

MEMBERS PRESENT: CRAWFORD, OPRITA, BUECHLER, BRADLEY, KISH, BRUCKNER AND MONTGOMERY  
 MEMBERS ABSENT: NONE  
 ALSO PRESENT: CAPTAIN KING, ST. CLAIR COUNTY SHERIFFS DEPARTMENT  
 PAT SMITH, FIRE CHIEF  
 LISA SHAGENA, ASSESSOR  
 PATTY BUNDY, UTILITY BILLING CLERK  
 SHARON WILTON, ZONING ADMINISTRATOR / COMMUNITY EVENTS COORDINATOR

7:00 P.M. - SUPERVISOR OPENS PUBLIC HEARING TO REVIEW AND HEAR CITIZEN COMMENTS, QUESTIONS AND/OR OBJECTIONS TO THE TOWNSHIP-AT-LARGE HIGHWAY LIGHTING AND INDIVIDUAL LIGHTING ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS; AND VELMA DRIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT; AND 2020 SPECIAL ASSESSMENT FOR FIRE PROTECTION; AND 2020 FIRE DEPARTMENT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT VOTED MILLAGE LEVY; AND 2020 POLICE PROTECTION VOTED MILLAGE LEVY; AND 2021 RESIDENTIAL SOLID WASTE/YARD WASTE AND BI-WEEKLY CURBSIDE RECYCLING COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL SERVICES; and continued with the Regular Agenda, at this time.

Motion by Kish, seconded by Bruckner, to approve the Minutes of the **REGULAR MEETING** of October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020, as printed and posted. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED.**

**CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD:** \* NONE

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Crawford, seconded by Oprita, to approve the Agenda, with the addition of Item #2, NEW BUSINESS: Proposal to replace office copier. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED. AGENDA APPROVED, AS AMENDED.**

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

GENERAL FUND	\$ 1,824,231.98
FIRE DEPARTMENT FUND	\$ 750,323.17
FIRE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND	\$ 278,949.68
POLICE PROTECTION FUND	\$ 492,932.62
TRASH / RECYCLING FUND	\$ 157,100.75
BUILDING DEPARTMENT FUND	\$ 38,630.34
UTILITY RECEIVING FUND	\$ 1,535,191.66
TOTAL	\$ 5,077,360.20
MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS	\$ 1,440,853.70
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 6,518,213.90

Motion by Bradley, seconded by Buechler, to receive the Treasurer's Report, as given. Roll Call Vote, 7/0. **MOTION PASSED. TOTAL TREASURER'S REPORT APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 6,518,213.90.**

**BILLS PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL:**

GENERAL FUND	\$ 21,408.64
FIRE DEPARTMENT FUND	\$ 2,066.99
FIRE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND	\$ 0.00
POLICE PROTECTION FUND	\$ 75,752.41
TRASH / RECYCLING FUND	\$ 750.00
BUILDING DEPARTMENT FUND	\$ 0.00
UTILITY RECEIVING FUND	\$ 19,999.88
TOTAL	\$ 119,977.92
MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS (PARKS MILLAGE)	\$ 750.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 120,727.92

Motion by Bruckner, seconded by Kish, to pay bills, as presented. Roll Call Vote, 7/0. **MOTION PASSED. BILLS APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 120,727.92.**

\* According to Section 6 of the Charter Township of Fort Gratiot By-Laws adopted 02/20/2003.

**SHERIFF DEPARTMENT REPORT:** Given by representative of Sheriff Department: Captain King

Total Calls for Service for the month of August, 2020, (342). Number of Patrol Hours, (1080). 4 Animal Complaint; 1 Assault & Battery; 24 Assist Other Depts.; 59 Assist Public; 27 B&E/Alarm; 11 Disorderly Persons; 10 Domestic Assault; 7 Fraud; 6 Harassment & Threats; 5 Juvenile Matter; 7 Larceny; 1 MDOP; 5 PI Traffic Crash; 29 PD Traffic Crash; 21 Retail Fraud; 4 Sex Offense; 2 Stolen Vehicle; 49 Suspicious Incidents; 66 Misc.: School Checks/Warrant Arrests/Follow-up/BOL, 911 Hang-ups, etc.; 119 Traffic Stops; 20 Tickets Issued.

**CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE SHERIFF:** \* Mr. Marlar regarding speeding on N. River Road between Wooded Twiggs and the EMS Station.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT:** WILL BE LISTED ON THE NOVEMBER AGENDA.

**BUILDING DEPARTMENT REPORT:** Total permits issued for the month of September, 2020, (36). 1 New Home (Val. 200,000); 12 Residential Addition/Alteration/Repair (Val. 120,175); 6 Residential Accessory Structure (Val. 89,786); 5 Fence (Val. 8,400); 1 Pool (Val. 38,000); 1 AG Zoning Compliance (Val. 1,200); 1 New Commercial Structure (Val. 5,300,000); 2 Commercial Addition/Alteration/Repair (Val. 1,600,000); 1 Sign (Val. 28,485). Total Valuation, \$ 7,418,046.00. Total Fees, \$ 29,551.00.

**PLUMBING/MECHANICAL INSPECTOR'S REPORT:** Total permits issued for the month of September, 2020, (16). 12 Mechanical (2,634.50); 4 Plumbing (1,856.00). Total Fees, \$ 4,490.50.

**ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT REPORT:** Total permits issued for the month of September, 2020, (13). Total Fees, \$ 6,669.00.

**ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER REPORT:** Total complaints in the month of September, 2020, (13). 3 Blight; 1 High Grass/Noxious Weeds; 1 RV Storage/Parking; 7 Misc. Ord. Violations.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** NONE

Motion by Kish, seconded by Buechler, to accept Reports, as presented. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED.**

**PUBLIC HEARING(S), CONTINUED:**

1. PROPOSED 2020 TOWNSHIP-AT-LARGE HIGHWAY LIGHTING ASSESSMENT DISTRICT; AND INDIVIDUAL LIGHTING ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS, AS FOLLOWS:

Township-at-Large Highway Lighting	\$	65,983.60
Angus Road	\$	1,546.20
Bardamar Drive	\$	2,168.88
Connie Lane	\$	927.72
Connie Woods Condominium Subdivision	\$	1,549.20
Fairway Drive	\$	5,566.32
Grace Road	\$	1,236.96
Grant Avenue	\$	1,236.96
Greenview Circle	\$	3,718.08
Hidden Forrest Subdivision Phase I	\$	1,549.20
Janice Avenue	\$	2,788.56
Lake Huron Manor Subdivision (Maplewood, Elmwood & Manor)	\$	4,020.12
Lakeshore Terrace	\$	2,403.05
Lomar Drive	\$	1,855.44
Milton Road	\$	927.72
Old Farm Subdivision	\$	106,691.21
Parker Road	\$	618.48
Pollina Avenue	\$	927.72
Shoreview Subdivision (Shoreview Dr., N. Shoreview Dr., S. Shoreview Dr. & San Juan Dr., between N. & S. Shoreview Dr.)	\$	2,109.60
Simpson Road	\$	1,178.90
Spartan Drive	\$	4,337.76
Stoney Creek I	\$	2,788.56
Stoney Creek II	\$	2,478.72
Stoney Creek III	\$	2,788.56
Stoney Creek IV	\$	5,577.12
Stoney Creek V	\$	2,478.72
Stoney Creek VI	\$	2,788.56
Teeple Avenue	\$	618.48
Watson Drive	\$	421.92
Whitney Place	\$	16,472.88
TOTAL	\$	249,755.20

**PUBLIC HEARING(S), ITEM #1, CONTINUED:**

Citizens were asked for comments, questions and or objections, at this time. Not one was heard.

Motion by Bradley, seconded by Bruckner, to close the Public Hearing to review and hear citizen comments, questions and/or objections to the Proposed 2020 Township-at-Large Highway Lighting Assessment District; and Individual Lighting Assessment Districts, as noted. Time, 7:41 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED. PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.**

Motion by Kish, seconded by Oprita, to accept the cost estimates provided; and adopt the 2020 Resolution Confirming Lighting Assessment Districts and Special Assessment Roll (2020-010) for the Township-at-Large Highway Lighting (\$65,983.60); and Individual Lighting Assessment Districts, as noted above, totaling \$250,338.71. Roll Call Vote, 7/0. **MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION (2020-010), ADOPTED.**

**2. VELMA DRIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT:**

**GRADE 3 TIMES / APPLY 2 APPLICATIONS (1,000 GAL.) CHLORIDE**

	WITHOUT GRAVEL	
PRINCIPAL AMOUNT	20.00	PER PARCEL
INTEREST AMOUNT (2%)	0.40	
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE	20.40	BILLED ON WINTER TAX NOTICE (12/01/2020)

Total Assessment of \$500.00 divided equally between 25 parcels at a rate of two (2%) percent interest.

Citizens were asked for comments, questions and/or objections, at this time. Not one was heard.

Motion by Bradley, seconded by Bruckner, to close the Public Hearing to review and hear citizen comments, questions and/or objections to the Proposed 2021 Velma Drive Annual Maintenance Special Assessment. Time, 7:14 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED. PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.**

**BOARD DISCUSSION: \***

Motion by Kish, seconded by Buechler, to accept the cost estimates provided; and adopt the Resolution Confirming THE 2021 Velma Drive Annual Maintenance Special Assessment Roll (2020-011), totaling \$500.00; or (\$20.40 per parcel, including interest). Roll Call Vote, 7/0. **MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION (2020-011), ADOPTED.**

**3. 2020 SPECIAL ASSESSMENT RATE FOR FIRE PROTECTION:**

2020 RATE PER \$1,000 T.V.	TOTAL TAXABLE VALUATION (REAL PROPERTY ONLY)	TOTAL
2.0580	418,367,047	860,999.38

Chief Smith stated they have been trying to get the Department to a 24 hour Department. In order to do that, the Special Assessment would need to be increased. In working the 2021 Budget, the Department plans to bring on another Full-Time employee but, with the proposed assessment rate, the Department won't be able to accomplish that if the Department runs the same amount of calls as 2020. The Chief and Department Officers have put together a three (3) year plan to attempt to increase full-time employment and to start running 24 hour coverage. In order to do that, the Fire Department would have to ask for a ten (10%) percent increase in the Special Assessment, for the next two (2) years, in order to cover those costs. Unfortunately, approval of Special Assessments comes before the Budget discussions and there hasn't been a chance to discuss this. It is his opinion that the Fire Protection Special Assessment rate should be 2.2638 mills per \$1,000/TV. It is the most the Special Assessment can be increased per year. With the increase, the Department wouldn't have to reach into Fund Balance and, within three (3) years, should be able to get the Department to 24 hour staff, without having to change any of their operating expenditures.

Trustee Kish asked how many full time employees they will have, total, by adding one more?

Chief Smith stated they would need two (2) full-time employees, over a period of two (2) years, giving the Department enough full-time employees to allow the Department to operate 24 hours.

**PUBLIC HEARING(S), ITEM #3, CONTINUED:**

Chief Smith explained ISO ratings, noting that response times, at night, are slower. During the day, when the hall is manned, they can be out of the hall in less than 1 to 1½ minutes and on scene within 4 minutes; when the hall isn't manned, at night, response time jumps to 4½ minutes to get out of the hall and 8½ minutes to get on scene. By lowering the response times, the ISO ratings will increase and the Township's insurance rates should be lower.

Trustee Kish asked about charging for emergency response calls on people who do not reside in the Township.

Chief Smith explained the pros and cons of charging out of Township residents. He stated the rate wasn't increased last year, instead using Fund Balance to cover costs. Raising the Special Assessment gives the funds needed to improve the Department.

Trustee Montgomery asked how many employees would be hired.

Chief Smith stated that the increase would allow to hire one (1) full-time employee this year; then raising another ten (10%) percent next year a second full-time employee could be hired and, then, they can look at running a 24 hour Department. He is looking at a three (3) year plan. Trying to lower response times and increase ISO ratings at the same time.

Trustee Montgomery asked if it would be possible to hire two (2) full-time employees, using Fund Balance, knowing that an increase next year would cover those costs. Chief Smith replied, it's a possibility.

Trustee Montgomery asked where the Fire Department ranks as far as calls for service in the County.

Chief Smith stated that Fort Gratiot and Marysville are within a hundred runs of each other; just over 1500 runs per year. The only Fire Department busier than Fort Gratiot is the City of Port Huron. Marysville is staffed 24 hours, as is the City of Port Huron. Port Huron Township is staffed 24 hours and their call volume is 865 for the year. Fort Gratiot's calls for service continue to rise; and as we are getting new apartment complexes (PACE, Lake Huron Woods) is going to increase call volume.

Trustee Kish asked if the City of Marysville Fire Department is also funded by a Special Assessment.

Marysville is a City, so most of their funding comes from the General Fund. Fort Gratiot Fire Department isn't funded, at all, from the General Fund. The operation is funded through the Special Assessment; and voters approved the Fire Department Capital Improvement Millage.

Trustee Kish asked how many mills the Township levies as a Charter Township. We could look at increasing this millage levy as an option also.

Chief Smith stated the Fire Department has applied for the Assistance to the Fire Fighter Grant; the Department has been turned down every year.

Trustee Montgomery noted the response times being quicker from 7 am-11 pm, staffing and response time is significantly quicker than 11 pm-7 am. Taxpayers don't get to choose a time they may have a heart attack, house fire or an accident. Responding at night, responders must get out of bed, get dressed and drive to the hall before getting in the truck to go.

Chief Smith agreed, stating the structure fire call today came in with "flames showing". Staff was out of the hall within one (1) minute and on scene within three (3) minutes. That fire was stopped at the front porch. At night, the fire would have burned for another 3-5 minutes and would have been up in a child's bedroom. The Department wants to eliminate slower response times. Additionally, call volume creates the need to look at manning the hall 24 hours.

Trustee Bruckner asked about percentage breakdowns for calls the Department gets.

Chief Smith stated: 78% medical calls; the rest are spread over personal injury accidents, fire or anything that isn't considered a medical call. Unfortunately, we have to act on Special Assessments before budget talks and he has his budget worked out but it includes adding another full-time employee.

**PUBLIC HEARING(S), ITEM #3, CONTINUED:**

Citizens were asked for comments, questions and or objections, at this time. Not one was heard.

Motion by Kish, seconded by Bradley, to close the Public Hearing to review and hear citizen comments, questions and/or objections to the Proposed 2020 Special Assessment for Fire Protection.

Time, 7:31 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED. PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.**

BOARD DISCUSSION: \* Because a higher amount is being requested, the Public Hearing will have to be rescheduled and republished.

The Public Hearing for the Proposed 2020 Special Assessment for Fire Protection will be rescheduled in November, depending on publication requirements.

**4. 2020 FIRE DEPARTMENT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT VOTED MILLAGE LEVY:**

2020 RATE PER \$1,000 T.V.	TOTAL TAXABLE VALUATION (REAL & PERSONAL PROPERTY)	TOTAL
0.5971	446,254,206	266,458.38

Citizens were asked for comments, questions and or objections, at this time. Not one was heard.

Motion by Buechler, seconded by Oprita, to close the Public Hearing to review and hear citizen comments, questions and/or objections to the Proposed 2020 Fire Capital Improvement Voted Millage Levy.

Time, 7:37 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED. PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.**

BOARD DISCUSSION: \* New truck ordered and to be delivered in September 2021  
 \* Levied rate was .60000 in 2019; Due to Headlee the rate is 0.5971

Motion by Buechler, seconded by Kish, to approve the 2020 Millage Rate (after Headlee Rollback), of 0.5971 for Fire Department Capital Improvement Voted Millage Levy, to be assessed against all Real and Personal Properties within the Fort Gratiot Charter Township; and adopt the 2020 Resolution Confirming 2020 Fire Department Capital Improvement Voted Millage Levy (2020-013). Roll Call Vote, 7/0. **MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION (2020-013), ADOPTED.**

**5. 2020 POLICE PROTECTION VOTED MILLAGE:**

2020 RATE PER \$1,000 TAXABLE	TOTAL TAXABLE VALUATION (REAL & PERSONAL PROPERTY)	TOTAL
2.0000	446,254,206	892,508.41

Supervisor Crawford noted this is the same rate levied in 2019 and asked for citizen comments, questions and or objections, at this time. Not one was heard.

Motion by Bradley, seconded by Buechler, to close the Public Hearing to review and hear citizen comments, questions and/or objections to the Proposed 2020 Police Protection Voted Millage Levy. Time, 7:39 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED. PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.**

Motion by Kish, seconded by Bruckner, to approve the 2020 Millage Rate (after Headlee Rollback), of 2.0000 for Police Protection Voted Millage Levy, to be assessed against all Real and Personal Properties within the Fort Gratiot Charter Township; and adopt the 2020 Resolution Confirming the Police Protection Voted Millage Levy (2020-014). Roll Call Vote, 7/0. **MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION (2020-014), ADOPTED.**

**PUBLIC HEARING(S), CONTINUED:**

6. SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT FOR RESIDENTIAL SOLID WASTE/YARD WASTE AND CURBSIDE RECYCLING COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL AT A RATE OF \$188.00 PER UNIT:

Supervisor Crawford indicated that his includes an \$8.00 increase over 2019, due to increased disposal costs at the landfill and asked for citizen comments, questions and or objections, at this time.

Lisa Shagena stated she feels it's a great deal. She talks with people who don't receive this service and have to contract on their own. They don't get weekly recycling or yard waste. They pay a heck of a lot more than we pay.

Motion by Kish, seconded by Bruckner, to close the Public Hearing to review and hear citizen comments, questions and/or objections to the Proposed 2020 Special Assessment District for Residential Solid Waste/Yard Waste and Curbside Recycling Collection and Disposal. Time, 7:41 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED.**  
**PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.**

BOARD DISCUSSION: \* Trustee Kish asked if a tonnage record is kept on recycling. He's curious if more of the general public is taking advantage of the service.  
\* Trustee Montgomery noted that if recycling were thrown in the trash, it's cheaper than it is to recycle it.  
\* Supervisor Crawford noted the difficulty of getting rid of recycling. Due to oil prices, it's cheaper to make new plastic than it is to convert old plastic back to new. He did note that the recycling truck has been running behind, due to the volume of recycling materials put out.  
\* Previous complaints that recycling was being thrown into the garbage truck.  
\* Fixed contract rate by Marcotte for recycling; trash varies based on the amount of trash going into the landfill; fuel charge varies based on cost of fuel.

Motion by Montgomery, seconded by Bradley, to approve the 2020 Special Assessment for Residential Solid Waste / Yard Waste and Curbside Recycling Collection and Disposal at a rate of \$188.00 per unit; and adopt the 2020 Resolution Confirming the 2020 Residential Solid Waste/Yard Waste and Bi-Weekly Curbside Recycling Collection and Disposal Services Special Assessment Roll (2020-015). Roll Call Vote, 7/0. **MOTION PASSED.**  
**RESOLUTION (2020-015), ADOPTED.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** NONE

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Motion by Crawford, seconded by Bradley, to authorize the Clerk to pay Election Inspectors and Chairpersons \$50.00 each Hazard Pay for the November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 General Election.

POINTS OF DISCUSSION: \* Clerk Buechler applied for a \$5,000 Center for Technology and Civic Life (CTCL) Grant, a non-profit. The funds are to be used for elections. Also have funds available in the Elections Budget.  
\* Hazards of people working in close proximity with other people.  
\* Approximately 41 election workers. Funds will also be used to cover costs of PPE.  
\* Other municipalities have bumped up election pay with additional hazard pay.

Roll Call Vote, 7/0. **MOTION PASSED.**

2. Motion by Oprita, seconded by Montgomery, to accept the Proposal to replace the existing office copier with a Toshiba e-STUDIO 5015AC Model, at the same cost and lease terms of the existing copier (\$259.00/Month).

POINTS OF DISCUSSION: \* Replaces current copier with a new copier under the same terms and costs as our current Lease Agreement. Current copier has done over a half a million copies and we are beginning to have more service issues.

Roll Call Vote, 7/0. **MOTION PASSED.**

**BOARD DISCUSSION:**

- Lakeshore Woods Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Monday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Paperwork was filed for Coronavirus Local Government Grant Program and \$10,188 was received at the end of August. This covers COVID expenses and a report had to be filed showing those expenses, prior to the end of September. Additional cleanings throughout the end of the year will probably use up remaining funds. Funds must be spent by the end of December; remaining funds must be returned to the State in January.
- Cleaning process being used on a daily basis.
- 2021 Budget.
- Water Meter Replacements and Meter Reader installation update.
- Replacement of Ordinance Enforcement Officer. Currently, complaints are being handled in-house.
- Cleaning and power washing of the outside of the Municipal Center.

**CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD:** NONE

Motion by Kish, seconded by Buechler, to adjourn. Time, 8:05 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED.**  
**MEETING ADJOURNED.**



ROBERT D. BUECHLER, CLERK  
FORT GRATIOT CHARTER TOWNSHIP

ROBERT C. CRAWFORD, SUPERVISOR  
FORT GRATIOT CHARTER TOWNSHIP

RDB/RCC/vo