

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
QUARTERLY DISCUSSION MEETING OF THE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, MI 48390
Tuesday, January 26, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**

Due to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services order, this meeting was held via electronic video conferencing technology.

CALL TO ORDER: Supervisor Gray called the Township Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Larry Gray, Supervisor
Molly Phillips, Treasurer
Vanessa Wagner, Trustee
Rick Sovel, Trustee
George Weber, Trustee
Bob Berkheiser, Trustee

Absent: Melissa Creech, Clerk (excused)

Also Present: Jim Dundas, Fire Chief
Christine Dennis, Deputy Clerk
Emily England, Senior Director
Jay James, P.E. Building Official
Ben Sebrowski, Director of Technology
Mark Schoder, Maintenance Director
Debbie Watson, DDA Assistant

Ken Milburn of MERGE LIVE, Multimedia Group, a digital content provider, is host of the meeting.

Ben Sebrowski, Director of Technology, is co-host of the meeting.

ITEM 1: Public Comments

Supervisor Gray opened Public Comments. Seeing no raised hands, Supervisor Gray closed Public Comments.

ITEM 2. Request to Write and Submit a FEMA Grant Application – Fire Department
Chief Dundas asked the Board for permission to aggressively pursue writing 5 FEMA grants for replacement of existing equipment. The Fire Department budget allows for the expenditure of up to \$4,000.00 on grant writing. Some of the grants are regional

ITEM 2. Request to Write and Submit a FEMA Grant Application – Fire Department (continued)

where other local fire departments share in the cost of writing the grant. All of the grants pay 90% of the cost for replacement of equipment and the Township would only pay 10% of the cost. This would be a one-time expense and not obligate the Township to future outlays. The 5 grants are as follows:

1. SCBA (air packs) and masks, this is a regional grant applied for with other area fire departments
2. Washing and drying equipment for turn out gear
3. Rescue equipment
4. Training equipment and props, another regional grant led by Novi
5. Radio equipment, regional led by Springfield

MOTION by Sovel, supported by Phillips, to authorize Chief Dundas to apply for the 5 grants with funds to come from the Fire Department budget in an amount not to exceed \$4,000.00.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Sovel, Phillips, Magner, Weber, Berkheiser, Gray

NAYS:

ABSENT: Creech

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 3: Residency Requirement for Boards and Commissions

A general discussion followed regarding whether a person serving on one of the Township's boards or commissions should be a resident of the Township, unless specific residency exemptions are listed in a particular board or commission's by-laws.

The Board's consensus is the policy should be consistent and Commerce Township must be a person's primary residence to be eligible to serve on a board or commission, with a few noted exceptions. Each board and commission is reviewing their by-laws at this time and changes will be made as needed.

ITEM 4: DDA Director Discussion

Trustee Sovel started the discussion regarding the need for a new DDA Director after the tragic passing of Mark Stacey. Trustee Sovel high-lighted the complexity and the challenges faced by a DDA Director.

A general discussion followed regarding continuity, residency, the process of appointing a new DDA Director, and the urgency to do so.

DDA Assistant Deb Watson asked to be considered for DDA Director. She proposed an interim period of 90 days at the budgeted salary.

ITEM 4: DDA Director Discussion (continued)

The trustees agreed the DDA Board should schedule a special meeting as soon as possible to appoint Deb Watson as the Interim DDA Director, or discuss other possible candidates.

MOTION by Gray, supported by Weber, to recommend Deb Watson as Interim DDA Director pending DDA Board approval for 90 days.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Gray, Weber, Sovel, Magner, Phillips, Berkheiser

NAYS:

ABSENT: Creech

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 5: DDA Debt Presentation

Treasurer Phillips reviewed the documents in the agenda packet and shared her screen so the Board could see the DDA financial spreadsheets. For her analysis she used very conservative assumptions on property sales, build-outs, and values in order to assess best-case and worst-case scenarios. Treasurer Phillips assured the Board that the balance in the Debt Sinking fund never drops below \$290,135.00 and the Township will not "hit the wall."

The trustees discussed the timing of sales in the DDA and the debt sinking fund and would like to address changes to the assumptions quarterly.

ITEM 6: Township Owned Properties

Trustee Weber gave an update on the progress the sub-committee has made into their investigation of township owned properties. The sub-committee identified 8 different property categories:

1. Park Designation
2. Greenspace
3. Wetlands
4. Sell Property – Residential
5. Sell Property – Commercial
6. Union Lake Road Corridor
7. Deed Land to Commerce Township
8. Township Municipal Property

Trustee Weber explained the types of property in each category and indicated that the next steps are to continue to categorize the remaining properties, visit some of the properties, develop recommendations and present them to the Board. Ultimately he would like the Board to approve a strategy and action plan at a future meeting after the sub-committee concludes its work.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Sovel, supported by Berkheiser, to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

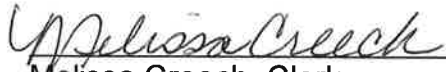
ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Sovel, Berkheiser, Magner, Weber, Gray, Phillips

NAYS:

ABSENT: Creech

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Melissa Creech, Clerk
Charter Township of Commerce