

JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP
24725 Jefferson Center Street
Cassopolis, MI 49031

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
November 9, 2023

Call to Order & Roll Call: Supervisor Hass called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Present: Brunner, Bundle, Gillam, Hass, Mendenhall

Additional attendees: Aaron Mendenhall, Ryan Cook, Dallas Austin, Jeff Locke, Mark Howie, Mary Howie, Gerry Bundle

Pledge to the flag: led by Supervisor Hass

Correspondence: None

Public Comment: Jeff Locke shared concerns that the Gemstone Solar Project has not begun construction. He wanted to know what the next steps were and if they were to be granted any further extensions. The board shared that no further extensions of the site plan or SLUP were to be granted and then turned the floor over to Aaron Mendenhall to explain where they are in the process. Aaron Mendenhall and Ryan Cook representing Clenera explained they had met with building inspector, Wayne Hardin and electrical inspector, Ron Bellaire earlier in the day to review their proposed Phase I demo of buildings and re-model of existing home on the Roseland Organic property that will serve as headquarters for the Gemstone Solar Project in Jefferson Township. They plan to start in December once granted a building permit. Once the building permit is granted and work continues, the site plan and SLUP remain active.

Approval of Agenda: Brunner moved, seconded by Mendenhall to add agenda item regarding the Gemstone Solar Decommissioning Bond. Motion approved. Hass moved, seconded by Brunner to add agenda item to consider Gemstone PA 116 approvals for the Roseland Organic and Boyd properties. Motion approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Gillam moved, seconded by Hass to approve the October 12, 2023, BOT meeting minutes. Motion approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Mendenhall presented reports. Brunner moved, seconded by Bundle to approve the treasurer's reports. Motion approved unanimously.

Payment of Bills: Brunner presented payment of bills from the General Fund. Mendenhall moved, seconded by Hass to approve the payment of bills. Motion approved unanimously.

Old Business: None

New Business:

1. The board discussed the appointment of applicant Dallas Austin to the Board of Review. He was the only resident to apply and is very interested in getting involved in local government by serving on the Board of Review. The board discussed his email outlining his qualifications and interest. Moved by Hass, seconded by Bundle to appoint Dallas Austin to the Board of Review. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Brunner presented the PA 116 application forms for the Roseland Organic Farm property and the Boyd property. These forms need township approval to move on to the state for final consideration. Brunner asked attorney Senica to review the application forms and contact the state to verify all requirements were met at the local level. She verified that everything was in order. Moved by Hass, seconded by Brunner to approve and sign off on the PA 116 applications. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Consideration of approval of Gemstone Decommissioning Bond. Aaron Mendenhall explained that the state requires a decommissioning bond for the land included in the Rural Properties Program. That comprises about 40% of the solar project. Based on estimated decommissioning costs, they would be taking out a bond for approximately \$926,000 for the township. As the project has not been completed, attorney Senica felt it would be appropriate for the township to approve this bond. The township is authorized by the zoning ordinance to reassess the bond every 3 years. Moved by Brunner, seconded by Mendenhall to approve the bond. Motion passed unanimously.

Inspectors Reports:

1. **Zoning/Code Enforcement:** Steve Allen, code enforcement officer, submitted his monthly report.
2. **Building:** No report submitted.
3. **Plumbing/Mechanical:** No report submitted.
4. **Electrical:** No report submitted.

Emergency Services/Utilities Reports:

1. **Cass Ambulance:** Next meeting is scheduled for December 4, 2023, at 5:30 pm at the Wayne Township Hall
2. **Central Cass Fire Department:** Chief Locke asked if it is possible for the board to consider implementing a leaf burning ban around Diamond Lake. The fire department has received a high volume of calls complaining of burning leaves. The board will see what action can be taken.
3. **Edwardsburg Fire Department:** No report
4. **CAUA:** No report

Township Board Reports:

1. **Planning & Zoning Commission:** All revisions have been approved by the Commission. The next meeting will be a public hearing for the new Zoning Ordinance to be held January 17, 2024.
2. **Zoning Board of Appeals:** No business.
3. **Construction Board of Appeals:** No business.

Public Comment:

Next regular Board of Trustees meeting: December 14, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

With no other business before the Board at 7:00 p.m. Moved by Brunner, supported by Bundle to adjourn. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Brunner, Clerk

APPROVED