

**OTISCO TOWNSHIP REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
**At the OTISCO TOWNSHIP HALL**  
**December 12, 2023 @ 7:00 P.M.**

Supervisor Desmond Pike called the Otisco Township Board meeting to order at 7:00 pm, in attendance were John Feuerstein, Joe Borek, Paula Byrne, Desmond Pike and Lynda Sower. Desmond Pike opened with a prayer followed by the township residents standing for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Agenda:** Moved by John Feuerstein supported by Paula Byrne to approve the December 12, 2023 agenda without additions or changes. Motion Passes 5-0

**Public Comment:** Khristie Walls asked how the new Counting Board for elections would work? Clerk Lynda Sower replied that would be covered later in the meeting under New Business.

**Approval of Minutes:** Approve the November 14<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting minutes with corrections. Spelling of KRISTIE and SCHEID. Motion to approve November 14<sup>th</sup> minutes with spelling corrections. Moved by Paula Byrne supported by Joe Borek to accept with changes, Motion Passes 5-0.

**Payables and Payroll:** Brief discussion on the account for the Accident Fund, Lynda Sower reported that it has been paid. Moved by Joe Borek supported by John Feuerstein to pay the payroll and payables. Passes 5-0

**Communications Reports:** None

**Treasurers:** Bank statements aren't in; available report is last month's information.

**Township Deputy:** not present, no report received after the December 5<sup>th</sup> report.

**Assessor:** has been busy, see written report.

**Cemetery Committee:** No meeting, no report.

**County Commissioner:** Not present.

**Planning Commission:** No meeting.

**Zoning Board of Appeals:**

Granted a variance for 5840 Dumon Road, regarding accessory storage building from setbacks.

2008 Luscombe Ranch land split. Needs further research.

**Hall Expansion Committee:** Met on December 6, 2023, ongoing process.

**Unfinished Business:**

**Old Dropbox:** Residents are invited to put sealed bids in the old Dropbox by next month. Highest bid pays and takes the box home with them.

**2024 Goals**

Township Goal, get the expansion done.

Jeff Hunter would like to see the Township focus on expanding farm land and putting it into family trusts so that it can't be subdivided and built on.

**New Business:** Otisco Township Counting Board for Elections Resolution – Lynda Sower introduced a resolution that has to do with the absentee ballots. Belding will loan the Township one of their counting machines for the February primary election, so The Township won't have to purchase a machine. It will give the Township an opportunity to use a machine and see how it works. The new state voting structure allows you to go in nine days early and cast your ballot. To vote early in person the voter have to go to downtown Ionia. To vote on the regular voting day go to your Township voting precinct. Those using Absentee Ballots will be processed through the Township as is the past. Kristie Walls stated that she would like to see the ballots hand counted to compare the count with the tabulator. Motion by Joe Borek supported by John Feuerstein to accept Resolution 202310. Roll call vote, John Feuerstein, yes; Joe Borek, yes; Paula Byrne, yes; Lynda Sower, yes; Desmond Pike, yes. Passes, 5-0

**Public Comment:**

Kristie Walls believes that if the Township spent more on education it would benefit on how to run a meeting. That the Township is not taking advantage of the training that is available through the MTA. The Township has a budget for training it that is not being utilized. "When we have elections and we have new officers that they can not only be trained, but, if that training requires more than normal hours for them in the first few months of their tenure that the budget allow for them to be compensated for extra hours." Also consider cross training between departments on every other officer's job.

Zoning and regular ordinances scanned and available on the Township website to the public. And should be done in a way that the documents are searchable. It is the clerk's responsibility to keep the available to the public minutes and agendas and packet information and placed on the website where they can be easily found.

It was suggested each officer create a monthly and annual calendar of required duties with deadlines and notes of lead time needed to execute efficiently for our future Township leaders' successful transition of new officers when elected.

Jeremy Hopkins of Keene Township had questions about the Township survey for solar, since the news came out about Governor Witmer's possible plans. Our survey was planned prior to the announcement made by the governor. Joe Borek explained that we have a solar and wind ordinance but we're trying to make it stronger. It's not about industrial solar, we are working with our attorney to make the wording stronger. We would like to see some setback changes, also the size of land that's allowed, a decommission cost of teardown, and percentages. We are looking at that ordinance and getting a stronger rewrite.

**2024 Meeting Dates:** Proposed dates for 2024 meeting dates were made available.

**Agenda and Meeting Minutes Two Weeks Ahead**

Joe Borek requested that the agenda and supporting materials be mailed out five days before the meeting so that it can be reviewed and researched if necessary. It was pointed out that sometimes some materials are "time sensitive" and may not be available five days prior to a meeting. Every effort will be made to have all available materials in Trustee folders five to ten days prior to a meeting.

**Motion to adjourn** made by Joe Borek supported by Paula Byrne passed 5-0

Minutes respectfully submitted  
by Laura J Staats