

Douglass Township Board  
Regular Board Meeting  
Douglass Township Hall  
December 7, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.  
Minutes

1. Call to Order by Cindy at 7:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
  - 3.1. Supervisor Cindy Shick Present
  - 3.2. Treasurer Amy Laper Present
  - 3.3. Clerk Holly Huff Present
  - 3.4. Trustee Ken Bunting Present
  - 3.5. Trustee Eric Tester Present
4. Reading and Approval of Minutes dated 11-02-2022

I so move that we accept the minutes as written.  
Motion by: Eric Second: Amy  
Discussion: none  
Vote: voice unanimous  
Motion carried
5. Approval of Agenda

I so move that we accept the agenda as with changes  
Motion by: Holly Second: Eric  
Discussion: none  
Vote: voice unanimous  
Motion carried
6. Meeting Format
  - 6.1. Robert's Rules of Order - Cindy
  - 6.2. Civility - Civility
7. Bylaws

I so move that we prepare bylaws for this Township Board  
Motion by: Ken Second: Eric  
Discussion: Ken will research and prepare for next meeting  
Vote: voice unanimous  
Motion carried
8. Public Comment on Agenda Items

Example: Name - Item Number - Comment

  - 8.1. Linda Reynolds - DT - Attorney - paper with recommendation,
  - 8.2. Ben Reynolds - DT - Insurance - Be sure there is non-monetary litigation coverage (challenge to ordinance)
  - 8.3. Sheila Crooks - DT - Wind Ordinance - support rescind the 2017 and - Attorney -support same as Linda
  - 8.4. Christy Williams - DT - IT - Desires Zoom, email, Facebook for updates
  - 8.5. Deb LeFever - DT - Election - Very large turnout, thank workers, accusations concerning the 400 total absentee ballots are false, only 3 not returned and she called on those (Amy - "one returned to sender" came today)

9. Reports
  - 9.1. Treasurer Amy Laper
    - 9.1.1. New report style to show more information
  - 9.2. Approve Treasurer Report

I so move that we accept the treasurer report with corrections

Motion by: Ken      Second: Eric

Discussion: Software used is Quickbooks

Vote: voice unanimous

Motion carried
  - 9.3. Clerk Holly Huff - This time Amy Laper
  - 9.4. Approve Payment of Bills

I so move that we accept bills to be paid with corrections

Motion by: Eric      Second: Ken

Discussion: Need to purchase stamps - okayed

Vote: voice unanimous

Motion carried
  - 9.5. Administrator Dave Kelsey
    - 9.5.1. Additions, home lot line adjustment
    - 9.5.2. Violations
      - 9.5.2.1. One now compliant
      - 9.5.2.2. One turned over to Sheriff
      - 9.5.2.3. Burn violation, multiple ordinances, ticket thrown out of court
  - 9.6. Approve Administrator Report

I so move that we accept the administrator report as given

Motion by: Amy      Second: Holly

Discussion: none

Vote: voice unanimous

Motion carried
  - 9.7. Committees - no committees
  - 9.8. Unfinished Business
  - 9.9. 2017 Ordinance(s)
    - 9.9.1. Wind

I so move that a six month moratorium on wind ordinance begins immediately and extends until the board's regular meeting in June 2023.

Motion by: Eric      Second: Ken

Discussion: Wind Ordinance is reason for change in board and needs to be addressed to reflect the desire of the residents

Vote: Roll Call - Ken: Yes, Eric: Yes, Amy: Yes, Holly: Yes

Motion carried
    - 9.9.2. Solar

I so move that a 2-month moratorium on Solar Ordinance begins immediately and extends until the board's regular meeting in Feb, 2023.

Motion by: Ken      Second: Eric

Discussion: Solar Ordinance originates close to 2017 Wind Ordinance in question, need to be sure proper procedure followed

Vote: Roll Call - Ken: Yes, Eric: Yes, Amy: Yes, Holly: Yes

Motion carried
    - 9.9.3. Marijuana

I so move that a- 6 month moratorium on Marijuana Ordinance begins immediately and extends until the board's regular meeting in June 2023.

Motion by: Ken          Second: Holly

Discussion: Marijuana Ordinance originates close to 2017 Wind Ordinance in question, need to be sure proper procedure followed

Vote: Roll Call - Ken: Yes, Eric: Yes, Amy: Yes, Holly: Yes

Motion carried

9.10. Wind Energy System Ordinance - Tabled see above 9.9.1

9.11. New Business

9.11.1. Appointments

9.11.1.1. Fire Meeting Trustee

I so move that Ken Bunting represent Douglass Township fire meetings

Motion by: Eric          Second: Amy

Discussion: Meets quarterly Stanton Community Fire Department Meetings, not the other township fire meetings.

Vote: Voice Unanimous

Motion carried

9.11.1.2. Planning Commission Liaison

I so move that Eric Tester represent the Township Board as the Liaison member of the Douglass Township Planning Commission

Motion by: Ken          Second: Amy

Discussion: None

Vote: Voice Unanimous

Motion carried

9.11.1.3. Planning Commission

I so move that as positions open on the planning commission, an application process through the Township Supervisor will be used to select commissioners prior to the planning commissions first meeting in the new year. The 2023 openings to be published as soon as possible, 2024 openings will be published in November 2023.

Motion by: Holly          Second: Eric

Discussion: Current PC members will be welcome to reapply, new residents welcome to apply, goal to encourage participation by community over time, similar to elected offices and ability for anyone to run for office, interview and recommendation by Township Supervisor and approval by Township Board. According to record of oaths current appointments end as noted:

Michael Swan - Dec 2022 - Appointment needed Jan 2023  
(Completed term of resignation)

Paul Olson - Dec 2022 - Appointment needed Jan 2023  
(Completed term of resignation)

Jack Jeppesen - Dec 2023 - Appointment needed Jan 2024

Rick Baldwin - Dec 2023 - Appointment needed Jan 2024

Becky Sowles - Dec 2024 - Appointment needed Jan 2025

Tamela Sweeris - Dec 2024 - Appointment needed Jan 2025

Vote: Roll Call - Ken: Yes, Eric: Yes, Amy: Yes, Holly: Yes

Motion carried

9.11.1.4. Township Board of Review - Assessor involved in this, starting to pull together multiple townships in the process. Need to wait to see what is determined.

9.11.1.5. Zoning Board of Appeals

I so move that as positions open on the Zoning Board Of Appeals, an application process through the Township Supervisor will be used to select commissioners prior to the planning commissions first meeting in the new year. The 2023 openings to be published as soon as possible, 2024 openings will be published in November 2023.

Motion by: Eric Second: Ken

Discussion: All three seats are open this January 2023. Zoning Ordinance on p. 93 requires the first member to be a member of the PC, the second member to be a member of the TB, the third member to be a resident elector residing in an unincorporated area of the township. Also, there may be two alternates who are called on a rotating basis as needed. According to the record of oaths, all seats will open at the end of this year.

Vote: voice unanimously

Motion carried

I so move that Cindy Shick is the township board member on the Zoning board of Appeals for three years.

Motion by: Eric Second: Ken

Discussion:

Vote: voice unanimous

Motion carried

I so move that positions open for all appointments begin an application process through the Township Supervisor to select commissioners prior to the planning commissions first meeting in the new year. The 2023 openings to be published as soon as possible, 2024 openings will be published in November 2023.

Motion by: Holly Second: Ken

Discussion: For all 2023 openings, current appointees are welcome to reapply, new residents welcome to apply, goal to encourage participation by community over time, similar to elected offices and ability for anyone to run for office, interview and recommendation by Township Supervisor and approval by Township Board.

Vote: voice unanimous

Motion carried

9.11.2. Road Commission

Predetermined to be Cindy Shick by appointments set for supervisors with road Commission

9.11.3. Employees - Informational

9.11.3.1. Zoning Administrator is Dave Kelsey

9.11.3.2. Cemetery Sexton is Don Larson

9.11.3.3. Other is the Election Committee to be determined later.

9.12. Conflict of Interest

I so move that research be done to formally define conflict of interest for all township positions.

Motion by: Ken      Second: Eric

Discussion: Need clarity in bylaws or in separate ordinance. Ken will research proper definition, other townships, MTA and report back

Vote: Voice unanimous

Motion carried

9.13. Current Contracts and Professional Arrangements

9.13.1. Attorney

I so move that we select a new attorney.

Motion by: Eric      Second: Ken

Discussion: In the past two years the public has lost confidence in Ron Reddick; we need to have a different direction for our community. Need to research, area expertise, contact, consider costs and billing, experience. All members of the Township Board members will research and share printed info to prepare for meeting discussion.

Vote: Roll Call - Ken: Yes, Eric: Yes, Amy: Yes, Holly: Yes

Motion carried

9.13.2. Planner

I so move that we select a new planner.

Motion by: Eric      Second: Ken

Discussion: In the past two years the public has lost confidence in the current planner; we need to have a different direction for our community. Difficult to find planners willing to be involved with recent wind ordinances. Need to research, area expertise, contact, consider costs and billing, experience, word of mouth/recommendations from other townships. All members of the Township Board will research and share printed info to prepare for meeting discussion.

Vote: Roll Call - Ken: Yes, Eric: Yes, Amy: Yes, Holly: Yes

Motion carried

9.13.3. Technology

9.13.3.1. Hardware

9.13.3.2. Software

9.13.3.2.1. Quickbooks for financial

9.13.3.2.2. BS&A Software for Cloud-Based Utilities Management Suite

9.13.3.2.2.1. Cannot change

9.13.3.2.2.2. Used by Montcalm County and our township Assessor

9.13.3.2.2.3. Yearly maintenance fee

9.13.3.2.3. Qualified Voters Software

9.13.3.2.3.1. Cannot change

9.13.3.2.3.2. Used by Montcalm County Clerk

9.13.3.3. Internet Service

9.13.3.3.1. Current CASAIR/Point Broadband

9.13.3.3.1.1. \$64 month

9.13.3.3.1.2. Extremely weak and slow

9.13.3.3.2. New HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative

9.13.3.3.2.1. Fiber is buried

9.13.3.3.2.2. Tied to poles

9.13.3.3.2.3. Waiting for official letterhead to show Holly is the clerk, she will use these minutes

- 9.13.3.3.2.4. Holly is working on what the cost will be
- 9.13.4. Grouping of topics
  - I so move that the topics listed below will be tabled until the next meeting. Insurance, Auditor, Assessor, Property/Building Use and Maintenance, Utilities, and Mail
  - Discussion: Assessor is Melissa Zelma, township has a one year contract
- 9.13.5. Meeting Accessibility
  - 9.13.5.1. ADA Compliant - building is compliant
  - 9.13.5.2. IT Set Up, Zoom Account, Wifi, Costs involved - research will be done to consider February Township board meeting on Zoom - Ken will research
- 9.13.6. Number allowed in building - Holly will try to find
- 9.14. Direction for Planning Commission
  - 9.14.1. Master Plan Review with Resident Input - discussion that this was started, input from PC Member Rick Bladwin, Rick noted that this is not redoing entire plan
  - 9.14.2. Zoning Ordinance Review with Zoning Administrator and Resident Input - discussion that this is planned for after Master Plan Review, input from PC Member Rick Bladwin noted that this is not redoing the entire plan,
  - 9.14.3. I so move that Eric will take to the Douglass Township Planning Committee a charge from the Township Board to prepare a wind ordinance that is acceptable to the desires of the public. Also, this charge is to take precedence over the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance Reviews due to the current moratorium on wind.
    - Motion by: Holly Second: Ken
    - Discussion: The recent election demonstrated that a large majority of residents did not approve of the two wind ordinances on the ballot. This fact should give the planning commission direction for a new ordinance.
    - Vote: Roll Call - Ken: Yes, Eric: Yes, Amy: Yes, Holly: Yes
    - Motion carried
- 9.15. Township Cleanup and Blight
  - Discussion: Input from Dave Kelsey: currently Douglass Township Ordinance specifies complaint needed, followed by citation, cannot write ticket with our proper ID and date of birth, which can be difficult to get, Dave has heard that the county will be working on this in January and involving the township supervisor but nothing official; when asked about reasons given for blight Dave said he has never had someone mention inability, if they did he could give more time, Holly has contacts to provide help in unable due to health or finances.
- 9.16. Training
  - 9.16.1. New Officials Training
    - 9.16.1.1. Friday, Dec. 16, 2022 at LCC W. Campus Lansing
    - 9.16.1.2. Costs: \$150 per person, \$98 Starter Book Kit (1 kit)
    - 9.16.1.3. Attending: Holly, Cindy, Eric
    - 9.16.1.4. Reimbursement
      - I so move that we send and cover the costs to send Holly, Cindy and Eric to New Officials Training.

Motion by: Amy      Second: Eric

Discussion: Provided by MTA, books are latest editions recommended to have at township office for reference

Vote: Voice unanimous

Motion carried

9.16.2. Other Training - None

9.17. Contact Information - Working on emails, through office is best

10. Announcements

10.1. Next Meeting Date(s)

I so move that the next Douglass Township Board Meeting will be held on December 21, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. with the primary topic to be a new attorney for the township.

Motion by: Ken      Second: Eric

Discussion: Much discussion on date, the need for good research, the importance of this decision, how much time to have to do the research and to make the decision, the need for an additional meeting either in December or January in order to have questions concerning appointments and procedures in place before planning commission and other appointed roles become active for 2023.

Call for the Question made by Ken, Second:Eric

Vote: Roll Call - Ken: Yes, Eric: Yes, Amy: Yes, Holly: No

Motion carried

10.2. Other Training - None at this time, Holly possibly in future

10.3. Future Committees - None at this time

10.4. Office Hours

10.4.1. Treasurer - Amy Laper - November 1st through the month of February: 2nd and 4th Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.; March 1st through the month of October: 2nd and 4th Wednesday, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.; More days during tax time, also days required by law, additional times by appointment.

10.4.2. Clerk - Holly Huff - Beginning January 1st, 2023: Monday 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Wednesday 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and Saturdays by appointment. Email [hollyhuff.douglass@gmail.com](mailto:hollyhuff.douglass@gmail.com)

10.4.3. Supervisor - By appointment, appointments can be made by contacting the office or emailing [cindyshick.douglass@gmail.com](mailto:cindyshick.douglass@gmail.com)

10.4.4. Publishing - Office hours will be published on the township web page and posted at the door.

11. Public comment

Example: Name - Item Number - Comment

11.1. Christy Williams - DT - Thank you - Please look at ordinances concerning mud-bog trucks, race cars and offroad vehicles for consistency

11.2. Sheila Crooks - DT - A reminder that the power and final say in ordinances rest in the hands of the Zoning Board of Appeals, please keep this in mind when selecting candidates, in a neighboring county industrial wind turbines were permitted by way of a zoning variance; Also, having attended a few other township meetings in the county, impressed with Attny. Leslie Abdoo's knowledge, experience, and method of working with township leaders.

11.3. Don Rasmussen - DT - Request to consider Beechwood and Iron Wood roads that access the shoreline from Hillman Road, they are in need of maintenance before the asphalt is completely lost.

- 11.4. Richard Draper - DT - 2017 is a consternation, the township board can vote it out and it becomes a mute point, rescind/abolish it.
- 11.5. Linda Reynolds - DT- appreciates that the board will be looking at wind, solar and marijuana for proper publishing, also consider the river as it was approved around the same time, other positions do need interviews, She asked our County Commissioners why they don't attend our meetings like they do other township meetings. They were told that they didn't need to attend, but all we have to do is invite them again, maybe on a rotating basis.
- 11.6. Rick Baldwin - DT - Keep in mind that not all advice from the past attorney and planner is not money wasted. The PC has the correct verbage for the ordinance and now needs to change details to reflect the desires of the community as shown in the vote.
- 11.7. Christa Baldwin - DT - When researching the attorney, keep in mind that often important research comes from personal recommendation, word of mouth and success at other local townships. We all make important decisions based on that type of information.
- 11.8. Jack Switalski - DT - Multiple issues with owner of an adjacent property, burning citation dismissed by judge due confusing ordinances, fire department not aware of ordinance; violation date when not home, citation 20 days past, Dave Kelsey not up to date and form incomplete, feels other land owner is using board to his benefit; Jack has lived there 35 years, burning all of those years; also the other landowner built fence in road and another section not following setbacks, impacting multiple neighbors
- 11.9. Todd Wells - DT - Response to Jack Switalski: Montcalm County Road Commission decided on the abandoned road and gave him ownership and permission for the fence; Phone System suggestion RingCentral offers Zoom-like service for up to 100 participants and personal extensions that will notify via other technology if not in the office.
- 11.10. Becky Sowles - Upset how she feels changes of Planning Commission members will be done by the board.
12. Adjournment  
I so move that we adjourn this meeting.  
Motion by: Eric      Second: Amy  
    Discussion: none  
    Vote: Voice unanimous  
    Motion carried  
Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully Submitted by Holly Huff on December 13, 2022