

November 11, 2024

The Regular Meeting of the Chocolay Township Board was held on Monday, November 11, 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, David Lynch, Judy White, Don Rhein

ABSENT: Ben Zyburt (excused), Kendra Symbal

STAFF PRESENT: William De Groot, Suzanne Sundell

OTHER STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Tony Carrick, Nick Carter, Mason Mitchell, Jon LeGalley, Liz Norris-Harr, Linda Poole, Joe Neumann

APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

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

MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC COMMENT – NONE.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting – Regular Meeting, October 14, 2024.
- B. Approve Revenue and Expenditure Reports – October 2024.
- C. Approve Bills Payable, Check Register Reports – October 3, 2024 (Check #'s 27145 – 27163, in the amount of \$13,602.43), October 11, 2024 (Check #'s 27164 – 27179, in the amount of \$10,987.11), October 22, 2024 (Check #'s 27180 – 27202, in the amount of \$42,245.13), and October 31, 2024 (Check #'s 27203 – 27220, in the amount of \$13,716.24).
- D. Approve Bills Payable, Tax Check Register Reports – October 3, 2024 (Check #'s 5097 – 5099, in the amount of \$1,117,644.47), October 11, 2024 (Check #'s 5100 – 5102, in the amount of \$1,106,071.60), and October 22, 2024 (Check #'s 5103 – 5105, in the amount of \$28,805.50).
- E. Approve Bills Payable – Regular Payroll of October 10, 2024 (Check #'s DD4575 – DD4612 and Check #'s 11612 – 11619, with 11604 – 11611 Voided, Federal, State, and MERS in the amount of \$51,309.96), and Regular Payroll of October 24, 2024 (Check #'s DD4613 – DD4636 and Check #'s 11620 – 11627, Federal, State, and MERS in the amount of \$49,580.40).

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

MOTION CARRIED

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Supervisor Bohjanen thanked everyone for the diligent work they had done during the past term of office. This is his last meeting as supervisor.

CLERK'S REPORT

Clerk Engle reported on the November election – was a very busy at the beginning, with a steady stream of voters during the day. Total registered voters in Chocoley Township is 5,277, with 3,954 voting (combination of Early Voting, Absentee Ballots, and Election Day voters) for a 76% turnout.

TREASURER'S REPORT - NONE

PUBLIC HEARING – PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE FY 2025 BUDGET

Opened Public Hearing for input and questions at 5:34 pm – No discussion - Public Hearing closed at 5:35 pm.

PUBLIC HEARING – PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE TOWNSHIP RECREATION PLAN

Opened Public Hearing for input and questions at 5:36 pm. Supervisor Bohjanen stated that this was a very comprehensive plan which was written to satisfy the requirements of the State and use for grants. No discussion – Public Hearing closed at 5:38 pm.

PRESENTATIONS – LIFE SAVING AWARD – CHIEF TONY CARRICK AND SGT. NICK CARTER

Supervisor Bohjanen read the Letter of Commendation:

“On September 6th, 2024 at approximately 12:14 pm, Central Dispatch aired an AED incident occurring at 800 Mangum Rd. EMS and Fire were also dispatched. Sgt Carter and Chief Carrick responded and arrived on scene prior to EMS and Fire.

Upon arriving Sgt Carter found the victim was unresponsive lying on the couch. Chief Carrick and Sergeant Carter quickly checked vitals and determined that the victim was in cardiac arrest. Chief Carrick and Sergeant Carter moved the victim to the floor and Sergeant Carter initiated chest compressions. Chief Carrick prepared the AED, while relaying information to responding units. After the AED was activated and the first shock was administered Sergeant Carter continued chest compressions. A second shock was administered at which time Chief Carrick took over chest compressions and Sergeant Carter administered breaths. After several more rounds of CPR it was found that the victim regained a solid pulse. Chief Carrick assisted the victim by opening her airway and her breathing improved. Sergeant Carter and Chief Carrick continued to ensure her airway was clear and monitored vitals.

A short time later Chocoley Township Fire arrived on scene and assisted with the airway and help prepare for EMS's arrival. Once EMS arrived on scene CTFD, Chief Carrick and Sergeant Carter assisted in transporting the victim to the ambulance. Due to the quick response of all involved and our officers actions the victim lived. You are both valued members of this department. Your actions demonstrate the dedication and commitment you have to your profession and the citizens you serve.

It is my honor to present to you this Life Saving Award for your efforts and contribution.”

Awards were presented to both.

CONSIDER DELINQUENT SEWER PAYMENT TRANSFERRED TO WINTER TAX BILLING

Lynch moved, Rhein supported to accept the list of delinquent sewer charges and penalties as allowed in Ordinance 39, Division 6, 2.6.6 (B) (3) to be added to the Chocolay Township December tax roll.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: White, Rhein, Lynch, Engle, Bohjanen

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Zyburt, Symbal

MOTION CARRIED

CONSIDER THE TOWNSHIP RECREATION PLAN UPDATE

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF CHOCOLAY

2025-2029 RECREATION & NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION PLAN

For Board of Trustees of the Charter Township of Chocolay, Marquette County, Michigan

WHEREAS, the Charter Township of Chocolay has undertaken a planning process to determine the recreation and natural resource conservation needs and desires of its residents during a five-year period covering the years 2025 through 2029, and

WHEREAS, the Charter Township Chocolay began the process of developing a community recreation and natural resource conservation plan in accordance with the most recent guidelines developed by the Department of Natural Resources and made available to local communities, and

WHEREAS, residents of the Charter Township of Chocolay were provided with a well-advertised opportunity during the development of the draft plan to express opinions, ask questions and discuss all aspects of the recreation and natural resource conservation plan, and

WHEREAS, the public was given a well-advertised opportunity and reasonable accommodations to review the final draft plan for a period of at least 30 days for plan, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on November 11, 2024, at the Chocolay Township Fire Hall to provide an opportunity for all residents of the planning area to express opinions, ask questions and discuss all aspects of the 2025-2029 Recreation and Natural

Resource Conservation Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Charter Township of Chocolay has developed the plan as a guideline for improving recreation and enhancing natural resource conservation for the Charter Township of Chocolay, and

WHEREAS, after the public hearing, the Charter Township of Chocolay voted to adopt said 2025-2029 Recreation & Natural Resource Conservation Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Charter Township of Chocolay hereby adopts the 2025-2029 Recreation & Natural Resource Conservation Plan.

Yeas: White, Rhein, Lynch, Engle, Bohjanen Nays: None Absent: Zyburt, Symbal

I, Max Engle, Township Clerk, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and original copy of a resolution adopted by the Charter Township of Chocolay at a Regular Meeting thereof held on the 11th day of November, 2024.

Kudos were given to staff for preparing the document.

MANAGER RECRUITMENT UPDATE

Chet Janik, Michigan Leadership Institute (MLI) joined the meeting. Mr. Janik is the consultant that has been hired to conduct the Manager Recruitment. Janik reported that job was posted the week of October 28. As of this morning, there are 15 applicants, with 10 of those being from the Upper Peninsula. He feels he has some very qualified candidates. The deadline for applications is November 27. The morning of the 28th, Janik will scan all the applications and will be sending those out to the Board.

A committee will be set up to review the applicants. As of now, the committee will consist of Bohjanen and Lynch. This review will take place on December 2 at 2:00 pm. Supervisor Bohjanen asked about adding another member to this committee, and if so, should it be another person from the Board or someone from staff. After discussion, the Board agreed that there should be 2 from the Board, and one from staff.

Rhein moved, Lynch supported that the committee consist of two members from the Board and one person from staff to go through the preliminary applications.

MOTION CARRIED

Discussion by Board and Mr. Janik on timeline to be established – possibly interviewing 4-6 applicants.

Timeline established:

November 27 – Deadline for applications to be received

November 28 – Chet will email all applications to the entire Board

December 2 @ 2:00 pm – Hiring Committee will meet consisting of two Board members (Doc and David) and one staff member (?)

December 2 @ 5:30 pm – **Special Meeting** of full Board to go over committee recommendations on who to interview

December 9 @ 5:30 pm – **Regular Board meeting** – no interview will be conducted at this meeting as there is already a full agenda (Budget Resolution, Appointments, etc.)

December 11 @ 5:30 pm – **Special Meeting** for first set of interviews

December 12 @ 5:30 pm – **Special Meeting** for second set of interviews (if needed).

Motion:

Lynch moved, Rhein supported that the Township Board hold a Special Meeting on December 2nd at 5:30 pm to screen the candidates for interviews to occur at a Special Meeting on December 11th at 5:30 pm and, if need be, December 12th at 5:30 pm.

MOTION CARRIED

DISCUSSION OF CLERK’S SALARY REQUEST

Clerk Engle brought forward his request for an increase in salary. Engle voiced his concern on possibly losing his administrative assistant – partly due to the extra workload being placed on the Clerk’s department by changes in laws for elections. Supervisor Bohjanen acknowledged that the election requirements have increased, along with FOIA requirements, but wondered if doubling the salary over the next four years was appropriate. Lynch indicated he had done some research, and indicated the numbers were all over the board. He felt there needs to be a study on what other jurisdictions in the area are paying their Board members. Rhein agreed that a study needs to be done, and that he cannot support doubling the salary at this time. Lynch did not feel they should be singling out one position.

Engle stated he would not be able to put in more hours without getting rid of his second job. He may not be here as much during an off year, but during elections there would be considerably more time in the office.

Bohjanen asked if there was an estimate on the hours he was working, as compared to what he is putting in during an election. Engle stated that his normal work schedule approximately 3 hours per day, and now he is putting in 5 – 6 hours per day, especially during elections. Feels that even with the extra hours, there is still a strain being put on his staff.

Bohjanen asked if Engle would be doubling hours with an increase in salary. Engle stated during elections he would, and the only other option would be to hire part-time help during the election which requires training.

Bohjanen then asked about FOIA, as it is his understanding that this is not a statutory duty of the Clerk. Could this be assigned to someone else? Possibly the manager.

Township Manager De Groot stated that the amount is currently being accounted for in the draft budget but reminded the Board that this a Board decision.

Lynch felt this would be hard to justify to constituents without having some type of study done. If switching the FOIA to the new manager, this would relieve the clerk of some of the extra duties.

Lynch moved, Rhein supported to move the FOIA requirements from the office of Clerk to the office of Manager.

MOTION CARRIED

Bohjanen also discussed the subject of parity within the offices of Clerk, Treasurer, and Supervisor and salaries were adjusted.

Bohjanen moved, Rhein supported to proceed with the gathering of data to make a decision at a later time.

Clerk Engle asked to abstain from this motion.

Ayes: 4

Abstain: 1 (Engle)

MOTION CARRIED

DISCUSSION OF FY 2025 FINAL BUDGET

Manager De Groot indicated that this is the last budget he will be providing. The process has changed over the last four years. De Groot challenges the Board and the new Manager to look at a four year design and a yearly design.

De Groot stated is has been an honor working with the Board. Many great things have been done for the community.

The draft of the budget is a status quo budget. The equity across officers will be changed for the motions for December. Resolutions will be prepared for December 9th meeting.

CONSIDER SCADA – SEWER MONITORING CONTRACT

Lynch moved, Rhein supported that the Chocolay Township Board approves staff recommendation to sign the contract with FDS Engineering & Electrical Services and to include the funding in the

sewer fund under professional services. The allocation of money for 2025 would be \$16,000.00 and \$3,000.00, for a total of \$19,000.00 for the years 2026 through 2030.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: White, Rhein, Lynch, Engle, Bohjanen

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Zyburt, Symbal

MOTION CARRIED

CONSIDER RENTAL FEE REFUND OF TOWNSHIP PAVILLION RENTAL

Rhein moved, Engle supported that the Chocolay Township Board approves staff recommendation and reimburse the \$50.00 rental fee to the resident.

MOTION CARRIED

MANAGER UPDATE OF WORK PLAN AND CORPORATE STATUS

Manager De Groot stated that he will coordinate with legal to move FOIA from the Clerk to the Manager. Resolutions for the 2025 Budget will be prepared for the December meeting.

De Groot thanked the Board for the opportunity to work with the Township for the past 5 years.

Work plan is coming to a close. Staff is now working on closing out the year, preparing budget amendments, and preparing for the audit.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Don Rhein – thanked White for her service for the last 12 years – she was an inspiration and he enjoyed working with her. Also, thanked any Veterans for their service.

Kendra Symbal – absent

Judy White – indicated this was her last meeting. It has been very educational and rewarding serving her constituents for the last 12 years.

Dave Lynch – echoed Rhein’s sentiments – she will be missed on the Board.

Ben Zyburt – absent

Max Engle – thanked White

Richard Bohjanen – thanked White.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

Rhein moved, Lynch supported that the meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS.

- A. Minutes – Chocolay Township Planning Commission; Regular Meeting of September 16, 2024, Draft.
- B. Minutes – Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority; Regular Meeting of October 16, 2024.
- C. Minutes – Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority; Special Meeting of October 21, 2024.
- D. Minutes – Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority; Special Meeting of October 30, 2024, Draft.
- E. Information – Chocolay Township Newsletter – October 2024.
- F. Information – 2024 Toys for Tots.
- G. Correspondence – D. Mulcahey, 633 Lakewood Lane
- H. Correspondence – D. Mulcahey, 633 Lakewood Lane

Max Engle, Clerk

Richard Bohjanen, Supervisor