Chief Jeremy Ball and many audience members

Weinzapfel called the meeting to order at 7 pm and the Pledge was recited

Agenda Approval

Add under Supervisor Report: Michigan DNR Trust Fund Grant for Property on NW Torch Lake Drive

Add County Commissioner Report under Planning Commission Report

Motion to approve the agenda as amended by L. Atkinson/B. Pharo. Motion carried 4-0

Absent: J. Renis

Approval of regular meeting minutes of July 10, 2023

Motion to approve by L. Atkinson/S. Ball. Motion carried 4-0 Absent: J. Renis

**Public Comment:**

Sheriff Dan Bean thanked the community for their support as he begins his retirement. Kevin Hoch is the interim Sheriff. Bean said he feels one of his big achievements was bringing resources together to manage the Torch Lake Sandbar on the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday.

Paulette Termaat of Joe Marks Trail stated that someone had brought a bull on the beach at the O'Dell Road Public Access. This is unacceptable. Weinzapfel said he will address this under his Supervisor's Report.

Fred Gulick offered an informational notice to the board members. He explained that this is about ordinances.

**Sheriff's Report: Sheriff Hoch**

Sheriff Hoch thanked Dan Bean for all of his support and mentorship through the years. He discussed fraud scams they are seeing in the area. This by way of telephone calls. He asked people to be cautious. Update on construction at the county building. George Lassiter will be the undersheriff. 383 events for July.

**Fire Department Report: Chief J. Ball**

22 incidents for July. Monthly report submitted to the board. We have two people interested in joining the department. Jordan Way and Emily McDonald both live in Elk

Rapids and I'm submitting their names for approval. They've passed the background check.

Motion to approve Jordan Way and Emily McDonald as new members of the Milton Township Fire Department by B. Pharo/C. Weinzapfel. Motion carried. 4-0 Absent: J. Renis

Update on phone proposal for Station #2. Our In an effort to save money, we are looking into VOIP from 186 networks. It would be \$33.25/month which is a cost savings on an annual basis. I would propose that we switch our phone carrier

Motion by S. Ball/B. Pharo to switch the phone carrier at Fire Station 2 from Frontier to Chain of Lakes. Motion carried. 4-0 Absent: J. Renis

Fire Department Apparatus Replacement Plan with NFPA standards and guidelines, presented. NFPA stipulates any apparatus that cannot meet safety standards or is 25 years or older must be replaced. We have a truck committee working toward replacing that truck. It will be a yearlong process. Another emissions standard will affect all manufacturers and everything will go up cost wise. I'm hoping we can get that truck ordered before these emissions standards go into effect.

#### **EMS Report**

There is a report in the packet

#### **Zoning/Planning Report:** Bill Hefferan

The next PC is Sept. 6th at 7 pm. We are having a public hearing on utility grade solar amendment to our ordinance.

#### **County Commissioner Report:** Bill Hefferan

Hefferan thanked Sheriff Bean for his service.

There is a jury trial starting in Bellaire next month for the Whitmer trial. Accessing the Bellaire campus is going to be very difficult August 23 through the end trial.

#### **Attorney's Report:** B. Derman

Update on Brettonwood Special Assessment District and Metro Act Distribution.

#### **Supervisor's Report:** C. Weinzapfel

Replacement of Control Panel: Park Irrigation proposal review. A bid was provided by Lautner Irrigation. The price is up to \$2850 to replace the control box.

Motion to approve the bid by Lautner Irrigation for up to \$2850 by L. Atkinson/S. Ball. Motion carried. 4-0 Absent: J. Renis

Asphalt Sealing and Repair Bids: This is for Station 1 and 2, the Township Office and in front of the basketball courts. We got one bid back from Ahrens and one from Black Magic. Discussion of ADA requirements and adding \$200 to account for this addition in scope if not included.

Motion by L. Atkinson/C. Weinzapfel to approve the bid for Aherns for a cost of \$9640. Motion carried. 4-0 Absent: J. Renis

TLPA Letter: A letter was received from TLPA. We thank them for supplying porta potties and trash cans down at the Torch River Bridge during Torch Fest. They won't be doing this any longer and they suggest we begin looking at this cost. L. Atkinson will follow up.

Letters to the Board regarding the idea of adding 1000 ft. buffer between weekly rentals. We've gotten letters that people would like to add this to our vacation rental ordinance.

Don Watkins described the amount of weekly rentals around his home. The density of rentals is getting worse. It's becoming Club Torch. We think what East Bay has done is a step in the right direction. We can't have half the homes in a neighborhood be rentals.

Board Discussion: L. Atkinson suggested referring this to the planning commission. Weinzapfel said he will send this to the planning commission with the letters so they can look at the East Bay Township ordinance that was recently passed.

Bill Hefferan asked the board what they specifically want from this review by the planning commission. This is a police ordinance. The board has authority here. We would like clear direction. My question is has the ZA been consulted about this yet? Atkinson said she has the letters.

B. Pharo said we'd like to see you look more deeply and look at the issues and see if something needs to be done and if so what. L. Atkinson said this is a growing issue and it's to the point where there are golf carts driving up the road delivering towels and other things to people. It's a full commercial activity there and it's unsettling.

Motion by L. Atkinson/C. Weinzapfel to refer this to the planning commission. Motion carried. 4-0 Absent: J. Renis

Hefferan asked for a clarification of the motion. Discussion between B. Pharo and L. Atkinson. L. Atkinson said the five rental homes are owned by one family. Pharo asked if this is an issue township wide and if there is something we need to do to change the ordinance. We don't make ordinances for one area. I don't think we should give them a conclusion before they start. Otherwise, we should just make the motion here at this board.

Motion to rescind the previous motion by L. Atkinson/S. Ball. Motion carried. 4-0 Absent: J. Renis

Motion by B. Pharo/L. Atkinson to refer this issue to the Planning Commission for review and determine if a change should be made to the vacation rental ordinance, if so, what that change should be. Motion carried. 4-0 Absent: J. Renis.

5. Michigan Natural Resources Grant on Torch Lake Drive: Weinzapfel discussed the background on this. We've applied for a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant. We just got notice of how many people applied for that grant, and it exceeds a lot more money than the state will issue. Our project would not score as well compared to the other applications. It was recommended that we look at that because if we withdraw the application now, there is an individual that has contacted the conservancy who is interested in buying the property and conserving it. Because of that slim chance we'd get the grant, we are looking at withdrawing the application and rescinding our lease with county for lot #33. This was to be used for access to Torch Lake since this is across from Maplehurst and would allow you to walk down from there.

Fred Gulick asked why you would want to have someone buy the property. Weinzapfel said you get points from the DNR for different things. We will not score well enough to compete for the grant.

Dwayne Meyer of NW Torch Lake Dr., asked if the decision has to be made tonight? He didn't know there was an update. Is there a way to get a recap and clarify what needs to happen? Is this good news or bad news? Derman said the board has given an update. The GT Regional Land Conservancy has applied. We are waiting for the DNR to review their application. The grant is based on points. Other applications will score well above what we can score. We have a slim chance of getting our grant. The conservancy has someone who will commit to leave the house in place and preserve the property and this would not be open to the public and the township will withdrawal its application. Part of this is an agreement with the property owner to keep it off the market until the decision is made with the DNR. L. Atkinson said the opportunity is there to negotiate with the buyer, but they won't negotiate until we pull the application.

Keith Termaat asked about the back lot. Was it the purpose to keyhole or funnel people from Maplehurst to this new lot? It sounds like a funneling project. L. Atkinson said it's not allowed here. Termaat said you don't have a choice. You must pull this application as it sounds like funneling.

Motion by L. Atkinson/B. Pharo to withdraw our application to Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant application for the acquisition of property on NW Torch Lake Drive.

Roll Call: B. Pharo-Yes; S. Ball-Yes; C. Weinzapfel-Yes and L. Atkinson-Yes.

J. Renis: absent

Motion carried. 4-0 Absent: J. Renis

Weinzapfel said regarding the steer at the road end access at O'Dell Road. This should not be down there. There are issues on the road ends that need to be addressed.

**Library Report:** L. Atkinson

Minutes sent via email

## **Unfinished Business**

RFP Bids for Sewer System Feasibility Study:

Weinzapfel discussed the history of this issue. We have two bids back. One is from Gourdie Frasier and one is from Wade Trim. After they do the study and get some cost reference, then we would follow up with letters to all property owners affected. B. Pharo said Gourdie Fraser was cheaper but Wade Trim has excellent references. L. Atkinson said she's not seeing big differences in what they are providing.

Motion to approve the bid from Wade Trim to provide a feasibility study for the possible sewer extension for Milton Township for a cost of \$21,000 by S. Ball/L Atkinson.

Motion carried. 4-0. Absent: J. Renis Timeline will be forthcoming.

## **New Business**

1. Maplehurst: Crosshatch Center for Art and Ecology. Atkinson said we've had a request that they would like to post the story from their Writers Series at Maplehurst. B. Pharo said he's not in favor of this. We don't allow signs because it can get out of hand. We support the Antrim Writer's Series, but it would be Atkinson's recommendation that we post it on the website and at the library, but not on a sign at Maplehurst.

Motion by B. Pharo/L. Atkinson to deny the request to post the Crosshatch Center for Art and Ecology Maplehurst story at Maplehurst. Motion carried. 4-0 Absent: J. Renis

2. Maplehurst: All County Search and Rescue: We've had a request to use Maplehurst for a search and rescue training. They will be using tracking dogs. The training will be from 10 am -2 pm. Once the date is determined, we will post this and ask people not to use the site.

Motion by S. Ball/C. Weinzapfel to allow Maplehurst to be used for search and rescue training. Motion carried. 4-0 Absent: J. Renis

3. Request to lower speed limit on SW Torch Lake Drive from 35 mph to 25 mph we've had a request to lower the speed limit on NW Torch Lake Drive from 35 to 25 MPH.

Chris Dakoske of SW Torch Lake Dr., provided a letter. Weinzapfel said he talked to the Antrim County Road Commission. They would need our recommendation for a feasibility study for that.

Joyce Grammar said we've already been through this with NW Torch Lake Dr., and the state police said no. L. Atkinson said this was tried three times and it was denied.

Gary Bowkerman of NW Torch Lake Dr., said the DNR wants to expand the boat launch. Now they want to change it to SW Torch Lake Dr., and add a bigger launch that has a road with a speed limit of 35 mph. That makes it difficult to control the area.

L. Atkinson said the state police gave more authority to the road commission to dictate speed limits. S. Ball said she has no problem supporting this.

Boyd Upton of SW Torch Lake Dr., talked to the state police, they referred it to the road commission, and the road commission referred it to you. He provided photos.

B. Derman asked regarding the map. You'd like it 25 mph from the blinking light to Hickin Road.

Motion by S. Ball/L. Atkinson to recommend SW Torch Lake Dr., from Cherry to Hickin be 25 MPH rather than 35 MPH and to refer this to the Antrim County Road Commission. Motion carried. 4-0 Absent: J. Renis

**Public Comment**

No one wished to speak.

Chief J. Ball suggested he could write to the ACRC to support this change in speed limit.

Fred Gulick asked about what will happen if the ACRC does a study. What if they suggest widening the road?

**Board Comments:**

Clean up day is August 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Approval of Bills**

Motion to approve the bills by S. Ball/L. Atkinson. Motion carried. 4-0 Absent: J. Renis

Meeting adjourned by order of the chair at 8:40 pm.

These minutes are subject to approval at the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. A copy of these minutes are available at [miltontownship.org](http://miltontownship.org)

Respectfully submitted,  
Sandra Ball, Clerk