

MEMBERS PRESENT: CRAWFORD, WELLS, BUECHLER, BRADLEY, KISH, BRUCKNER AND ARMBRUSTER
 MEMBERS ABSENT: NONE
 ALSO PRESENT: CAPTAIN TRAVIS WOOLMAN, FIRE DEPARTMENT
 ROB MONTGOMERY, ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS / PARKS COMMISSION
 CONNIE NEESE, PARKS COMMISSION

7:00 O’CLOCK P.M. - SUPERVISOR OPENS PUBLIC HEARING TO REVIEW AND HEAR CITIZEN COMMENTS, QUESTIONS AND/OR OBJECTIONS TO THE PROPOSED 2024 BUDGET; and continued with the Regular Agenda, at this time.

Motion by Armbruster, seconded by Wells, to approve the Minutes of the **REGULAR MEETING** of November 1st, 2023, as printed and posted. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED.**

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD: *

Vance Richardson requested a marquee sign placed out front to notify residents of upcoming meeting dates & times; and also suggested adding “*Times Herald Notifications*” to the Township’s website to advise of legal notifications.

Angela Defrain asked the Board to adopt a Resolution to oppose State Legislation with regard to solar energy; and agreed with the need for a marquee sign placed out front to keep community updated.

Sandra Richardson thanked Trustees who attended the Planning Commission meeting held at the Convention Center; suggested considering forming a citizen committee to address concerns of these types of developments.

Andrea Heering requested the Board adopt a Resolution in opposition of industrial solar farms and keeping it in local control.

Karen Ahearn also spoke in support of the Board adopting a Resolution to keep local control over industrial solar farms.

Vance Richardson requested citizens names, comments and, if applicable, answers be recorded as part of the Minutes.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

TREASURER’S REPORT:

GENERAL FUND	\$ 2,329,952.06
FIRE DEPARTMENT FUND	\$ 1,212,699.62
FIRE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND	\$ 177,223.02
POLICE PROTECTION FUND	\$ 385,936.91
TRASH / RECYCLING FUND	\$ 243,109.77
BUILDING DEPARTMENT FUND	\$ 125,014.92
UTILITY RECEIVING FUND	\$ 2,420,097.08
TOTAL	\$ 6,894,033.38
MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS	\$ 920,153.22
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 7,814,186.60

Motion by Kish, seconded by Bruckner, to receive the Treasurer’s Report, as given. Roll Call Vote, 7/0. **MOTION PASSED. TOTAL TREASURER’S REPORT APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 7,814,186.60.**

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

BILLS PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL:

GENERAL FUND	\$ 52,640.88
FIRE DEPARTMENT FUND	\$ 7,264.50
FIRE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND	\$ 0.00
POLICE PROTECTION FUND	\$ 84,563.20
TRASH / RECYCLING FUND	\$ 62,765.73
BUILDING DEPARTMENT FUND	\$ 0.00
UTILITY RECEIVING FUND	\$ 19,976.55
TOTAL	\$ 227,210.86
MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS (MAINT. & IMP.)	\$ 120,384.40
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 347,595.26

Motion by Armbruster, seconded by Bradley, to pay bills, as presented. Roll Call Vote, 7/0. **MOTION PASSED.**
BILLS APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 347,595.26.

SHERIFF DEPARTMENT REPORT: Given by representative of Sheriff Department: Captain, Matt Pohl

Total Calls for Service for the month of October, 2023, (557). Number of Patrol Hours, (1116). 13 Animal Complaint; 4 Assault & Battery; 44 Assist Other Depts.; 199 Assist Public; 27 B&E/Alarm; 1 B&E Vehicle; 2 Child Abuse; 10 Disorderly Persons; 16 Domestic Assault; 7 Fraud; 11 Harassment & Threats; 12 Juvenile Matter; 6 Larceny; 1 MDOP; 3 PI Traffic Crash; 35 PD Traffic Crash; 13 Retail Fraud; 1 Robbery; 1 Sex Offense; 36 Suspicious Incidents; 2 Trespasser; 113 Misc.: School Checks/Warrant Arrests/Follow-up/BOL, 911 Hang-ups, etc.; 133 Traffic Stops; 54 Tickets Issued.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE SHERIFF: * Discussion held with regard to an unidentified citizens question as to whether every one of the listed calls are within the Township's jurisdiction. Captain Pohl replied that, with the exception of "Assist other Departments" when they may be called out of the jurisdiction, all listed calls are within the Township jurisdiction during the month.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Total runs for the month of October, 2023, (149). 5 Fire; 105 Rescue/EMS; 7 Hazardous Condition (No Fire); 3 Service Calls; 7 Good Intent Calls; 21 False Alarm/False Call. Total Cost, \$19,133.37.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT REPORT: Total permits issued for the month of October, 2023, (40). 4 New Homes (Val. 600,000); 19 Residential Addition / Alteration/Repair (Val. 616,781); 2 Accessory Structure (Val. 267,000); 6 Fence (Val. 63,991); 1 Multiple Residential (Val. 195,731); 1 Residential Demolition (Val. 10,000); 1 New Commercial Structure (Val. 1,200,000); 4 Commercial Addition/Alteration/Repair (Val. 1,109,000); 2 Commercial Signs (Val. 32,600). Total Valuation, \$ 4,095,103.00. Total Fees, \$ 19,681.50.

PLUMBING/MECHANICAL INSPECTOR'S REPORT: Total permits issued for the month of October, 2023, (21). 16 Mechanical (2,570.00); 5 Plumbing (994.00). Total Fees, \$ 3,564.00.

ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT REPORT: Total permits issued for the month of October, 2023, (12). Total Fees, \$ 2,265.00.

ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER REPORT: Total Complaints for the month of October, 2023, (10). 3 Blight; 32 High Grass/Noxious Weeds; 4 Misc. Ordinance Violations. Total Hours, 13. Total Miles, 50.

CORRESPONDENCE:

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

PUBLIC HEARING(S), CONTINUED:

1. PROPOSED 2024 BUDGET:

Supervisor Crawford asked for citizen comments, questions and/or objections to the Proposed 2024 Budget, at this time:

An unidentified citizen asked about the monthly bill for USA Today Network fee of \$2,553.20. It was explained that it is for required publication notices in the Port Huron Times Herald.

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

Supervisor Crawford discussed the budget with regard to estimated fund revenues and expenditures, Revenue Sharing and individual departments. He also noted various Grants the Township is looking into. He highlighted:

- General Fund
- Supervisor's Department
- Drains-at-Large Special Assessments
- Parks Commission
- Grounds Maintenance
- Pointe Community Center
- Water & Sewer Fund

Connie Neese pointed out a correction, from \$0.00 to \$2,000 on Parks Commission's Repair/Maintenance Equipment (101-751-929-001).

Austin Richardson suggested adding an additional column to the budget spreadsheets indicating the percentage (%) increase or decrease.

Vance Richardson referred to leak detection services and asked if there is any figure available indicating the current amount of loss.

Supervisor Crawford stated it appears loss it, at least, ten (10%) percent higher than they should be. Typically, with a water leak, a sizable lost appears on the surface with a geyser of water. There has been a consistent 20% to 24% water loss from what we purchase and what we get paid for. If the Township can reduce that by 10% in one quarter, it would pay for the leak detection service being considered on this Agenda. (Item 6, NEW BUSINESS).

After hearing no further citizen comments, questions and/or objections to the Proposed 2024 Budget, a Motion was made by Kish, seconded by Bruckner, to close the Public Hearing. Time, 7:33 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

Supervisor Crawford noted the Budget must be adopted before the end of 2023.

NO ACTION TAKEN, at this time, on Proposed 2024 Budget.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

1. REQUEST, FROM VERNON & DENISE DENCKLAU, 4177 PARKER ROAD, FOR ADJUSTMENT ON WATER CHARGES FOR THE PERIOD JUNE-AUG, 2023 TOTALING \$1,205.49:

- POINTS OF DISCUSSION:
- * Historically, high usage every summer (2012 to present).
 - * Total bill is for water usage only, as this address is not connected to Sanitary Sewer but is on a septic system.
 - * Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Dencklau were present.
 - * Single Meter. No additional meter for irrigation.
 - * Meter has been checked and no issue found. Owners should look into a possible issue with their property that may the cause.

NO ACTION TAKEN on request, from Vernon & Denise Dencklau, 4177 Parker Road, for adjustment of water charges for the period June - August, 2023.

NEW BUSINESS, CONTINUED:

2. Motion by Crawford, seconded by Bradley, to appoint Tanya Keefe to the Parks Commission vacancy, for a term to expire November 20, 2024.

POINTS OF DISCUSSION: * One (1) Application received from Tanya Keefe, 2625 Whitney Place, Fort Gratiot
 * Ms. Keefe was present and Clerk Buechler read her *Letter of Interest* aloud.

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

Supervisor Crawford explained that this is an elected position. Ms. Keefe will have the option to run in the August 2024 Election to continue a four (4) year term.

3. Motion by Bradley, seconded by Bruckner, to approve the request, from Grounds Maintenance, to list “For Sale” the 2001 John Deere 455 Riding Lawnmower with 54” Mower Deck, to the highest bidder, with a minimum bid of \$1,000.00.

POINTS OF DISCUSSION: * 3 Cylinder Liquid Cooled Diesel Yanmar Engine with 2969 hours.
 * Requirement of a minimum bid.

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

4. Motion by Bradley, seconded by Buechler, to approve the request, from Grounds Maintenance, to purchase 24 hp. Kubota Zero-Turn Mower with 72” deck, at a cost of \$19,655.06, from Wadhams Equipment.

POINTS OF DISCUSSION: * Cost includes \$1,343.94 Discount.
 * Funding is available in the 2023 Budget; and proceeds from sale of John Deere can be used.

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

5. Motion by Kish, seconded by Wells, to approve Department of Public Works request to purchase 2024 Ford F-750 Regular Cab DRW 4x2 Rugby Titan Dump Truck, from LaFontaine Ford of St. Clair County, at a cost of \$101,987.00; and list the 1983 Ford F-750, 5 Yard Dump Truck “For Sale” to the highest bidder. Roll Call Vote, 7/0.
MOTION PASSED.

6. Motion by Kish, seconded by Buechler, to accept the estimate, from American Leak Detection, to perform leak detection services on Fort Gratiot Township’s Municipal Water System at a total cost of \$28,405.00.

POINTS OF DISCUSSION: * 73 Miles @ \$389.00/mile = \$28,405.00

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

7. Motion by Armbruster, seconded by Bradley, to approve the St. Clair County Road Commission 2024 Local Road Funding Assistance Program Agreement to replace the culvert on State Road at Doe Creek Extension (Between Carrigan Road & Keewahdin Road) at a cost of \$100,000.00 for the Township:

PROJECT	TOTAL COST	TOWNSHIP COST (50%)
Culvert Replacement on State Road at Doe Creek Extension (Between Carrigan Road & Keewahdin Road)	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 100,000.00

POINTS OF DISCUSSION: * Application for 2024 Local Road Funding Assistance Program approved on October 17, 2023 by St. Clair County Board of County Road Commissioners.

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

BOARD DISCUSSION:

- Broken culvert behind McDonalds. Drain Commission's attorney sent letter to force the issue with those businesses involved.
- Parker Road fence post & fencing installation.
- Port Huron Golf Club and drainage along Fairway Drive.
- Board commended Township Planning Commission for the Public Hearing held last week regarding industrial solar farm.
- Resolution in opposition of taking away local control over issues of Townships.
- Adjustment to traffic lights to accommodate holiday traffic.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD:

Unidentified citizen asked about a time frame for the State Road culvert replacement.

Unidentified citizen asked for time frame for repair of drain on service drive behind McDonalds.

Angela Defrain re: fencing repairs & replacement.

Sandy Richardson regarding follow-up and addressing citizen suggestions brought up at this meeting.

Rob Montgomery noted the Parker Road Pavilion is 99% completed. He noted the bike lanes that have been added to Gratiot Avenue and suggested it may be a viable option for Lakeshore Road, between Keewahdin Road and M-25. He also asked about widening Krafft Road for pedestrian traffic.

Connie Neese noted that studies have shown white lines are not enough to increase safety.

Motion by Kish, seconded by Armbruster, to adjourn. Time, 8:16 o'clock p.m. Vote, Unanimous. **MOTION PASSED. MEETING ADJOURNED.**

ROBERT D. BUECHLER, CLERK
FORT GRATIOT CHARTER TOWNSHIP

RDB/RCC/vo

ROBERT C. CRAWFORD, SUPERVISOR
FORT GRATIOT CHARTER TOWNSHIP

The Charter Township of Fort Gratiot complies with the "Americans with Disabilities Act" and if auxiliary aids or services are required at the meeting for individuals with disabilities, please contact Clerk, Robert C. Crawford, 3720 Keewahdin Road, Fort Gratiot MI 48059, (810)385.4489, three days prior to said meeting.