

Regular Meeting of the Crystal Lake Township Board

1651 Frankfort Highway, Frankfort MI 49635

May 21, 2024

Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Amy Ferris at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: Nielsen, Marble, Northway, Ferris, and VanMeter were present, constituting a quorum.

Guests: Gregory Wright, David Spragens, Leroy Reed, Paul May, Zoning Administrator Tom Kucera, Abigail Ellsworth, Brian Halliday, County Commissioner Karen Cunningham, Sue Webber, Cathy Wilkinson, Deputy Clerk Sondra Halliday, Fire Chief Cederholm, Fred McGill, Joshua Toms, and Keelee Beaudet.

Agenda:

Ferris moved to accept the agenda as amended:

- Nielsen added Roads under Reports, to specifically discuss millage renewal.
- Marble amended Financials to include resolution to change credit card authorized reps.
- Marble amended Roads to include Birchwood and Marquette Ct. apron discussion.
- VanMeter amended Financials to include April post-audit payroll resolution.
- Ferris amended Correspondence to include three additional docs plus related resolutions.

Nielsen supported. All ayes. Agenda accepted as amended.

Conflicts of Interest: No conflicts of interest were declared.

Minutes: April 16, 2024, Regular Board Meeting

Ferris moved to accept the minutes of the April 16, 2024 Regular Board Meeting as presented. Marble supported. All ayes. Minutes accepted as presented.

Correspondence

- Resignation letter from Grant Sowa, Crystal Lake Township Enforcement Officer.
- Resignation letter from Planning Commissioner Michael Pasche.
- Letter of interest from Abigail Ellsworth regarding new CLT Environmental Committee.
- From Johnna Bridges regarding Vine, Linden, and Broadway lakeshore maintenance.

Guest: Airport Manager Brooke Popp said she was excited about her new position at the airport. She shared the goals/action plans she has for the airport going forward. She also explained the payment plan for the recent air easement settlement. Popp noted the FCCAA will support the Wings of Mercy Wingman Challenge and Fundraising event which runs from May 4 to September 2, 2024. Popp also shared the new website address: www.frankforddownmemorial.com.

County Commissioner Karen Cunningham's Report

(Full report available on CLT website)

- The BoC met on May 14, 2024, with 12 action items to discuss. One of those items was the Headlee Amendment, which will be on the ballot in November. Commissioner Cunningham noted that if passed, the millage rate will remain at current levels for two years.
- Correspondence received regarding BoC decisions on the Commission on Aging millage included on the August ballot. She clarified the commissioners had not voted against the millage but had more questions. She noted there was a plethora of millages that will be on August and November ballots.
- Benzie County Community Financial Impact report was shared.
- Merit Network, Inc. presentation regarding the digital pilot which included Benzie County. The company was hired to facilitate and identify goals and timelines. Grow Benzie is working with Merit and will assist with the informational template.
- Cherry Capital Connections had a failed beta test and were still working out details.
- EDC looking for a grant writer. The EDC action plan was 10 years old, but the top three concerns remained the same—critical infrastructure/County master plan with water as main focus, encouragement of prosperity through skilled trades, and entrepreneurship in agribusiness.
- The new dog park in Frankfort was opened and much appreciated by dogs and owners.
- Sondra Halliday asked if the BoC looked into an alternative to the NMC millage, which would basically donate \$3 million dollars to the college per year and not benefit Benzie County as a whole.

Frankfort Fire and Rescue Department Report from Chief Cederholm for April/May 2024

(Full report available on CLT website)

- There will be water shuttle and flow rate training at CSA next week.
- 6 Fire and 11 EMS calls for CLT in April, with the number of EMS calls increasing.
- Correspondence shared, and he explained how training objectives were developed.
- There will be a summer camp for PreK to 5th grade including safety rules for camping, fireworks, bicycling, and water.
- On March 29 an employee was in full cardiac arrest at Frankfort Manufacturing and, through the heroic efforts by employees and the EMS, the employee survived. Certificates and pins were presented during National EMS week. Story made the television and newspaper news.

Public Comment:

- There were no public comments.

Financials:

- Marble shared March and April financial reports. She said she would be participating in extensive training through BS&A Online Services on Friday.

- Marble discussed a motion to reimburse Popp per hour for her assistance during the transition period. Ferris felt a set amount was more appropriate. Marble noted the per hour rate was based on what was paid to the Deputy Clerk.

Marble moved the Crystal Lake Township Board approve 6 hours for payroll assistance and up to 18 hours for audit assistance at the rate of \$27.00 per hour. Actual hours of work per task may be adjusted. Nielsen seconded. Roll was called. Marble, yes; VanMeter, yes; Nielsen, yes; Ferris, yes; Northway, yes. Motion approved.

- Marble said CLT authorized reps needed to be changed on the Township credit card.

Marble moved that Brooke Popp's name be removed from the Township's Visa credit card account. Treasurer Jill Marble's name will be reflected on the Visa card. Judy VanMeter, Clerk and Jill Marble, Treasurer will be co-authorized account representatives. (Resolution will include corrected date of current credit card policy.) VanMeter supported. Roll was called. VanMeter, yes; Marble, yes; Northway, yes; Nielsen, yes; Ferris, yes. Motion approved.

- Ferris shared an amendment to the Groundskeeper contract to include payments starting in April. VanMeter noted an incorrect date in the resolution that was corrected.

Ferris moved the Crystal Lake Township 2024-2027 Groundskeeping Contract shall be amended to read that the Clerk may start payroll in equal increments beginning in April for Mr. Kittleson and Crystal Clear Landscaping IF work commenced in April. VanMeter supported. Roll was called. Nielsen, yes; Ferris, yes; Marble, yes; Northway, yes; VanMeter, yes. Motion was approved.

- Ferris presented an amendment to the 2024-25 General Fund Budget for Treasurer Professional Development. VanMeter noted an incorrect date in resolution that was corrected.

Ferris moved to include an additional appropriation of \$2,000.00 to the already adopted \$500 (for a total of \$2,500) budgeted to the Treasurer's activity training line 253-910 "Professional Development" from the General Fund balance to defray expenditures for the remaining fiscal year. Marble supported. Roll was called. Nielsen, yes; Marble, yes; Northway, yes; Ferris, yes; VanMeter, yes. Motion approved.

- VanMeter presented the April post-audit payroll expenditure resolution and report.

VanMeter moved the Board approve the payment of \$17,307.45 for salaries and wages, per the Payroll Summary Report for April 2024. Marble supported. Roll was called. Ferris, yes; Northway, yes; Nielsen, yes; VanMeter, yes; Marble, yes. Motion approved.

Warrant Report

- Clerk VanMeter amended the warrant report to include April and May groundskeeper payment \$5,657.17; Kalamazoo Flags for \$158.24; and Bayside Printing for \$38.04; adjusting the General Fund by 3,024.85 for a total of \$17,064.25; Cemetery Fund was \$57.54; and no bills for

Roads and Fire. She noted the Township had a credit balance from DTE at the end of the budget plan year, so the monthly cost will be reduced to \$89.00 from \$100.00.

VanMeter made the motion to approve the warrant report as amended to include the extra monthly payment to Crystal Clear Landscaping, adjusting that amount to \$5,657.14 and to include invoices from Kalamazoo Flags of \$158.24 and Bayside Printing of \$38.04. This adjusted the General Fund total to \$17,064.25. The total amount for the Cemetery Fund was \$57.54, and there were no charges to the Road or Fire Fund accounts. Marble supported. Roll was called. Ferris, yes; Northway, yes; VanMeter, yes; Marble, yes; Nielsen, yes. Motion approved.

- VanMeter shared the 2023-2024 audit will be June 5 and 6, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Township office hours will be limited.

Airport

- Ferris shared the original resolution from 2016 regarding financial support for the FCCAA (Frankfort City/County Airport Authority) but did not include a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Frankfort, County and FCCAA. She felt CLT never technically joined the FCCAA and only committed to paying one year toward the salary of the airport manager. Ferris wanted clarification of CLT's status with the FCCAA. She noted the current FCCAA bylaws stated that once an entity rep was appointed to the FCCAA, they represented the best interests of the airport, not the entity which appointed them. Ferris felt CLT might be asked for more money in the future and needed to decide what to do. Marble shared the FCCAA bylaws were under review, and the Board could offer suggested edits to the language regarding entity representatives.

Nielsen felt if the Township withdrew from the FCCAA, there may be some financial obligations, which needed to be part of the conversation. Ferris said that needed to be clarified; however, CLT was not responsible for the lawsuit judgment. Marble wanted more time to research questions raised and have the discussion at another meeting. A committee of VanMeter, Marble, and Spragens was formed to research answers to questions raised. A report from the committee will be given at the next Board meeting.

Buildings and Grounds

- Brian Halliday shared the furnace was about 40 years old and needed to be replaced. Halliday noted the bids he received for a new HVAC system. Kucera indicated there was some asbestos tile under the furnace.

Ferris moved the Crystal Lake Township Board agree to the purchase and installation of a high efficiency heating and air conditioning system for the Township Hall at a cost not to exceed \$12,000. Nielsen supported. Roll was called. Ferris, yes; Nielsen, yes; Northway, yes; VanMeter, yes; Marble, yes. Motion approved.

- Brian Halliday explained that during our cleanup events, the company that delivered the recycling bins increased the charge for the bins by an additional \$400 for transportation per event.

Ferris moved the Crystal Lake Township Board agree to fund the increase in the recycling bin transportation costs for the two, clean-up date events at a cost of \$800.00 for 2024. Marble supported. Roll was called. Northway, yes; Nielsen, yes; Marble, yes; Ferris, yes; VanMeter, yes. Motion was approved.

- Ferris presented information regarding Lot 35 on South Shore. This was a small vertical parcel of land that was given to the township. Possible sale of the property was discussed previously. The property was surveyed. There have been adjacent owners who have expressed interest in purchasing this land. Ferris suggested Brian speak with those owners again and have the land appraised. The Board agreed.

Cemetery

- Ferris thanked the high school volunteers and chaperones who helped put the Memorial Day flags out at the cemeteries.
- The irrigation system was turned on, but a spigot was accidentally run over and, currently, the water was off at North Cemetery.
- Complaints were received that cemetery rules weren't consistently applied. Ferris asked, and it was noted the Board still supported the guidelines of the cemetery ordinance of 2014.
- There was a provision in the ordinance to sell plots back to the Township at cost minus an administrative fee of \$25.00. Some plots, currently worth approximately \$24,00.00, sold for as low as \$60.00. Should the Board look into adjusting these costs? Marble wanted Ferris to offer a suggested, consistent formula for calculating figures related to sell-back of plots. VanMeter asked how many times the plot sell-back issue was raised. Ferris said about eight times over a 13-year period.

Blight

- Ferris shared the updated Blight Ordinance that was reviewed by the attorney. Ferris generally agreed with the document received but offered some suggestions for page 2. Marble approved of the removal of the provision for "antique items." VanMeter wanted the penalties added to the ordinance, without referencing an additional ordinance to find penalties (page 5). Marble agreed and felt fines may be too low. Ferris questioned if the fines were not paid was a lien posted on the property? Kucera shared that, when discussing this with the attorney, it was agreed the fines needed to be reviewed. He said that one cannot go on someone's property to clean it up without a court order. He felt the Board needed to have a one-on-one meeting with the attorney on this subject. We need to have a violations bureau which oversees the police ordinances.

Nielsen suggested when new items, such as this ordinance, were included on a Board agenda, the topic would be discussed at that meeting and then voted on at a different meeting.

Northway shared that MTA was having a blight buster discussion, and noted we were not alone with these issues. Ferris will share with the attorney questions raised and comments made. Nielsen wanted an in-person meeting with the attorney. Consensus was there should be a public meeting on blight to gather input. Wright shared MTA had given advice on how to handle the issue.

Elections

- VanMeter shared the May 7, 2024, Special Election for FEAS was uneventful. 48 voters on election day and 267 absentee voters; about 31% of our voter roll.
- August State Primary early voting starts on July 27, 2024, for 9 days. She encouraged voters to take advantage of early and absentee voting as turnout may be high on Election Day.

IT

- Ferris shared the proposed broadband service map for CLT as of April 2024, which was also available on the website. It was noted the installation was unfortunately not moving fast.

Newsletter

- Ferris shared an updated draft of the newsletter and noted additional edits needed to be submitted before June 17, 2024. Nielsen wanted it noted the Road Commission was responsible for road care. Ferris said it was too late to put it in the current issue, and felt CLT Road Committee could also be proactive on the topic.

Planning and Zoning

- Kucera received and was reviewing the Lakeview Drive Ordinance from the attorneys, which only offered corrections to the ordinance submitted.
- The Short-Term Rental Ordinance has been sent to the attorneys for review.
- Camp Nearby Land Use Application was being reviewed, and there will be a public hearing in July.
- There was one Zoning Board of Appeals issue raised at the May 30 meeting regarding a property on South Shore.
- 18 Zoning Permit applications have been received as of this date.

Ferris moved and recommended the Crystal Lake Township Board appoint David Spragens to the CLT Planning Commission to a term effective May 21, 2024 through June 1, 2027. Northway supported. Roll was called. Ferris, yes; Nielsen, yes; Northway, yes VanMeter, yes. Motion approved.

Wright shared he was very pleased with the addition of David Spragens who was a former attorney and had vast knowledge. He said he will confirm the date/time of 7:00 p.m., July 24, 2024 for a joint meeting of the Board and Planning Commission.

Policies and Procedures

- Ferris shared the Sale or Disposal of Township Property Policy resolution. This would encompass getting rid of old furniture or even the sale of land. “With consideration” meant it was no longer needed by this governmental entity. The responsibility for the policy could be appointed to CLT Buildings and Grounds Coordinator Brian Halliday. The resolution information will be included in the CLT Policies and Procedures Manual.

Ferris moved that Crystal Lake Township has, “with consideration” the expressed legal authority vested in itself or a qualified chosen township employee, to sell, lease or give away property that is not longer needed for public purposes by the township, and may direct the sale, lease, or donation of the said property to either individual offices of the township, to another township or local unit of government, or to a nonprofit organization or other private properties. VanMeter supported. Roll was called. Nielsen, yes; VanMeter, yes; Marble, yes; Northway, yes; Ferris, yes. Motion approved.

Roads

- Nielsen wanted to place a CLT road millage renewal on the November ballot. Ferris asked that he type up the resolution and share it with the attorney. Marble said she will assist Nielsen in typing this document. VanMeter shared the submission deadline to have the millage on the November ballot was July 30. The resolution will be added to the June Board meeting agenda.
- Nielsen asked when the Board makes the decision on the millage amount to put on tax bills (up to 1 mil). CLT currently had around \$400,000.00 in the Road Fund and may not need to assess the entire 1 mil. Ferris noted the deadline for the L-4029, which includes the millage requests, was September 30.

Old Business

- **2024 Priorities:** Ferris asked the Board what they felt were the priorities for 2024. Topics suggested included the airport, blight, building renovation, and Policy and Procedures Manual. A Blight Committee consisting of Sue Webber, Joshua Toms, and Matt Stefanski was created. Northway felt the Board needed to continue the discussion regarding a new building, since the current facility does not have proper size and layout for elections.

New Business

- **New Meeting Calendar:** Marble discussed moving the meeting to an earlier time and the third Wednesday to accommodate schedules. Nielsen wanted the time to remain at 7:00 p.m. Ferris preferred the second Wednesday.

Marble moved the Crystal Lake Township Regular Board Meetings will henceforth change to 6:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month, as the attached calendar indicated. VanMeter supported. Roll was called: Marble, yes; Nielsen, no; Northway, yes; Ferris, yes; VanMeter, yes. Motion approved.

- **Payroll Outsourcing:** Marble stated the township processed its own payroll and was liable for taxes. It was recently discovered that QuickBooks had not been updated to include new tax information. Outsourcing removes liability and would affirm all requirements were being met. Northway felt this was a much cleaner way of processing payroll. Marble and VanMeter will discuss and decide on payroll contractor together.

Marble moved the Crystal Lake Township Board agree to outsource payroll processing to a licensed, insured payroll processing service at a cost not to exceed \$3,000.00 annually. Particular vendor chosen will be based on a mutual decision between the Clerk and Treasurer. VanMeter supported. Roll was called: Ferris, yes; Nielsen, yes; Northway, yes; VanMeter, yes; Marble, yes. Motion approved.

- **Environmental Committee:** Ferris shared that Abigail Ellsworth agreed to spearhead Crystal Lake Township’s Environmental Committee. VanMeter asked what the committee’s responsibilities entailed.

Ferris moved the Crystal Lake Township Board grant approval for Abigail Ellsworth to form and spearhead an Environmental Committee on behalf of the health, safety, and welfare of Township encompassing water, land, and air issues facing our community. Marble supported. Roll was called: Nielsen, yes; Northway, yes; Marble, yes; VanMeter, yes; Ferris, yes. Motion was approved.

Public Comment

- Webber suggested CLT look at local CPAs for payroll outsourcing. Ferris noted local CPA costs were much higher.
- Wright said he enjoyed seeing all the new people attending the Board meetings.
- Reed shared the cleanup day event went very well. There was no traffic back up on the street, and the location was very good.

Board Comment

- Northway asked Sondra Halliday if Ironman 70.3 Triathlon documentation was submitted. She explained the state was waiting to receive the approved minutes from tonight’s meeting, which will be sent after the meeting.
- Ferris noted the Ragnar relay race was scheduled for September, from Traverse City to Muskegon.
- Ferris shared that on early Saturday morning, her home was attacked and rocks were thrown through windows. Marble shared this was a traumatic event and uncalled for under any circumstance. Anyone with information on the incident should come forward.

Meeting adjourned at 9.03 p.m.

Judy VanMeter, Clerk and Sondra Halliday, Deputy Clerk, reporting.

Amy Ferris, Supervisor

Date

Judy VanMeter, Clerk

Date