

Blue Lake Township

Kalkaska County, Michigan

Minutes

Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 3, 2023

17 Present

- I. Meeting Call to Order at 7:00 pm
- II. Pledge of Allegiance – Shearer
- III. Roll Call of Board Members – Almose, Shaw, Shearer, Shoemaker, and Nichol all present.
- IV. Adoption of Agenda – **Motion** to adopt agenda by Shoemaker with additions under XIII, supported by Shaw. Motion carried.
- V. Call for Conflict – Shearer – Roll call, Almose, Nichol, Shaw, Shoemaker, and Shearer all stated no conflict of interest.
- VI. Minutes of last meeting – **Motion** by Shaw to accept the April 5, 2023 minutes, support by Almose, motion carried.
- VII. The Treasurer’s report was accepted.
 1. The LCSA handout from last month was modified for additional clarity and handed out to the board.
- VIII. Clerks Report – Nichol
 1. **Motion** by Shaw to pay the April 2023 expenditures in the amount of \$99,748.35 supported by Almose. Roll Call: Almose, Shaw, Shoemaker, Shearer, and Nichol all yeas. Motion carried.
- IX. Correspondence and Guests
 1. An email received from the Sheriff’s Office showing 14 incidents in the township including 2 liquor inspections.
 2. Kohn Fisher – County Commissioner – not present
- X. Public Input – Question about MEBS logging and messing up Squaw Lake Rd. Shearer called soil erosion and explained he’s spoken with KCRC with no help there. We’ve also been told pictures/video showing trucks damaging the road are necessary to seek reparations. Citizen was advised of KCRC meeting date/times and encouraged them to attend and/or call or email KCRC Chair Mike Cox. Question on speed signs. Shearer stated leave email with him and he will send the AuSable letter to them. Question on blight ordinances. Two citations pending. Fletemeier read a letter regarding his take on what Blue Lake Township should do with next years budget due to decreased taxable value. Shearer handed out an email from a citizen stating her views on next years budget and including “raise property tax 28%, a worst case scenario”. As Nichol and Shearer reported receiving calls with regard to a posting on social media by Fletemeier, with their takeaway of a tax increase of 28% (which was not stated nor the intent per Fletemeier). The Clerk addressed the false sense that property tax can be raised without voter approval. The points she made are as follows:
 1. Property tax increases are the result of Michigan Law(s) that Assessors must follow. Law provides for a cap on the increase of taxable value should the state mandated calculations rise above 5% percent. Calculations reached over 7% but taxable value increased by the cap of 5%. *Added for clarity:* Your Winter Tax Bill will be the millage amount times your taxable value (TV). Ex: your TV was \$95,238 and this year the 5% increase raised your TV to \$100,000. Blue Lake Township tax is .08123 of a mill. Mathematically stated: prior year $95238 \times .0008123 = \77.36 , current year $\$100,000 \times .0008123 = \81.23 so the tax you pay for BLT increased by \$3.87 which is 5%) Any new millage (or request to continue a millage once it expires) MUST go before the voters and pass by a majority to be instituted. Michigan

Townships are capped at 1% for its operating mills by statute. This mil is subject to the Headlee Rollback. Headlee Rollback has reduced our 1 mil to .08123 mil. It cannot be increased back to the 1 mil without going before the voting public and passing by a majority of the voters. IF the voters were to vote to reinstate the full 1 mil, that 1 mil is subject to Headlee Rollback. That is a calculation too complex for this writing. Headlee is a constitutional amendment passed in 1978. It created a process to reduce millage rates ensuring property tax revenue would grow only at the inflation rate. (Paraphrasing a.2gov.org). The Treasurer explained the loss of revenue due to TransCanada's application to reduce its personal property tax. The Assessor concluded the application met the criteria to be exempt from this tax (he also ran it by the township attorney who also agreed), the exemption was not denied. The loss was \$38 million. Our tax revenue for the following funds decreased by (rounded figures) General Fund \$27,000, Highway \$50,000, Fire \$60,000, Trash \$33,500.

2. The second point the Clerk made was to address the Social Media post from Fletemeier about the Clerk proposing a 3% salary increase. The Clerk is responsible for preparing a salary schedule every year. Within the schedule the Clerk gave options of 1, 2, and 3% increases. This year the Clerk only used 3% as an increase as the total is easily divisible by 3 to come up with a 1 or 2%. The presented options are not the only options. The board, as in years past, can vote no increase up to what the board deems appropriate. The Clerk also informs the board what the Cost of Living and inflation percentages are. The board decided several years ago to look at this data every year. *Additional info:* A 3% increase amounts to \$4065 annually (\$2,773 GF and \$1,332 FF). A copy of the schedule is available upon request.

XI. Township Reports – written reports are available in the Clerk's office.

1. Assessor's Report – Sheneman –
 - a. For the month of April: 8 deeds, 1 transfer, 2 death certificates, 0 electrical easements, and 6 DTE easements.
 - b. As per statute, 20% of properties are to be inspected every year. Sheneman will send a mailer to the properties he will be inspecting this year.
2. Zoning Administrator's Report – Schuhart
 - a. For the month of April: 5 building permits were issued.
3. Planning Board Report – Shaw
 - a. The public hearing is scheduled for June 17th and will not be on Zoom. Postcards will be mailed in May notifying taxpayers of the public hearing. Nothstine will bring his Owl in for the planning board to evaluate. Proposed noise ordinance from Bear Lake: Sheriff Whiteford submitted comments.
4. Zoning Board of Appeals – Buttermore
 - a. A variance meeting is scheduled for May 10th at 1:00 pm at the township hall.
5. Hospital Report – Nichol
 - a. Moments of Excellence: 1. The Board thanked KMHC leadership team for the orientation sessions; they provide education, information on KMHC structure, and the wide variety of healthcare services. 2. Mr. Raymond, CFO and Mr. Cannon, CNO have passed the Board of Governors Exam. They are now certified as Fellows in the American College of Healthcare Executives. 3. Dr. Miliken (gastroenterologist) approached KMHC with his wish to perform a new procedure not offered elsewhere in northern Michigan. After training and purchasing necessary equipment, the first Bravo pH Monitoring procedure was successfully performed (helps access acid in stomach). Campus Plan Update: The Acute Care Pavilion project is going very well, is on schedule for October 2023 completion date. Leadership team is reviewing and modifying goals and objectives for FY24 including investigations with other potential partners and evaluation of internal

capabilities. Kaliseum Update: Business plan is 95% complete. It is very in depth and provides scenarios evaluating the role of KMHC. Medical Staff report: Pandemic level was moved to green on April 14th. Nine other hospitals in the state made the change at the same time. Visitor and masking policies were updated.

6. Road Committee Report – Shoemaker

- a. KCRC recommends Elmer's for the planned Blue Lake Road work. Still needing further bids on a different scope of this project. A managers report was given to all board members.

7. Fire Department Report – Brierley (given by Dickens)

- a. 11 runs for the month of April; 8 fire related, and 3 medical runs. 1 mutual aid call for Coldsprings for a pickup truck fire, 1 mutual aid to Bear Lake for a UTV fire, and one mutual aid to Kalkaska for multiple field fires.
- b. Old Business: We received the Trans Canada grant check for \$15,000.
- c. New Business: Mike Umphrey, S Branch Fire Chief has been invited to the June Board Meeting to discuss MABAS. I encourage the Board to contact Coldsprings/Excelsior and Bear Lake board members to get their perspectives and why they made the decision to join. Fletemeier emailed the board regarding FD electric care fire equipment. I have done some research on the Rosenbauer Battery Extinguishing system. Currently, most fire departments do not have any special equipment to handle EV fires. Chemicals in malfunctioning battery cells react violently, causing extreme heat then fire. Fire does not take long to break down the other cells. To stop the chemical reaction the cells must be cooled, taking on average 30 - 50 thousand gallons of water. Getting water to the battery compartment is housed under the cars. Once thought put out, fires reignited time after time. This system is designed to apply the water directly to the battery compartment. Pros: Great piece of equipment, cut down water consumption and time, and we would be the only department in the area to have the equipment. Cons: We would be the only department in the area to have the equipment, very expensive, and chance of being called for mutual aid for this specific equipment could be a reality.
- d. Training: Training for the month consisted of truck checks, medical CUE, live scenario car v pole and car fire, and scenario Firefighters IC.
- e. Truck/Equipment maintenance: None for April.
- f. No reply yet from our Attorney regarding Shoemakers submissions and Shaw's new motion. Shaw states she has waited long enough. **Motion** by Shaw that as a matter of policy, all Blue Lake Fire Department administrative policies, procedures and guidelines be reviewed, updated, revised or developed by the Chief and Officers through teamwork and consensus. The agreed upon documents will be presented to the Township Board. When consensus cannot be reached, those issues will be resolved by the Township Board. This motion shall not impede upon the Chief's statutory authority under the Fire Prevention Code Act, Public Act 207 of 1941. This motion shall not conflict with or interfere with any State or Federal Fire mandates or medical protocols. This motion shall not interfere with Emergency Response directives from the Scene Command Officer. Supported by Almose. Roll Call: Shaw, Almose, Shoemaker all yeas. Nichol: No. Shearer: abstained. Motion carried.

XII. Board Member Comments and Input –

1. Clerk still waiting on word from DNR regarding snowmobile crossings. She will call again.

XIII. Old Business –

1. ARPA Project Estimates: Almose-Reception desk was looked into with findings that the sizes are too large for the area. Almose withdrew the request. Shearer- looked around township and does not see an immediate need for new signage. Cost for signs are \$200 per sign

payable to KCRC (they would also install for this price). Bid specifications: still no response to call(s) and no specs have been received. Will look to another qualified source to produce the bid specifications (including porch repair and water to east side of Hall). Shaw-Audio/visual. A Planning Board member will set up an "Owl" for them to evaluate if it is something that would benefit the residents and Board. Shaw contacted Geek Squad, they would need to come out and measure and get other information. Shaw states we will not use them. Brierley- Estimate for LED lighting for meeting room and truck bay has been requested but not received yet. Once figures are in, projects can be agreed upon and work can be scheduled. Shaw questioned whether we could use ARPA funds for kitchen. As we can, monies not apportioned to projects could be put there. Once figures are in, projects can be agreed upon and work can be scheduled.

2. Shearer: Wake Limitations on all Lakes. Discussion followed by next steps: To Planning Board with petition of X signatures necessary. The signatures should be X % of land/lots to consider. Treasurer states 1209 real and 23 exempt. Perhaps 30% to be considered?
3. Spark Grant: The new Spark Grant round began May 1st. Pope from KCSAS met with Almose to discuss. The result: KCSAS is withdrawing their request for Blue Lake Township to apply for the Spark Grant.

XIV. New Business – REMINDER

1. 2023/2024 Budget –Budget hearing/workshop will be May 11th at 10 am at the township hall. This is a public meeting, those who would like to attend are encouraged to do so.

XV. Adjournment – Next meeting June 7, 2023 at 7:00 pm

1. **Motion** to adjourn at 9:24 pm by Nichol, supported by Shearer, motion carried.