

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF PLYMOUTH
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING
APPROVED MINUTES**

Tuesday, January 9, 2024
6:00 PM



CALL TO ORDER AT 6:00 P.M.

A. ROLL CALL: Kurt Heise ✓, Bob Doroshewitz ✓, Jerry Vorva ✓,
Jen Buckley ✓, Chuck Curmi ✓, Audrey Monaghan ✓, John
Stewart ✓

ALSO PRESENT: J. Knittel, Police Chief
P. Conely, Fire Chief
K. Bennett, Atty
S. Visel, Environmental Services Coordinator
L. Simpson, Recording Secretary

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Michael Talbot – Former Chief Judge of the
Michigan Court of Appeals

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Tuesday, January 9, 2024

Moved by Clerk Vorva and Supported by Trustee Monaghan to approve the agenda as amended for the Board of Trustees meeting of January 9, 2024.

All Ayes

Motion Passed

D. CLOSED SESSION

- a.** At 6:01 p.m., Supervisor Heise moved that a Closed Session be called for the purpose of consultation with attorneys on specific pending litigation; Wayne County Circuit Court Case Number *23-010250-AA, Meijer vs. Plymouth Township*, in accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act, Section MCL 15.268(8e). Seconded by Clerk Vorva
- b.** Consultation with attorneys on specific pending litigation; Wayne County Circuit Case Number *22-014653-CZ, International Outdoor, Inc. vs Plymouth Township*, in accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act, Section MCL 15.268 (8e).

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**All Ayes
Motion Passed**

E. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

At 7:24 p.m., Clerk Vorva moved and was Supported by Trustee Monaghan that the Board return to Open Session.

**All Ayes
Motion Passed.**

Moved by Supervisor Heise and Supported by Clerk Vorva that the Board of Trustees accept the recommendation of the Plymouth Township attorneys in the matter of *Meijer vs Plymouth Township, Wayne County Circuit Court Case Number 23-0102500-AA*.

Roll Call Vote

AYES: Supervisor Heise, Clerk Vorva, Trustee Buckley, Trustee Monaghan, Trustee Stewart

NAYES: Trustee Curmi, Treasurer Doroshewitz

Motion Passed.

Moved by Supervisor Heise and Supported by Trustee Monaghan that the Board of Trustees accept the recommendation of the Plymouth Township attorneys in the matter of *International Outdoor, Inc. vs Plymouth Township, Case Number 22-014653-CZ*.

**All Ayes
Motion Passed**

Supervisor Heise remembered Former Plymouth Township Supervisor Maury Breen on his passing last week just shy of celebrating his 91st Birthday. A memorial service is planned for later this month at St. Kenneth Church. Clerk Vorva noted that Mr. Breen was an outstanding attorney, who served as a Trustee, Supervisor and as a Wayne County Commissioner and worked to make Plymouth Township a friendly community. Trustee Stewart noted that he served with Mr. Breen as a Trustee from 1988 – 1992 and remembered the positive drive that Mr. Breen had in serving the people of Plymouth Township. A moment of silence was observed in his honor.

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F. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

F.1 Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting, December 12, 2023

F.2 Correspondence

- a. Letter from Friends of the Rouge to EGLE, Opposing Salem Township's Application for Wastewater Treatment Facility – 12-18-23

F.3 Approval of Township Bills:

FUND	ACCT	ALREADY PAID	TO BE PAID	TOTAL:
General Fund	101	1,427,658.79	252,114.85	1,679,773.64
Drug Forfeiture Federal	262	.00	.00	.00
Drug Forfeiture State	265	.00	.00	.00
Drug Forfeiture IRS	266	.00	.00	.00
ARPA	285	37,641.32	1,182.25	38,823.57
Improv. Rev.	446	.00	.00	.00
Senior Transportation	588	8,044.65	.00	8,004.65

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Water/Sewer Fund	592	395,344.40	372,684.67	768,029.07
Solid Waste Fund	596	7,823.07	26.91	7,849.98
Tax Pool	703	15,271.67	.00	15,271.67
Police Bond Fund	710	.00	.00	.00
Special Assessment Capital	805	.00	25,391.25	25,391.25
TOTALS:		1,891,783.90	651,399.93	2,543,183.83

Moved by Clerk Vorva and Supported by Trustee Buckley to approve the consent agenda for the Board of Trustees meeting on December 12, 2023.

**All Ayes
Motion Passed.**

Supervisor Heise noted that he spoke with Attorney Mike Cox, the attorney for Northville Downs on December 15, 2023. He reiterated the Community Benefit Agreement offer with him, and communicated to the rest of the Board of Trustees their conversation which is protected under Attorney-Client privilege negotiations. The PUD application process ends at the end of February, with only two meetings in between.

G. PUBLIC COMMENT (*Limited to 3 Minutes*)

- Dale Bernhardt, Bea Friedlander, Mary Pine, Bill Pine, April Lawson, Rena Ban, Anthony Costa, Mary Ann Adams, Donald Garlit, Julia Flagg, Howard Hamerink, Robert Richards, and Walter Ikes all expressed strong emotions against the proposed racetrack. Many comments were concerns about traffic studies, cruelty to horses, gambling, and subsidizing racetracks.
- Duane Zantop had questions about Meijer.
- Jill Curtis thanked the Board of Trustees for acting against the Billboard issue but is opposed to Meijer.
- Donna Broderick noted that clapping and shouting in a public meeting is

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inappropriate and apologized for the people who shouted at the Board. She also thanked Sara Visel for accepting comments on Park regulations.

H. NEW BUSINESS

1. Land Division Text Amendment, **Resolution # 2024-01-09-01**, *Laura Haw, Township Planner*

Planner Haw noted this is the second reading for this Amendment as a public hearing had been presented at the Planning Commission in November 2023. They unanimously recommended this Text Amendment to the Board of Trustees. This amendment to the zoning ordinance adds three standards related to land divisions, as noted in the agenda packet. She noted that this applies to unplatted properties and does not anticipate changes in density, because the amendment does not change any of the dimensional standards for the zoning code. The lot frontage requirement won't change.

Moved by Treasurer Doroshewitz and Supported by Trustee Monaghan to adopt **Resolution #2024-01-09-01**, authorizing adoption of the text amendment to Zoning Ordinance No. 99, amending Article 28, Section 2, Subsection 3(a), to provide additional specificity to the criteria for depth-to-width ratio exceptions in land division applications, as recommended by the Planning Commission.

**All Ayes
Motion Passed.**

2. WTUA Ordinance First Reading, **Resolution # 2024-01-09-02**, *Supervisor Kurt Heise*

Supervisor Heise explained the resolution would require any entity that wants to join the Western Townships Utilities Authority (WTUA) system would need to present a formal written application to Plymouth Township. The Township would have a sixty-day public comment period, with a formal public hearing following. The WTUA system is fully owned by the Townships of Plymouth, Northville, and Canton. The Board of Trustees would then require a super majority vote, (a five-person vote), directing the Supervisor to accept or reject the application to allow a new entrant to the WTUA system at the next relevant WTUA board meeting.

Moved by Clerk Vorva and Supported by Trustee Monaghan that **Resolution 2024-01-09-02** providing for a supermajority vote of the Board of Trustees for the entry of a

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new customer into the WTUA sewer system be considered read for the first time.

**All Ayes
Motion Passed.**

3. Annual Goal Setting Discussion, *All BOT Members*

Supervisor Heise opened discussion on goal setting for 2024. He highlighted some items under Public Safety, Infrastructure, Fiscal Integrity, Quality of Life, Economic Development, and Technology, all noted in the Agenda Packet. He first touched on the possibility of replacing a fire station funded partially through a bond, fire transport options, a canine program, a citizen's academy, truck and weight enforcement, improving signalization at Ann Arbor Road and Haggerty Road, and traffic signalization allowing emergency vehicle to get through. Chief Conely added that the new ambulance will be arriving in February.

Supervisor Heise continued by highlighting Advanced Metering Systems, (AMI), the Sidewalk Gap program, and sidewalk replacement program, noting that the replacement program may be paused temporarily. The Township Hall Pond and fountain, planting of trees in the Downtown Development Authority, (DDA), rebuilding Five Mile Road, a new pathway on Wilcox to Hines Dive., and Riverside Drive were also mentioned.

Clerk Vorva added that the Board should consider a permanent voting center before the next election year in 2026. Suggestions were made about finding something in the industrial area, but they must meet state requirements and accessibility.

Supervisor Heise also talked about paying off the Pension Fund completely and 75% of the Other Post-Employment Benefits,(OPEB) Fund by the end of 2028, District Court Revenue loss, and the use of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) fund. There may be more CDBG funds available in 2025. Potential recreation use and rebuilding Riverside Dr. were suggested for these funds. Replacement of the wooden play structure, an easement to Shearer Cemetery with new signage and a bench, creation of a Bicentennial Commission for the bicentennial in 2027, creation of an annual Veterans Day event, a pickleball court at Township Park, updating the animal policy at the parks, and a new Citizens Advisory Committee were all part of the discussion.

Supervisor Heise discussed development of vacant or unused properties and also amending the parking ordinance, as suggested by the Planning Commission. He indicated NEL Hydrogen will be working with the Township on plans for construction. Trustee Stewart noted that he would like to be part of any public welcoming of the

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Norwegian company if he hears of any appropriate ceremonial music for the event. Supervisor Heise also noted the cybersecurity is constantly changing and a cybersecurity consultant has been hired, but a new assistant is needed to work with the Township IT.

He added that any additional ideas should be emailed to him, so the ideas can be prioritized. Adoption of these would be at the January 23, 2024 meeting.

4. Continued Discussion on Park Rules, *Supervisor Kurt Heise and Environmental Services Coordinator Sara Visel*

Environmental Services Coordinator Sara Visel and Supervisor Heise noted that the new park hours would be dawn through dusk but never before 7:00 AM or after 9:00 PM. Ms. Visel suggested the latest should be 9:30 PM, with hours subject to change. Chief Knittel added that he had been working with Township Park and would have a patrol assist by driving through Township Park at closing as needed. The subject of animals in the parks was discussed. Animals other than dogs and cats will remain prohibited in the parks, and dogs must be licensed and on a leash. It was suggested to have a new policy in the Township about picking up one's dog waste, with the parks having dog waste baggies available if necessary. Attorney Kevin Bennett was asked to start working on an ordinance pertaining to these items.

Moved by Supervisor Heise and supported by Trustee Monaghan to amend the park policy that the hours are dawn through dusk, but not before 7:00 AM, or after 9:30 PM, with hours subject to change without prior notice. Exceptions will include all league scheduled activities or any events approved in writing by the Supervisor or designee.

**All Ayes
Motion Passed.**

I. PUBLIC COMMENT (*Limited to 3 Minutes*)

-Marilyn Bertera commented that she supports the Racetrack and reiterated that Pinnacle Racecourse in New Boston went out of business, because it was run by a banker and not by someone familiar with horses. She added that Northville Downs does not own the majority of the property in Northville, and the owners decided to sell because of high property values.

-Duane Zantop suggested the top layer of a sidewalk can be ground down to level off a rising sidewalk rather than replacing it.

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-Dale Bernhardt and Mary Pine added more comments about the racetracks not being profitable or healthy.

J. BOARD COMMENTS

Trustee Stewart noted that St. John's is a fine landmark in the Township. He thanked Sara Visel for her work in Environmental Services. He also thanked Clerk Vorva and Chief Knittel for their invitation to the swearing in of the newly hired police officer.

Trustee Buckley noted she was looking for a backup date for the Veterans Commission Meeting for January and February, as both of the original dates were on Federal Holidays. She congratulated the UM National Football Champions.

Treasurer Doroshewitz indicated that the year ended with the Township earning \$1.7 million in interest as compared to the \$266,000 the previous year. About half of that went to water and sewer and the other half between the general fund and other funds. Taxes are coming in. He also congratulated UM Football.

Clerk Vorva added that over 11,000 absentee voting applications were mailed out with about 40% of them returned to date. Over 200 people had been contacted due to lack of signature, the signature didn't match, or they failed to mark which ballot they wanted. The ballots were delayed in getting to the Township. He noted the nine days of early voting will run February 17th – February 25th, with normal election day on February 27, 2024.

Trustee Monaghan wished everyone a Happy New Year and thanked everyone for their comments. She added that she had been to Portugal and brought back Holy Water if anyone wants it.

Trustee Curmi asked who had landscaped the area at the I-275 Interchange. He was told that Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) had done this but has been in touch with Plymouth Township during the process.

Supervisor Heise also congratulated the University of Michigan on winning the National Championship. He indicated that the next meeting on January 23, 2024, will have the second reading of the ordinance. The recreation plan will have a public hearing and be adopted. The Fourth Amendment of the Michigan International Training Center (MITC) Brownfield Plan will be covered. A big

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concern is the Salem Springs project west of Napier Road to Gotfredson and north of Joy Road to M-14, called an Urban Services District, created by Salem Township. A water line has been built around the facility. They are now petitioning the State of Michigan for a wastewater treatment plant (sewage plant), at M-14 and Napier Road. The discharge of 840,000 gallons of "treated water" will flow into the Fellows Creek through Plymouth Township and Canton Township. Flooding and odor issues are associated with this plant, and Plymouth Township is requesting a public hearing.

K. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Stewart moved and Supported by Trustee Monaghan to adjourn the meeting of the Board of Trustees on January 9, 2024, at 10:18 PM.

**All Ayes
Motion Passed.**

Jerry Vorva, Clerk