

**NORVELL TOWNSHIP**  
**106 E. Commercial St., P.O. Box 188**  
**Norvell, Michigan 49263**  
**(517)-536-4370**  
**Fax (517)-536-0110**

**Regular Meeting-March 8, 2023**

**Present:**

William Sutherland, Supervisor, Jeff Oswalt, Clerk, Deserre Sauers, Treasurer, Matt Dame, Trustee, Andrew Haystead, Trustee, Norvell Township, Jackson County

The Regular Meeting of the Norvell Township Board was called to order by Supervisor Bill Sutherland at 6:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*A motion was made by Supervisor Sutherland, seconded by Treasurer Sauers to approve the agenda for the March 8, 2023 board meeting. Motion carried.*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 8, 2023**

*A motion was made by Treasurer Sauers, seconded by Trustee Haystead to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2023 board meeting. Motion carried.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Supervisor Sutherland commented on the financial information portion of the Consent Agenda, stating the township is currently \$56,125 under budget. A short discussion followed. *A motion was made by Supervisor Sutherland, seconded by Treasurer Sauers to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Supervisor Sutherland questioned why the paid bills total of \$70,376.85 was so high. Clerk Oswalt explained \$56,000 of that amount was payment in lieu of taxes. *A motion was made by Treasurer Sauers, seconded by Supervisor Sutherland to approve payment of unpaid bills totaling \$14,388.10, paid bills totaling \$70,376.85, and Payroll totaling \$14,611.43. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes-Sutherland, Sauers, Oswalt, Dame, and Haystead. Nays: None.*

**COUNTY COMMISSIONER REPORT**

No Report.

**SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Deputy Sheriff Jay Truchan spoke to the board, giving them information on the number of hours worked, the patrol miles and complaints handled during the month of February, and also mentioning the many hours spent responding to countless roadway hazards during the ice storm. Board members thanked him for his service, especially during the ice storm.

**Ford Dam Removal – Brooklyn – Chris Freiburger**

Supervisor Sutherland introduced Chris Freiburger, an Aquatic Ecologist for the MI Dept. of Natural Resources and invited him to speak to the issue of the Ford dam removal in Brooklyn, MI regarding any potential impact it might have on Norvell properties downstream from the dam. Mr. Freiburger spoke to the issue, assuring residents the would be little or no impact on Norvell

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residents when the dam is removed and explained the reasoning behind his statement. He then answered questions from the audience and the township board, and offered a handout on the project.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Land Division 2023-02 – Culbert/Knibloe**

Supervisor Sutherland spoke, informing the board this proposed land division is located on Arnold Road and is a request to divide part of parcel 000-20-10-376-001-01 to create a new 1.08 acre parcel. The Land Division Committee met to review the request and have determined that all State and Township requirements have been satisfied, recommending approval. *A motion was made by Supervisor Sutherland, seconded by Clerk Oswald to approve Land Division 2023-02 for parcel 000-20-10-376-001-01 as presented. Motion carried.*

**2023 Lawn Care Contract**

Supervisor Sutherland stated he had placed an RFP notice on both the township website and in The Exponent newspaper for 2023 lawn care. He received four responses, including one from the current provider, Perry's Pinnacle. Discussion followed, with board members agreeing Perry's Pinnacle has provided good service this past year and their proposed cost is reasonable. *A motion was made by Supervisor Sutherland, seconded by Treasurer Sauers to approve Perry's Pinnacle as the township's lawn care provider for 2023 at a cost of \$9,945.00 per year, with an option for a second year. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes-Sutherland, Sauers, Oswald, Dame, and Haystead. Nays: None.*

**Resolution 2023-04 – VLSD Sewer Rates**

Supervisor Sutherland spoke, stating the 20-year bond debt for the Vineyard Lake Sewer system will be paid off by April 1, 2023, and he and Treasurer Sauers have been meeting with Columbia Township discussing the dissolution of the Common Fund. The attached resolution will slightly lower the billing rate overall for VLSD residents due to the debt payment ending, but increase the treatment costs by 4% due to an expected increase from Leoni Township, and an increase to set aside monies for repair and replacement, since the township will now be responsible for all the repair and maintenance. Overall, the resolution provides a decrease of \$4.32 per month or \$12.96 per quarter. Treasurer Sauers requested a slight wording change in the resolution for clarification purposes. *A motion was made by Supervisor Sutherland, seconded by Treasurer Sauers to adopt Resolution 2023-04 – VLSD Sewer Rates, as amended. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes-Sutherland, Sauers, Oswald, Dame, and Haystead. Nays: None.*

**Public Hearing for Capital Improvement Project – 300 Mill Renovation**

*A motion was made by Supervisor Sutherland and seconded by Trustee Dame to open the public hearing for the Capital Improvement Project-300 Mill Renovation. Motion carried.*

Supervisor Sutherland opened the meeting to the public for comments regarding the 300 Mill renovation.

Several residents spoke, asking questions, and expressing both negative and positive comments regarding the issue. Board members responded to residents comments, giving details regarding

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the history behind this proposal, where the funding will come from, the need for the township location change, and the future status of the current building. Discussion followed, with Township board members speaking both negatively and positively regarding the issue.

*A motion was made by Supervisor Sutherland, seconded by Trustee Haystead to close the public hearing for the Capital Improvement Project-300 Mill Renovation. Motion carried.*

**Allocating Funding to the Capital Improvement Fund**

*A motion was made by Supervisor Sutherland, seconded by Trustee Haystead to approve the transfer of \$6,000 to the Capital Improvement Fund to fund the next phase of the 300 Mill Renovation, as presented. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes-Sutherland, Sauers, Oswalt, and Haystead. Nays: Dame.*

**Board Representative to the Planning Commission**

Supervisor Sutherland read the resignation letter from Trustee Dame, citing his reasoning for leaving the position of board representative to the Planning Commission. *A motion was made by Supervisor Sutherland, seconded by Clerk Oswalt to accept the resignation of Trustee Matt Dame from the Planning Commission, effective immediately. Motion carried.*

A short discussion followed regarding the need to fill the position, with Trustee Haystead agreeing to do so. *A motion was made by Supervisor Sutherland, seconded by Trustee Haystead to approve Andrew Haystead as board representative to the Planning Commission to fill the vacant position, and will run concurrently with the elected officials term ending date of November 20, 2024. Motion carried.*

**Social Media Account for Norvell Township**

Trustee Haystead commented on a suggestion that the township consider setting up a Social Media account on Facebook for Norvell Township, this suggestion having been made at a township board meeting in September of 2017. His reasoning being this would be a good medium to get real time information to residents, citing the recent ice storm as an example. He suggested it could have minutes, agendas and other township information listed on the site and could have an option for no comments which could eliminate negative and disruptive dialogues. Discussion followed, with the board agreeing to look into the issue further and bring it back to the board at a later date.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

A resident spoke, asking about the repair/filling of pot holes on several roads, including Wamplers Lake Road, Hardcastle & Antcliff. Supervisor Sutherland responded.

A resident spoke, asking when the branches would be cleaned up on the roadsides caused by the recent ice storm. Supervisor Sutherland responded.

**ADJOURNMENT**

*A motion was made by Supervisor Sutherland and seconded by Trustee Haystead to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. Motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Oswalt,  
Norvell Township Clerk

Garnet Francis  
Deputy Clerk/Recording Secretary

