

MEMBERS PRESENT: CRAWFORD, WELLS, BUECHLER, BRADLEY, KISH AND BRUCKNER  
 MEMBERS ABSENT: ARMBRUSTER  
 ALSO PRESENT: CAPTAIN, TRAVIS WOOLMAN, FIRE DEPARTMENT  
 ROB MONTGOMERY, ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS / PARKS COMMISSION  
 CONNIE NEESE, PARKS COMMISSION  
 PETE IRLAND, PARKS COMMISSION  
 PATTI BUNDY, UTILITY BILLING CLERK / ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

7:00 P.M. - SUPERVISOR OPENED PUBLIC HEARING TO REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON:  
 THE TOWNSHIP-AT-LARGE  
 HIGHWAY LIGHTING AND INDIVIDUAL LIGHTING ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS; AND  
 VELMA DRIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT; AND  
 2023 SPECIAL ASSESSMENT FOR FIRE PROTECTION; AND  
 2023 FIRE DEPARTMENT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT VOTED MILLAGE LEVY; AND  
 2023 POLICE PROTECTION VOTED MILLAGE LEVY; AND  
 2024 RESIDENTIAL SOLID WASTE/YARD WASTE AND CURBSIDE RECYCLING COLLECTION AND  
 DISPOSAL SERVICES; and proceeded with the Regular Agenda, at this time:

Motion by Kish, seconded by Bruckner, to approve the Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING of October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, as printed and posted. Vote, Unanimous. MOTION PASSED.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD: \*

Rob Montgomery re: Parks Commission approval for 20x32 Pavilion at Parker Road Pickleball Courts and new signage for Township Parks; and late fees paid by the Township.

Sandra Richardson re: Proposed Solar Project and its impact on our Township Parks and community.

Austin Richardson re: Proposed Solar Project and importance of community awareness/communication.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion by Bradley, seconded by Buechler, to approve the Agenda, as printed and posted. Vote, Unanimous. MOTION PASSED.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

GENERAL FUND	\$ 2,015,370.77
FIRE DEPARTMENT FUND	\$ 1,289,452.92
FIRE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND	\$ 185,015.42
POLICE PROTECTION FUND	\$ 470,418.66
TRASH / RECYCLING FUND	\$ 306,011.77
BUILDING DEPARTMENT FUND	\$ 117,135.62
UTILITY RECEIVING FUND	\$ 2,455,394.95
TOTAL	\$ 6,838,800.11
MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS	\$ 918,228.22
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 7,757,028.33

Motion by Buechler, seconded by Bruckner, to receive the Treasurer's Report, as given. Roll Call Vote, 6/0. MOTION PASSED. TOTAL TREASURER'S REPORT APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 7,757,028.33.

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

**BILLS PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL:**

GENERAL FUND	\$	31,566.50
FIRE DEPARTMENT FUND	\$	8,355.47
FIRE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND	\$	0.00
POLICE PROTECTION FUND	\$	84,423.20
TRASH / RECYCLING FUND	\$	62,902.00
BUILDING DEPARTMENT FUND	\$	0.00
UTILITY RECEIVING FUND	\$	12,737.84
TOTAL	\$	199,985.01
MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS (MAINT. & IMP.)	\$	3,500.00
(BRACE/TICE BOND DEBT)	\$	575.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$	204,060.01

Motion by Bradley, seconded by Wells, to pay bills, as presented. Roll Call Vote, 6/0. **MOTION PASSED.**  
**BILLS APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 204,060.01.**

**SHERIFF DEPARTMENT REPORT:** Given by representative of Sheriff Department: Lieutenant George Maschke

Total Calls for Service for the month of September, 2023, (592). Number of Patrol Hours, (1080). 18 Animal Complaint; 1 Assault & Battery; 38 Assist Other Depts.; 225 Assist Public; 33 B&E/Alarm; 1 B&E Building/Vehicle; 2 Child Abuse; 10 Disorderly Persons; 13 Domestic Assault; 12 Fraud; 9 Harassment & Threats; 14 Juvenile Matter; 4 Larceny; 5 MDOP; 4 PI Traffic Crash; 40 PD Traffic Crash; 8 Retail Fraud; 2 Sex Offense; 1 Stolen Vehicle; 39 Suspicious Incidents; 3 Trespasser; 119 Misc.: School Checks/Warrant Arrests/Follow-up/BOL, 911 Hang-ups, etc.; 95 Traffic Stops; 39 Tickets Issued.

**CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE SHERIFF:** \*

**FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT:** Total runs for the month of September, 2023, (147). 10 Fire; 112 Rescue/EMS; 1 Hazardous Condition (No Fire); 1 Service Calls; 14 Good Intent Calls; 9 False Alarm/False Call. Total Cost, \$19,248.25.

**BUILDING DEPARTMENT REPORT:** Total permits issued for the month of Sept, 2023, (38). 25 Residential Addition / Alteration/Repair (Val. 599,391); 6 Accessory Structure (Val. 260,596); 2 Fence (Val. 30,000); 1 Multiple Residential (Val. 5,612,104); 1 Pool (Val. 1,500); 2 Commercial Addition/Alteration/Repair (Val. 165,000); 1 Commercial Sign (Val. 0.00). Total Valuation, \$ 6,668,591.00. Total Fees, \$ 24,945.00.

**PLUMBING/MECHANICAL INSPECTOR'S REPORT:** Total permits issued for the month of September, 2023, (14). 14 Mechanical (2,030.00); 0 Plumbing (0.00). Total Fees, \$ 2,030.00.

**ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT REPORT:** Total permits issued for the month of September, 2023, (10). Total Fees, \$ 1,852.00.

**ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER REPORT:** Total Complaints for the month of September, 2023, (12). 5 Blight; 2 High Grass/Noxious Weeds; 1 Storage/Parking; 1 Sheriff's Department; 2 Misc. Ordinance Violations; 1 Misc. Code Violations. Total Hours, 14. Total Miles, 41.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

1. Letter of *Thank You* and Member Certificate, from Blue Water Area Chamber of Commerce for Fort Gratiot Townships membership.

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

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

1. PROPOSED 2023 TOWNSHIP-AT-LARGE HIGHWAY LIGHTING ASSESSMENT DISTRICT; AND INDIVIDUAL LIGHTING ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS, AS FOLLOWS:

Township-at-Large Highway Lighting	0.1671	\$	81,249.40
Angus Road		\$	1,860.00
Bardamar Drive		\$	2,504.04
Connie Lane		\$	1,116.00
Connie Woods Condominium Subdivision		\$	1,788.60
Fairway Drive		\$	6,696.00
Grace Road		\$	1,488.00
Grant Avenue		\$	1,488.00
Greenview Circle		\$	4,292.64
Hidden Forrest Subdivision Phase I		\$	1,788.60
Janice Avenue		\$	3,219.48
Lake Huron Manor Subdivision (Maplewood, Elmwood & Manor)		\$	4,685.76
Lakeshore Terrace		\$	2,912.46
Lomar Drive		\$	2,232.00
Milton Road		\$	1,116.00
Old Farm Subdivision		\$	10,495.80
Parker Road		\$	744.00
Pollina Avenue		\$	1,116.00
Shoreview Subdivision (Shoreview Dr., N. Shoreview Dr., S. Shoreview Dr. & San Juan Dr., between N. & S. Shoreview Dr.)		\$	2,538.00
Simpson Road		\$	665.28
Spartan Drive		\$	5,008.08
Stoney Creek I		\$	3,219.48
Stoney Creek II		\$	2,861.76
Stoney Creek III		\$	3,219.48
Stoney Creek IV		\$	6,438.96
Stoney Creek V		\$	2,861.76
Stoney Creek VI		\$	3,219.48
Teeple Avenue		\$	744.00
Watson Drive		\$	507.60
Whitney Place		\$	4,050.48
	TOTAL	\$	166,127.14

Trustee Kish inquired as to the previous year's cost. Clerk Buechler replied, \$147,000.08.

Supervisor Crawford asked for citizen comments, questions and/or objections, at this time. Not one was heard.

After hearing no citizen comments, questions and/or objections, a Motion was made by Kish, seconded by Bradley, to close the Public Hearing to review proposed 2023 Township-at-Large Highway Lighting Assessment District; and Individual Lighting Assessment Districts, as noted. Time, 7:15 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED. PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.**

Motion by Buechler, seconded by Wells, to accept the cost estimates provided; and adopt Resolution 2023-013 Confirming Lighting Assessment Districts and Special Assessment Roll for the Township-at-Large Highway Lighting (\$81,249.40); and Individual Lighting Assessment Districts, as noted above, totaling \$166,127.14. Roll Call Vote, 6/0. **MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION 2023-013, ADOPTED.**

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

2. 2023 VELMA DRIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT FOR 2024 SEASON:

	WITHOUT GRAVEL	
PRINCIPAL AMOUNT	16.67	PER PARCEL
INTEREST AMOUNT (2%)	0.67	IF PAID AFTER 10/31/2023
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE	17.34	BILLED ON WINTER TAX NOTICE (12/01/2023)

Total Assessment of \$400.00 divided equally between 24 parcels at a rate of four (4%) percent interest.

Supervisor Crawford asked for citizen comments, questions and/or objections, at this time. Not one was heard.

After hearing no citizen comments, questions and/or objections, a Motion was made by Bradley, seconded by Buechler, to close the Public Hearing to review the proposed 2023 Velma Drive Annual Maintenance Special Assessment for 2024 Season. Time, 7:17 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED.**

**PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.**

- BOARD DISCUSSION:
- \* Two (2) gradings and two (2) Applications of Chloride for dust control.
  - \* No Assessment was spread for 2023, due to having a fund balance to cover the cost.

Motion by Kish, seconded by Bruckner, to accept the cost estimates provided; and adopt Resolution 2023-014 Confirming the 2023 Velma Drive Annual Maintenance Special Assessment Roll for 2024 Season, totaling \$400.00; (\$ 17.34 per parcel, including interest). Roll Call Vote, 6/0. **MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION 2023-014, ADOPTED.**

3. 2023 SPECIAL ASSESSMENT RATE FOR FIRE PROTECTION:

2023 RATE PER \$1,000 T.V.	TOTAL TAXABLE VALUATION (REAL PROPERTY ONLY)	TOTAL
3.0129	486,167,161	1,464,773

\* 2022 Rate was set at 2.739

Supervisor Crawford noted that the law allows for the Township to raise the Special Assessment rate by ten (10%) percent. This Assessment is used to cover the expense of operating the Fire Department. He, then, asked for citizen comments, questions and/or objections, at this time. Not one was heard.

Trustee Kish asked about the unionization of the Fire Department and the effect on the current budget.

Captain Woolman stated the Contract is currently under negotiations, but he has been advised that the Proposed Contract will fit within the Proposed 2024 Budget with the 2023 rate of 3.0129.

Motion by Bradley, seconded by Bruckner, to close the Public Hearing to review and hear citizen comments, questions and/or objections to the Proposed 2023 Special Assessment for Fire Protection. Time, 7:20 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED. PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.**

- BOARD DISCUSSION:
- \* Proposed 2024 Budget and Fund Balance
  - \* Option of billing insurance companies for incidents involving non-residents.
  - \* Lake Huron Woods costs based on number of calls and equipment used.

Motion by Kish, seconded by Wells, to approve the 2023 Special Assessment Rate of 3.0129 Mills per \$1,000 TV for Fire Protection, to be assessed against all Real Properties within the Fort Gratiot Charter Township; and adopt Resolution 2023-015 Confirming Special Assessment Roll for Fire Protection. Roll Call Vote, 6/0. **MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION 2023-015, ADOPTED.**

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

4. 2023 FIRE DEPARTMENT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT VOTED MILLAGE LEVY:

2023 RATE PER \$1,000 T.V.	TOTAL TAXABLE VALUATION (REAL & PERSONAL PROPERTY)	TOTAL
0.5870	512,317,134	300,730.06

\* 2022 Rate was set at 0.5870

Supervisor Crawford noted that this is a voted millage that has been rolled back by Headlee to 0.5870. He explained these funds can only be spent on Capital items valued at \$25,000 and above. Currently, funds are being used to make payment on Tower One (Aerial Ladder) Fire Truck. The millage expires in 2026. He asked for citizen comments, questions and/or objections, at this time. Not one was heard.

Motion by Bruckner, seconded by Kish, to close the Public Hearing to review and hear citizen comments, questions and/or objections to the Proposed 2023 Fire Capital Improvement Voted Millage Levy. Time, 7:28 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED. PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.**

BOARD DISCUSSION: \* This millage rate will be put before the voters in three (3) years.

Motion by Buechler, seconded by Bradley, to approve the 2023 Millage Rate of 0.5870 for Fire Department Capital Improvement Voted Millage Levy, to be assessed against all Real and Personal Properties within Fort Gratiot Charter Township; and adopt Resolution 2023-016 Confirming 2023 Fire Department Capital Improvement Voted Millage Levy. Roll Call Vote, 6/0. **MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION 2023-016, ADOPTED.**

5. 2023 POLICE PROTECTION VOTED MILLAGE:

2023 RATE PER \$1,000 TAXABLE	TOTAL TAXABLE VALUATION (REAL & PERSONAL PROPERTY)	TOTAL
2.4577	512,317,134	1,259,121.82

\* 2022 Rate was set at 2.10

Supervisor Crawford explained that this was approved by Township voters at a rate up to 2.5000, which due to Headlee, has been reduced to 2.4577. He noted the new Contract was approved at the 10/04/2023 meeting (2024 thru 2026). He is requesting the Board approve a rate of 2.1500 for the 2023 Police Protection Millage. The millage request will, again, be presented to the voters in August, 2024.

Motion by Kish, seconded by Bruckner, to close the Public Hearing to review and hear citizen comments, questions and/or objections to the Proposed 2023 Police Protection Voted Millage Levy. Time, 7:32 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED. PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.**

Motion by Kish, seconded by Bradley, to approve the 2023 Millage Rate of 2.1500 per \$1,000 T.V. for Police Protection Voted Millage Levy, to be assessed against all Real and Personal Properties within the Fort Gratiot Charter Township; and adopt the Resolution 2023-017 Confirming the Police Protection Voted Millage Levy. Roll Call Vote, 6/0. **MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION 2023-017, ADOPTED.**

6. SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT FOR RESIDENTIAL SOLID WASTE/YARD WASTE AND CURBSIDE RECYCLING COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL AT A RATE OF \$ 205.00 PER UNIT:

Supervisor Crawford noted there are 3,735 stops (\$205 x 3,735 = \$765,675). Estimated expenses are \$696,396.00, plus additional fees covering landfill surcharges based on tonnage and fuel charge variations. The Contract cost is the same rate that was charged last year.

Supervisor Crawford asked for citizen comments, questions and/or objections, at this time:

Dave Norris re: Number of stops made by the trash hauler. Supervisor Crawford stated 3,735.

**PUBLIC HEARING(S), ITEM #6, CONTINUED:**

Motion by Bruckner, seconded by Bradley, to close the Public Hearing to review and hear citizen comments, questions and/or objections to the Proposed 2023 Special Assessment District for Residential Solid Waste/Yard Waste and Curbside Recycling Collection and Disposal for 2024 Season. Time, 7:36 o'clock p.m.  
Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED. PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.**

BOARD DISCUSSION: \* 2022 Rate was \$202.00 per unit  
\* Fund Balance

Motion by Kish, seconded by Bruckner, to approve the 2023 Special Assessment for Residential Solid Waste / Yard Waste and Curbside Recycling Collection and Disposal at a rate of \$ 205.00 per unit; and adopt the 2023 Resolution (2023-018) Confirming the Residential Solid Waste/Yard Waste and Bi-Weekly Curbside Recycling Collection and Disposal Services Special Assessment Roll. Roll Call Vote, 6/0. **MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION 2023-018, ADOPTED.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** NONE

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Motion by Buechler, seconded by Bruckner, to adopt the *Proclamation Designating Fall 2023 to United in Purpose for United Way of St. Clair County*. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED.**
2. Motion by Kish, seconded by Bradley, to approve the Proposed First Amendment to Agreement of Municipal Services Agreement for Lake Huron Woods (LHW9); and Assignment of Municipal Service Agreement for Lake Huron Woods (LHW4), as presented; and authorize the Township Supervisor to sign the Agreements on behalf of Fort Gratiot Charter Township.  
LHW9 - LAKE HURON WOODS APARTMENTS REDUCED FROM 52 TO 45;  
LHW4 - LAKE HURON WOODS COTTAGES INCREASED FROM 40 TO 45

Roll Call Vote, 6/0. **MOTION PASSED.**

3. Motion by Bradley, seconded by Buechler, to approve the County Provided Service Agreement for Aerial Imagery, etc., at a cost of \$1,000 per year with a six (6) year commitment.

BOARD DISCUSSION: \* Includes two (2) fly overs in the six (6) year period.  
\* These are tools used by Ordinance Enforcement and Assessing Department. Mapping is also available to the public via the Township's website.

Roll Call Vote, 6/0. **MOTION PASSED.**

**BOARD DISCUSSION:**

- Parks Commissioner resignation will be addressed at November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 Township Board Meeting.
- Lake Huron Woods Ground Breaking for second phase was held today.
- Sledding hill ready for snow and trails available for cross country skiing.
- Fire Chief Position - Interviews to be set-up.
- Update on failed culvert on service drive behind McDonalds.
- Planning Commission opened the Public Hearing October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 for proposed Solar Project. After being unable to accommodate the large amount of attendees, the meeting was rescheduled for November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Blue Water Convention Center, 800 Harker Street, Port Huron MI 48060.
- Update on Bills in State House re: Solar project approval through Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC).
- Trustee Bruckner stated she spoke with representative from Ranger Power regarding calls she has received from concerned residents and the representatives promise to address said issues.
- Pointe Community Center Parking Lot and Water Heater.

**CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD:**

Connie Neese re: Deer blinds on property adjacent to Township trails and public properties.

Sandy Richardson re: Concerns with proposed solar project.

Susan Martin re: Concerns with proposed solar project and Fire Department's ability to respond to emergency situations with these types of panels.

Rob Montgomery re: Solar Project Ordinance and Planning Commissions, not the Township Board, having authority to approve/deny the project. He asked what would happen if there was no Ordinance? He also inquired about late fees incurred by the Township.

Austin Richardson re: Concerns with proposed solar project and decommissioning plan.

Motion by Kish, seconded by Bradley, to adjourn. Time, 8:06 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED.**  
**MEETING ADJOURNED.**

  
ROBERT D. BUECHLER, CLERK  
FORT GRATIOT CHARTER TOWNSHIP

RDB/RCC/vd

ROBERT C. CRAWFORD, SUPERVISOR  
FORT GRATIOT CHARTER TOWNSHIP