TORCH LAKE TOWNSHIP

ANTRIM COUNTY, MICHIGAN

APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING 4-0 WITH CHANGES

JUNE 20, 2023

COMMUNITY SERVICES BUILDING

TORCH LAKE TOWNSHIP

Present: Cook, Martel, Merchant and Windiate

Absent: Schultz

Audience: +/- 27

1. **REPEATING AGENDA:**
2. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the pledge to the flag.
3. **Motion** by Cook to approve Minutes of May 16, 2023 with one spelling correction was seconded and passed 4-0. In item A. 5 change “Commission” to “Commissioner”. **Motion** by Cook to approve the Minutes of Special Meeting of June 7, 2023 as presented was seconded and passed 4-0.
4. Correspondence/Announcements: None
5. Agenda Content: **Motion** by Cook to approve Agenda Content with changes was seconded and passed 4-0.

Move Item 1 New Business to Item E 6. Board Discussion; Add E 7. Public Hearing for Septic System Inspection; E 8. Boat Launch Update. Motion was seconded and approved 4-0.

1. Citizen Comment: **1.** Comment from EMS Director Mike Bertram wanting the public to know we had a full cardiac arrest at the Torch Lake Café and the patient was brought back using equipment purchased with township tax dollars. Patient is home and doing well. Thanks to paramedic Becky Boyce and EMT Johnny McCall as well as several firefighters that showed up on scene. **2.** Donna Purvis had questions about the trail extension from Acme to Charlevoix. Has the Township had any discussion with trail organizers, if so, where can Minutes of those meetings be found and how can she become involved with this important decision. Her questions were answered by Mr. Cook through an earlier email. **3.** Bill Petersen has concerns regarding the Dangerous Building Ordinance. He doesn’t see how this came to be. With a Zoning Ordinance there is a process and he sees nothing in the Planning Commission, no Public Hearing, no response from the County. He also believes this Ordinance will not be enforceable. How will the Township do inspections? That would be trespassing. Lastly, hardships happen. Is this going to be generated by complaints? More cases for abuse than for good. The township has no business getting into this. It is an over-step on our part and we do not need it in Torch Lake Township. **4.** Bob Spencer had comments about Road Ends. The County and the Township have had some jurisdictional conversations in the past with issues around Road Ends. If the Township is going to do modifications, clean up what you have as a starting point and go forward from there. **5.** Mary Van Valin thanked Mr. Cook and Mr. Hawkins. We are seeing less parking on the preserve beach. She is so grateful that the beach is a part of the reserve and not a parking lot! 6. Deputy Kevin Hoch took this opportunity to present the 911 report. They have two new cadets who are doing a great job. They have purchased two new vessels, one for inland patrols and one for Elk and Torch Lakes. He also had positive comments about the Stepping Up program. **6.** Tom Stillings has two issues. Why a Dangerous Building Ordinance when we already have an existing Blight Ord that has been used successfully. It is a Civil Infraction rather than a Police Ordinance. It provides due process and eliminates potential abuse that would be present in the new ordinance. He also questions the expertise this body has, or anyone, to make structural decisions. What’s next? You will tell us what color to paint our houses? Next, the Police Department Proposal. With a population of 1212 people it would cost a ridiculous amount of money per capita to do it right, and if you’re not going to do it right don’t do it wrong. If we really think we have a problem Let’s get with the County Commissioners and say we think the sheriff department needs some help. How about shuffling around some money in the budget and giving the sheriff a few bucks and solving whatever problems we have**. 7.** Jarris Rubingh: 1. The building department has released numbers thru May. So far, they have sold 1,008 building permits vs. last year’s total of 979. 2. Mr. Rubingh continues to become more knowledgeable of the Stepping Up program. It has been shown that approximately 30% of crimes can be linked to a mental illness. It would be better to get these people some help rather than putting them in jail. 3. The county building will soon be under construction. Many departments will be moved or shuffled around. If you can’t find the department you are looking for, ask someone for assistance.
2. **CONSENT AGENDA:**  All reports approved by Consent.
3. **SPECIAL REPORTS AGENDA:**
4. Mr. Merchant reported a short meeting for the Planning Commission. They passed two amendments to existing ordinances.
5. MS Windiate reported no new FOIAs and everything is caught up.
6. Mr. Cook gave the finical report, which is also available on the website.
7. Presentation by Anna McGlashen, the local policy manager for the Tip of the Mitt Water Shed Council, regarding Septic Ordinances. She and her team are presenting themselves as resources for our use while discussing the possibility of a Septic Ordinance. Mr. Cook had asked how many northern Michigan communities have an ordinance at this time. Seven (7) townships and 5 counties have either Time of Transfer or Time of Sale Ordinances. These ordinances require an inspection to be done by an approved inspector prior to the sale or transfer of the deed. An example of an ordinance in Berrien and Eaton Counties found almost 1000 failed systems and 300 residences with no septic at all. MS McGlashen goes on to explain who can do the inspection, the requirements that must be followed etc. A copy of the Ordinance can be found on-line at torchlaketownship.org.
8. **AGENDA FOR BOARD ACTION:**

Old Business: No Old Business

New Business:

1. Sign Ordinance: **Motion** by Cook to approve Resolution 2023-10 to replace/amend Torch Lake Township Zoning Ordinance Chapter 3A-Signs, as presented, with Publication within 15 days of approval and an effective date 30 days after such publication date. Motion was seconded and passed 4-0 roll call vote.
2. Traverse Bay Nature Preserve committee appointments: **Motion** by Cook to approve the following appointments listed below for the Traverse Bay Nature Preserve Board for terms of 2 years and existing Board Member terms are hereby terminated with both actions effective June 21, 2023. Motion was seconded and passed 4-0 roll call vote: Audra Randall, John Jenkins, Jake Blessing, Maureen Lorenz, Mark and Dee Jakubiak, Sheila WRIGHT , Chris Lampen-Crowell, Steve McLain, Jerry Klinefelter and Mary Van Valin.
3. Employee Insurance: **Motion** by Cook was seconded and passed 4-0 to approve the quote submitted by our insurance provider, Priority Health, for full time EMS Employee medical insurance plan at a cost of $50,082, a 9.7% increase.
4. Nomination: **Motion** by Cook to approve the hiring of Bob Hawkins as Co-Park lead coordinator at $21.00 per hour effective June 21, 2023 was seconded and passed 4-0.
5. **AGENDA FOR BOARD DISCUSSION:**
6. Update on Police Department project: Mr. Cook fears there is a misconception when HE refers to a “Police Department”. He is not looking to hire 2 or 3 full time people. A lot depends on State requirements. When talking with deputy Hock and Sheriff Bean, they may have an alternative for the township. Therefore, we will not be pursuing this any further until we hear back from that source.
7. Septic Ordinance—Next Steps
8. Road Ends: Mr. Spencer is adamant about the Township maintaining the Road Ends. It hasn’t been being done. It is a burden to us, but there have been complaints. Mr. Cook is looking for direction.
9. TBNP Update: Porta Potties, additional parking spaces, cement parking barriers to direct traffic, all have been good additions to the Preserve. However, a few people are still ignoring the parking signs. It is a $500 fine for a parking violation. Please be observant of the rules on this fire lane.
10. Board Member objectives for 2023-2024: When asked what each Board member wished to work on for the Township in the next year, a list was created. MS Schultz would like new carpet throughout building; wireless microphones for the Board table; office desk chairs. MS Windiate would like the Board to look into some type of trash service for the Township. Mr. Cook would like to see action on the Dangerous Building Ordinance, Septic Tank Inspection Ordinance, and Police Department status for the township. Mr. Merchant agreed with Windiate and Mr. Martel agreed with all he heard.
11. Dangerous Building: This needs to be scheduled for a Public Hearing date. July 12th is suggested for a Special Meeting with a Public Hearing for both Dangerous Buildings and the Septic Ordinance.
12. Boat Launch: Two drawings are included in tonight’s packet which show potential changes to the Day Park Boat Launch. Two launch areas would be created with a new launch site for kayaks etc. Hopefully this can help reduce the congestion in that area. Work would not begin until October.
13. **AGENDA ITEMS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY:**
14. Circuit court cases regarding ZBA appeal decisions: The township won the case about the helipad and has another case in 4-6 weeks. The judge has no opinion yet.
15. Boat wash exhibition by the State will be set up at the Day Park on Saturday, July 29th.
16. TLT/Eden Shore residents meeting to discuss water quality options in early to mid-July. Important to know what the residents want to see done.
17. Grant received for bike rack. A $800 grant was received for the Day Park to purchase a bicycle rack.
18. **CITIZEN COMMENT:** Deb Steggles had questions about the Day Park Minutes and where to find them; she is curious about the fence for the park. She hopes it’s not as ugly as the cement parking barriers in the Preserve. Not chain link. Something attractive. She asked when work begins on the Budget. And for Road Ends, look at the use. If help is needed contact some of the clubs in the area to give a helping hand.
19. **BOARD COMMENT:** MS Windiate would like to add columbariums to her wish list for the cemetery. With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:22 pm.

These Minutes are respectfully submitted and are subject to approval at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. They can be found on the township’s website at torchlaketownship.org.

Kathy S. Windiate

Township Clerk