

**ESCANABA TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING MINUTES MARCH 13, 2023 MINUTES 7:30 PM**  
**ESCANABA TOWNSHIP HALL 4618 COUNTY RD 416 20<sup>TH</sup> RD GLADSTONE MI 49837**

Supervisor Tom Rymkos called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff presented an opening prayer of thanks and direction.

Roll call. Present are Supervisor Tom Rymkos. Treasurer Kim Knauf-Wyckoff. Clerk Theresa Chenier. Trustee Al Gareau. Trustee Norman Fleury. All members are present.

**Motion to approve agenda with addition made by Trustee Gareau. Second by Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff. All in favor. Motion passed.**

**Motion to approve February 13, 2023 minutes with corrections was made by Trustee Gareau. Second by Clerk Chenier. All in favor. Motion passed.**

**Motion to approve Special Meeting of March 1, 2023 minutes with additions made by Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff. Second by Trustee Gareau. All in favor. Motion passed.**

The Financial Report was reviewed and discussed. Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff gave a report on CD investments. She will continue to research options to obtain what is most suitable for the township's needs.

**Motion to move \$70 from Fire Dept point system to Fire Department Assistant wages made by Clerk Chenier. Second by Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff. All in favor. Motion passed.**

**Motion to move \$1000 from Township Supplies to Fire Hall repairs was made by Clerk Chenier. Second by Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff. All in favor. Motion passed.**

**Motion to accept the Financial Report by Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff. Second by Trustee Gareau. All in favor. Motion passed.**

Communications. A letter was received from FEMA with updated listing of rivers. The letter is available in the Clerk's office. Payne & Dolan sent a letter of their continued surety bond. A letter of gratitude was received from Menominee County after the fire at a paper mill in October 2022 which the Township's fire department played a large part in controlling.

Public Comments. Fred Minor

Fire Chief Matt Rian gave the Fire Department report. They had 3 call outs. 2 were cancelled in route. 1 was a roll over accident in Rock, Mi. which has been billed out. 12 of 13 area fire departments have signed on to join MABAS. A new AED was ordered for the Township Hall. Chief Rian has applied for 3 grants. One from AAA Insurance \$15k-\$30k for a battery op hydraulic tool. One from Plains Great American \$7k-\$8k and the Hannahville Indian Community 2% grant for a \$3k thermos- imager. The Gladstone Lions Club is hosting a SPRING SOCIAL fund raiser to benefit the fire department on April 22, 2023 at the Bluff Country Club at 8 PM. Entertainment by the Jam Band. Tickets are available from Fire Chief Matt Rian. \$15 each.. Clerk Chenier will get information on insurance requirements to have a volunteer photographer take photos that can be used to enhance fire fighter training.

The state audit is not complete yet. Clerk Chenier is researching to find a grant to help assist with the expense of the fire address signs. The new improved website is very close to finishing. Suggestions for ARPA funds spending from residents is encouraged. Items considered are: Township Hall improvements and Fire Truck #1 repairs of pump and transmission for \$90,000. These options are tabled until exact estimates can be obtained. A letter dated February 28, 2023 was received from Billerud discussing Verso Grow concerns. Billerud noted that no new

permits will be issued while they are applying for license renewal. Billerud has been working with EGLE on the issue. Basement repairs to contain water leakage is continuing. Bittner Engineering will be presenting options for the township hall bathroom-AMA ( ADA ) required update and kitchen placement upstairs. The township attorney has sent a letter to Mr. LaBumbard concerning blight. Zoning Administrator has not seen any improvements at the property and suggests movement forward with next steps.

A resolution for the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Plan for an amendment to the Master Plan, which was not included previously and is a requirement to have, was read aloud by Supervisor Rymkos. **Motion to accept resolution to adopt a Master Plan amendment was offered by Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff. Second by Trustee Gareau. All in favor. 5 Yays -0- Nays. Motion passed.**

Flat Rock area blight complaint shows improvement with land- owner intentions to comply. No previous letter had been sent. Supervisor Rymkos has been in contact personally.

Regular meeting closed at 8:31 pm. Public Hearing opened at 8:31 pm for Escanaba Township Budget.

Public comments opened at 8:32. Fred Minor felt the roads and the fire department are both essential to township. Other fire departments in the area have fund raisers. This could be helpful.

Public Comments closed at 8:35 pm.

Clerk Chenier explained additional new line items were added to give more transparency and clarity. The projected audit cost is \$130 x 90 hours = \$11,700.00. Currently the township has projected revenue sharing of \$545,950. Pre audit reports stated there needs to be a General Appropriations Fund. (ACT to be adopted.) \$100,000 is placed in the Roads fund and \$20,000 into contingency fund. The budget with \$545,950 projected revenue and \$540,944 in projected expenditures, is balanced.

Road repairs were discussed. Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff has a report from Jody Norman, Delta County Road Commissioner. Triple Creek D-12 Road is 18 feet wide was approved last year but didn't have time to complete. The back end of Rivers Road is 22 feet wide. D-12 is a single road. **Motion to repair Rivers Road including the back end, D-12 and rebuild to D-7 made by Trustee Fleury. Second by Trustee Gareau. All in favor, Motion passed.**

**Clerk Chenier made motion to accept General Appropriations Act with attachment "A" included. Second by Trustee Gareau. All in favor. Motion passed.**

The Township's charges and pay schedule was read aloud by Supervisor Rymkos.

Pubic hearing for Escanaba Township Budget closed at 9:01 pm. Regular Meeting resumed at 9:01 pm.

A new contract was signed for the cemetery open and closing of graves. The assessor contract is tabled until next meeting. A local 4-H Youth Group is interested in using the Township Hall in Flat Rock to hold meetings. This is tabled until more information is obtained.

Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff received information on the process for the Escanaba Township Fire Department to be eligible for donations. Development of "*Friends of the Fire Department*" would be a \$1500 cost to create. **Trustee Fleury made the motion to fund the attorney to proceed with creating "*Friends of the Fire Department*". Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff second. Roll Call vote: Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff YES . Trustee Fleury YES. Trustee Gareau YES. Clerk Chenier YES. Supervisor Rymkos ABSTAIN. Motion passes 4 YAYS to 1 ABSTAIN.**

A fee for re-zoning requests will be researched and discussed. The Planning Commission would need to make an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, then present to the Township Board for consideration.,

Supervisor Rymkos will contact Delta County Road Commissioner, J. Norman, for clarification of any township roads.

Barry King expressed disapproval of the current website. In the winter months it is cold and hard to travel to read the minutes posted at the Township Hall. Clerk Chenier explained that a new website is being setup with the intention to cover all of his mentioned concerns. During the process of development and switching over, agendas and minutes have been being posted at the township hall message boards and outside doors as required.

Public Comments. John Miron. Matt Rian.

Member Comments. Clerk Chenier informed members and encouraged participation of a webinar called Fiscally Ready Communities. Clerk Chenier also informed that there will be several voting changes in 2024 to include 9 day voting time frame and ballot drop boxes.

Delta County Commissioner Steven Viau gave the County Commissioner's Report. The Personnel Committee meetings are open to the public or you can contact him if you would like your in-put addressed.

Planning Commission Liaison report presented by Clerk Chenier. A resolution passed for the Future Land Use Map. Two permits were approved. Township resident, Bob Barron, requested consideration of a zoning change on 195 acres. There have been two inquiries on Barnominium construction in the Lake Bluff area. The Planning Commission is working on 14 zoning changes from 2010. Some have made it to the 2010 zoning map and some did not. This has resulted into confusion which needs to be corrected.

**Motion to pay bills was made by Trustee Gareau. Second by Clerk Chenier. All in favor. Motion passed. Motion to adjourn was made at 9:50 pm by Treasurer Knauf-Wyckoff. Second by Trustee Fleury. All in favor. Motion passed.**

The next meeting of the Escanaba Township Board is scheduled for April 10, 2023 7:30 pm at the Escanaba Township Hall 4618 Co 416 20<sup>th</sup> Rd Gladstone MI 49837. If assistance is needed to attend a meeting, call or text 906-280-6182.

Minutes prepared by Cathy Culliton, Recording Secretary. *Approved as corrected April 11, 2023*