

June 10, 2024

The regular meeting of the Chocolay Township Board was held on Monday, June 10, 2024, in the Chocolay Township Fire Hall. Supervisor Bohjanen called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

TOWNSHIP BOARD.

PRESENT: Richard Bohjanen, Max Engle, Ben Zyburt, David Lynch, Judy White, Don Rhein

ABSENT: Kendra Symbal

STAFF PRESENT: William De Groot, Suzanne Sundell

APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

Lynch moved, Engle supported to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC COMMENT - NONE

POLICE CHIEF INTERVIEWS

Supervisor Bohjanen indicated that the interviews will be conducted on an individual basis.

Officer Anthony Carrick – Officer Carrick has an M.S. in Public Administration from Northern Michigan University, a B.S. in Criminal Justice from Lake Superior State University, and an A.S. in Criminal Justice. Along with this he has various certifications and training and 18 years of experience in law enforcement. He responded to a set of questions from the Board regarding community involvement, professional goals, recruitment, and training.

Officer Nicholas Carter – Officer Carter has a B.S. in Criminal Justice from Northern Michigan University and is a Police Academy graduate from Northern Michigan University. Along with this, he has various certifications and training and 9 years of experience in law enforcement. He responded to a set of questions from the Board regarding community involvement, professional goals, recruitment, and training.

Officer Jesse Wernholm – Supervisor Bohjanen stated that this individual had sent an email and was not able to be at the meeting for the interview. He had thanked the Board for the opportunity. It was agreed by the Board members that his candidate would no longer be in the running.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting – Regular Meeting, May 13, 2024 and Special Meeting, May 21, 2024.
- B. Approve Revenue and Expenditure Reports – May 2024.
- C. Approve Bills Payable, Check Register Reports – May 9, 2024 (Check #'s 26836 – 26856, in the amount of \$12,283.29), May 22, 2024 (Check #'s 26857 – 26878, in the amount of \$34,333.12), and May 31, 2024 (Check #'s 26879 – 26888, in the amount of \$16,139.12).
- D. Approve Bills Payable, Tax Check Register Reports – May 31, 2024 (Check # 5080, in the amount of \$512.44).
- E. Approve Bills Payable – Regular Payroll of May 9, 2024 (Check #'s DD4175 – DD4213 and Check #'s 11514 – 11521, Federal, State, and MERS in the amount of \$52,336.89), and Regular Payroll of May 23, 2024 (Check #'s DD4214 – DD4236 and Check #'s 11522 – 11529, Federal, State, and MERS in the amount of \$49,588.60).

Rhein moved, Zyburt supported to approve the consent agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

#### SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Supervisor Bohjanen stated that an Assessing Assistant has been hired and has started training – Joshua Brandenburg.

#### CLERK'S REPORT

Clerk Engle stated that 887 Absentee Applications were sent out in May. Ballots will be going out the week of June 24. Early Voting will run from Saturday, July 27 through Sunday, August 4 from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Township Hall (Chocolay, Sands, Skandia, and West Branch Townships). Absentee ballots can be brought to Early Voting site or the precinct for voter to run through the tabulator. In the August primary, voters are not able to cross over between the parties – this will make the ballot invalid.

TREASURER'S REPORT – NONE.

PUBLIC HEARING – NONE

#### CONSIDER POLICE CHIEF POSITION

After completing application reviews, background checks, reference interviews, and the interview process, Zyburt moved, Lynch supported that the Chocolay Township Board offers the position of Chocolay Township Police Chief to Sergeant Anthony Carrick.

MOTION CARRIED

#### CONSIDER SALE OF SURPLUS ITEMS AWARDS

Clerk Engle asked to be recused from the vote on this item.

Rhein moved, Lynch supported to accept the recusal of Engle.  
MOTION CARRIED

Lynch moved, White supported that the Chocolay Township Board accept the highest bids received for each of the listed surplus items. All money collected from the auction shall go directly back to the recreation capital fund:

- 2005 John Deere X540 lawn tractor - \$200.00
- #1 Stihl FS 55R weed whip - \$5.00
- #2 Stihl FS 55R weed whip - \$5.00
- Scaffolding - \$150.00
- 7-foot slide - \$10.00
- Red half-moon climbers - \$10.00

MOTION CARRIED

CONSIDER AWARD FOR THE PURCHASE OF FIREHOSE REPLACEMENT FROM MDNR GRANT

As a note: this would be a partial reimbursement on a 100% purchase of \$8,576.52.

Zyburt moved, Rhein supported that the Chocolay Township Board authorize the Chocolay Township Fire Department to proceed with the bid for fire hose from Jefferson Fire Safety for the amount of \$8,576.52 to complete the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Fire Assistance 50 / 50 matching grant. The Township 50% fund match would be paid out of the Capital Improvement Fire Grant Capital Outlay Fund 401.341.957.

MOTION CARRIED

MANAGER UPDATE OF WORK PLAN AND CORPORATE STATUS.

Audit – the measure of a government is how they spend within the confines of budget and law. The Township has no major findings. Only finding is not having enough staff to do our financials. This year the plan is to prepare these for the audit for the first time. We are showing a net gain of over \$170,000 for 2023. Explained the Expected Revenues / Expected Expenses on page 11 – this discrepancy between revenues and expenses is due to the grant cycle. We are on a calendar fiscal year with the State and Federal governments having a different fiscal year. The Township has to list the revenue and expenditure in the budget when we are going out for a grant, but we may not find out about the grant until the following year.

Have released a lot of RFP's on projects for this year. The new bathroom facility at Beaver Grove project is near completion. We are also looking at dredging at the Marina – grant would be \$112,000 with up to three years to spend.

Bohjanen moved, Zyburt supported to recess until Mike Grentz, Anderson Tackman, arrives for audit presentation.

MOTION CARRIED

Recessed at 6:32 pm, reconvened at 6:47 PM.

PRESENTATIONS – FY 2023 AUDIT – ANDERSON, TACKMAN, & COMPANY, PLC

Mike Grentz from Anderson, Tackman and Company PLC presented the FY2023 audit. Grentz indicated that this was an unmodified opinion which means the Township complied with all the General Accepted Accounting Principles and that a sampling of transactions was done. The Statement of Activities shows change in net position of \$1.1 million – sewer fund added \$1 million, everything else added \$85,000. The \$1 million for the sewer fund can be misleading – there was a capital contribution of \$873,120 (KBIC had paid for a lift station at approximately \$750,000, which is our asset) and there was also a generator grant which will also become an asset. Because the money came from outside sources, it is showing as revenue. The Capital Improvement fund is showing an increase of \$154,000, which is mainly due to the timing on when things are coming through – mostly local source dollars, which are mainly KBIC 2% monies. The General Fund had a loss of just under \$10,000 – a good portion of this is Federal grant revenues. Grentz also explained the problems of dealing with grants and different fiscal years. The only comment was that Anderson Tackman assists in preparing the financial statements and footnotes, due to the Township not having adequate staffing and / or time to prepare all the information, which is something that is reported every year. Grentz feels that the Township staff is very close to being able to get rid of this comment.

Township Manager De Groot also stated that staff is planning on completing a rate analysis this year on the sewer fund to make sure that it is self-sufficient.

There was some discussion on defined contribution versus defined benefit plans. The Township is currently 93% funded. Being in a defined benefit plan, the net investment income fluctuates from year to year. De Groot indicated that this has been an annual discussion with MERS. Treasurer Zyburt stated that the biggest flaw he sees is the assumption of 7%, when the average is under 5%.

CONSIDER ACCEPTANCE OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2023 AUDIT FINDINGS

Zyburt moved, Rhein supported that the Chocolay Township Board accept the Annual Audit performed by Anderson, Tackman, & Company for Fiscal Year 2023 as presented fairly.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Rhein, White, Lynch, Zyburt, Engle, Bohjanen

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Symbal

MOTION CARRIED

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Don Rhein – None

Kendra Symbal – absent

Judy White – Commended the manager and staff for their hard work

Dave Lynch – Agreed with comment from White

Ben Zyburt – Based on the interviews with Carrick and Carter, he feels that going forward the Township should be looking at and pushing for a full-time position for a Detective.

Zyburt moved, Engle supported to look at a full-time Detective position for the 2025 Budget.

MOTION CARRIED

Max Engle – None

Richard Bohjanen - None

PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

Lynch moved, Rhein supported that the meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

#### INFORMATIONAL REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS.

- A. Minutes – Chocolay Township Planning Commission; Regular Meeting of May 20, 2024, Draft.
- B. Minutes – Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority, Special Meeting of May 6, 2024.
- C. Minutes – Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority; Regular Meeting of May 15, 2024, Draft.
- D. Minutes – US 41 Corridor Advisory Committee – Regular Meeting of May 14, 2024.
- E. Information – Chocolay Township Newsletter – May 2024

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Max Engle, Clerk

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Richard Bohjanen, Supervisor