



**ADA TOWNSHIP REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MONDAY DECEMBER 9, 2024, at 7:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

Supervisor Korth called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Board Members Present: Trustee Damstra, Trustee Carter, Supervisor Korth, Clerk DeMarco, Trustee Proos, Trustee Hurwitz, Treasurer Moran.

Board members Absent: None

Staff Present: Township Manager Suchy, Deputy Clerk McIntosh, Planning Director Said, Assessor Boerman, Accountant Rodriguez, Buildings, Facilities and Grounds Director Brinks, Parks and Recreation Director Deason.

Members of the public present: 28 members of the public.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Supervisor Korth stated that there are two additions to the agenda regarding the Wayfinding signage project update. **Moved by Trustee Carter, supported by Trustee Hurwitz to approve the agenda with the noted additions. Motion Carried. 7-0.**

GENERAL TOWNSHIP BUSINESS

Moved by Trustee Proos, supported by Trustee Hurwitz to approve minutes and accept and file reports/communications under consent agenda. Motion Carried.

A. APPROVAL OF TOWNSHIP BOARD MINUTES

1. Regular Board Meeting Minutes – November 25, 2024
2. Closed Session Meeting Minutes – November 25, 2024

B. RECEIVE AND FILE VARIOUS REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes – October 17, 2024
2. Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes – October 1, 2024
3. Revenue & Expense Report as of November 31, 2024

APPROVAL OF WARRANTS

Treasurer Moran presented the Warrant Report in the following amounts:

Hand Checks: \$30,461.15

Warrants: \$489,009.29

Total all checks and warrants: \$519,470.44

Trustee Proos asked clarification questions regarding aspects of the warrant report. **Moved by Trustee Hurwitz, supported by Trustee Carter to approve the Warrant Report for December 9, 2024, in the total amount of \$519,470.15. Roll Call: Yes- 7 (Carter, Proos, Moran, Korth, DeMarco, Damstra, Hurwitz); No- 0; Absent- None. Motion Carried. 7-0.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

PUBLIC HEARING

Petition Requesting to Pave a Portion of 3 Mile Rd., a Natural Beauty Road, from the East End of the Previously Paved Portion Easterly to the East Side of Mela Via Ct. (Pvt) in Accordance with Michigan Act 451, Public Act 1994.

Supervisor Korth opened the public hearing at 7:08 P.M.

Mark Hunsaker, 2945 Mela Via Ct NE. Stated that he has been coming to the board meeting for a year now regarding the issue. He stated that this is not a request to get rid of the natural beauty distinction of the road. He stated that this is not a negative review on the Kent County Road Commission and stated that this is a petition to pave a small portion of the road that he feels is an unsafe area. He stated that with rain, deliveries, and typical traffic there is a large amount of continuous deterioration.

John Toigo, 3011 Mela Via Ct NE. He stated that he is a runner and frequently runs over 18 miles throughout the township. He stated that the portion of the road that is up for paving gets washed away and stated that a 'ravine' is continuous and difficult to maintain.

Greg Hahn, 2942 Mela Via Ct NE. Each day when he drives the road, due to the 'ravine', a choice is made due to the safety conditions of that portion of the road.

Eric Burgoon, 2923 Mela Via Ct NE. It is a boulevard street, while most are able to navigate around, it does become a challenge with delivery drivers and visitors, and poses a danger to drivers unfamiliar with the area.

Marceil Johnson, 5702 3 Mile Road. She has no problem with the paving of the small section. Her concern is with the amount of 3 Mile gets paved, the speeding in the area will increase. Stated that the speed at 55 MPH is too high and dangerous.

Nevin Zolenski, 6151 3 Mile Road. Stated that the Kent County Road Commission already determined that there was no safety issue. He stated that the safety issue was on the hill, not in the development. He stated that the road is the safety issue due to the unpaved nature of the road, sight lines, potholes and mud in the area. He stated that there are sections of the roads are one lane, and stated that the board has neglected the area for a long time. He stated that he has asked the board multiple times to pave the road due to safety, and stated that the KCRC should be abolished due to their mistreatment of the area. Stated that it is hypocritical of the board to pave the small section for 'safety' and not the large portion of the road.

Jen Marsh 6169 3 Mile Road. Stated she was one of the residents who did not want the road paved in 2007. Stated that the terrain and narrow roads makes it dangerous in wet conditions from snow and ice. Stated confusion for a small portion of the road to be paved, when the terrain and the danger of the whole road is more of a danger. Requesting the board to pave the whole road.

Ross Bacon, 6222 3 Mile Road. Stated that he lives near the development and the overall danger the road poses is only increasing. Stated he is out there daily with his family, and he stated that delivery drivers fly down the road regardless. He stated that doing the whole road will increase safety from trees and washout.

Peter Rahrig, 6276 3 Mile Road. Moved in several years ago and stated that potholes and the single lane hazard is increasingly dangerous and lack of speed limit signage is creating unsafe situations.

Andrea Hunsaker, 2945 Mela Via Ct NE. Wanted to bring the topic back to the agenda item of paving the small section of the road. Stated that she doesn't want that small portion forgotten and stated that the continuous washout is dangerous.

Michael Homier, 2977 Mela Via Ct NE. Stated that residents and their families, many of which have drivers learning, are being put in dangerous situations due to the narrow road, the rutting in the small section and the road overall, and the speed limit. Stated that paving the natural beauty road is permissible under the law and stated the whole road is dangerous and that this small section is opening a positive conversation between residents regarding the paving of the overall road.

Donny Nguyen, 2920 Mela Via Ct. Stated that the small section of the road that needs to be paved sees the unintended consequence of the paving meeting the dirty road. He stated that the neighbors have attempted to fix the issue themselves to no avail. He stated that residents continuously use the entrance to exit, causing continuing dangerous situations.

Supervisor Korth closed the public hearing at 7:37 P.M.

Township Manager Suchy stated that we are looking at this small portion of the road tonight due to resident requests. He stated the Township has typically reviewed requests for paving if more than 50% of the property owners support the project via a petition. Then the petition can come to the Township Board and the Kent County Road Commission for consideration. He stated that because Mela Via Court is between two major roads, notices were sent to more residents than would be directly impacted. Kent County Road Commission provided a work order to go through with the paving of the small section of 3 Mile Road, where the cost outline originates. He stated that staff is supportive of the project, if the Kent County Road Commission supports the project.

Steve Roon, Kent County Road Commission Representative, stated that he is governed by and accountable to the Kent County Road Commission Board. He shared that Ada Township has almost 15 miles of unpaved roads and welcomes questions from the board members.

Treasurer Moran inquired about surveying done in the area. Mr. Roon said traffic counts are likely recent, and the data can be provided to the board.

Trustee Proos inquired about drain work in the area. Mr. Roon stated that the natural beauty distinction has a different drainage standard than a modern road. Trustee Proos noted that this is a special request and would meet resident needs. He voiced concern for the speed limit and stated that it is an issue throughout the township.

Supervisor Korth asked whether there are any examples of a natural beauty road that has been left in its historic fashion. He stated there is a delicate balance between paving a natural beauty road and having a modern road with modern safety standards. Mr. Roon agreed, stating that residents bring up an important point regarding safety, but those problems are frequently mitigated with topography changes, road widening and brush maintenance.

Trustee Proos asked about additional cost the Road Commission is anticipated to allocate for potholes and road maintenance and how much would be saved if the whole road was to be paved. Mr. Roon stated that all road wear and require routine maintenance but there would be a large initial of cost savings.

Clerk DeMarco stated that she was in the area this summer on the campaign trail and had several close calls with drivers. She noted that there should be a balance between safety, beauty, and cost.

Trustee Carter asked why we did not pave the road in 2007. Mr. Roon stated that it was likely due to a lack of resident support. Trustee Carter stated that he lives on 3 Mile Road and has personally experienced the residents' issues.

Treasurer Moan stated that you must be careful with what you ask for with paving the whole road – siting changes to terrain and vegetation. He doesn't want the township funding the whole project, requesting a special assessment through the Homeowners Association or a percentage payment from the residents on the road. He stated the road looks and is dangerous and only the Road Commission can assist us with the paving.

Trustee Hurwitz inquired about the process regarding the proposed project with Manager Suchy.

Manager Suchy stated the board is set to make a decision on the small portion tonight. He stated that 3 Mile Road residents can circulate a petition and would go through a similar process requiring a public hearing. Manager Suchy stated that he has an active request for a petition for paving 3 Mile Road. He stated that cars are getting bigger, and deliveries are more frequent; therefore, regardless of what the Township does tonight, the issue is not going away as the Township has almost 15 miles of unpaved roads.

Supervisor Korth stated he would support paving the small portion of the road through a special assessment to assist with funding. He stated he wants to avoid undue costs to the township due to the precedent that would be set with the other 15 miles of unpaved road.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider Work Order from Kent County for the 2025 Local Road Program Project – Paving of 3 Mile Rd. from East End of Existing Pavement to 450' Easterly for an Amount not to Exceed \$110,000 with Ada Township Contributing \$60,500 (55%) of the Total Project Cost.

Supervisor Korth stated that the project's cost should be on the Homeowners Association through a special assessment. Suchy noted that a special assessment process is very different and can't be accomplished through a single motion at this meeting tonight. If there is a desire of the board to have a special assessment that will need to be reviewed with legal and the proper notices and hearings held. Board Members discussed contributions from the Township, Kent County Road Commission, and the Homeowners Association. Board members discussed future paving projects, what percentage the township should fund, and the long-term process of paving more roads in Ada if residents request it.

Moved by Trustee Proos, supported by Trustee Hurwitz, to send the issue to Kent County Road Commission for consideration and review of the Township's 45% funding share with percentage contributions to be discussed at a later meeting of the Township Board. Roll Call: Yes- 5 (Korth, DeMarco, Proos, Hurwitz, Damstra); No- 2 (Moran, Carter); Absent- None. Motion Carried. 5-2.

The board took a short recess.

Resolution R-120924-1: A Resolution to Approve a Preliminary Planned Unit Development (PUD) for the Holland Home Planned Unit Development (PUD).

Supervisor Korth requests planning Director Said to present on the issue. Director Said stated that this PUD is set to be built between Country Homes of Ada and the Ada Cemetery. Director Said addressed board members through concerns like rooftop HVAC units, appearance of buildings, and landscaping against Fulton Street, and stated the final Planned Unit Development will come back to the Planning Commission after Board approval. Director Said stated that the Planning Commission and staff have worked closely with the Holland Home team and architect Scott Vin to address concerns. Supervisor Korth stated that the Holland Home team has been stellar regarding their ability to take criticism and care with this project. He noted that the visual height is a concern with the plan stating that there is no discussion in the draft minutes regarding the issue.

Scott Vin, Integrated Architecture, discussed the thought process behind height and mechanical shielding and hopes to utilize a roof form rather than a screen. He stated that below-ground mechanical housing is impossible due to unground parking for staff.

Supervisor Korth stated that the Planning Commission would work out the final details and is encouraging architecture to remain below 46'.

Trustee Proos stated that he likes the project's idea and would encourage the final PUD and the mechanical shielding to be explored during the Planning Commission review.

Treasurer Moran stated that he attended the Planning Commission meeting and is looking forward to seeing the final elevation study.

Trustee Proos, is it too late to do a traffic study regarding a light? Mr. Vin stated that there have been meetings with MDOT regarding traffic in front of the site.

Director Said will work with the design team regarding sight lines and details regarding placement and final details. He stated that modifications to the driveway have been made due to MDOT recommendations.

Moved by Trustee Proos, supported by Trustee Carter to approve R-120924-1 with additional directive to the Planning Commission to address mechanical shielding in the Final PUD at a later meeting of the Planning Commission. Roll Call: Yes- 7 (Carter, Proos, Moran, Korth, DeMarco, Damstra, Hurwitz); No- 0; Absent- None. Motion Carried. 7-0.

Consider Work Order from Kent County for the 2025 Argo Avenue Non-Motorized Trail Project from Patterson Ave. to Cascade Rd. for an Amount not to Exceed \$465,400, with Ada Township Contributing \$53,910 (12.88%) of the Total Project Cost.

Township Manager Suchy stated that this would improve pedestrian safety and opened the floor for board member questions. Supervisor Korth requested insight into the cost. Suchy stated that a 10' path was not possible in the area, so 5' paths on each side of the road would be constructed. This project is receiving funding through the Safe Routes to School program and the Township has been aware of this contribution amount for a number of years. **Moved by Treasurer Moran,**

supported by Trustee Proos to Work Order from Kent County for the 2025 Argo Avenue Non-Motorized Trail Project from Patterson Ave. to Cascade Rd. for an Amount not to Exceed \$465,400, with Ada Township Contributing \$53,910 (12.88%) of the Total Project Cost. Motion Carried.

Consider Recommendation from Township Manager for Appointment of Kevin Austin as Downtown Development Authority Director.

Manager Suchy stated that the hiring committee for this position comprised himself, Supervisor Korth, Margaret Idema (DDA Board Member), and Justin Knapp (DDA Board Chair). The committee interviewed five candidates. Suchy stated that Mr. Austin previously served as a management intern in his office, where he participated in projects related to streetscapes and special event assistance. Supervisor Korth stated that Mr. Austin is outgoing, detail-orientated, and knowledgeable about the community and placemaking values. **Moved by Trustee Proos, supported by Trustee Damstra to appoint Keven Austin as Downtown Development Authority Director and authorizes the Township Manager and Supervisor to negotiate benefits. Motion Carried. 7-0.**

Consider the Purchase of a 2024 Ford F-250 from Fox Ford for an Amount Not to Exceed \$47,446.48.

Manager Suchy stated the Township has budget funds to replace Ford Ranger and would be split between parks, general fund and trails and the township would be putting the Ford Ranger up for auction. Buildings, Facilities and Grounds Director Brinks presented the memo and outlined additional costs for onboarding the truck. The Board requested that the Ford Ranger be sold via auction as opposed to being traded in with this purchase. **Moved by Trustee Proos, supported by Trustee Hurwitz, to approve the purchase for an amount not to exceed \$47,446.48. Motion Carried. 7-0.**

Resolution R-120924-2: Adopt 2025 Federal Poverty Exemption Guidelines.

Assessor Boerman stated these numbers will be utilized by the Board of Review and is an annual resolution. **Moved by Trustee Hurwitz, supported by Trustee Damstra to approve R-120924-2. Roll Call: Yes- 7 (Carter, Proos, Moran, Korth, DeMarco, Damstra, Hurwitz); No- 0; Absent- None. Motion Carried. 7-0.**

Resolution R-120924-3: A Resolution to Re-Appoint Rob VanderVennen & James Moyer and Appoint Justin Ellixson-Andrews to the Planning Commission.

Supervisor Korth presented the resolution to the board. He stated that he has worked with both Mr. VanderVennen and Mr. Moyer, and that Mr. Ellixson-Andrews is the cross-appointment seat with the Zoning Board of Appeals. **Moved by Trustee Proos, supported by Treasurer Moran to approve R-120924-3. Roll Call: Yes- 7 (Carter, Proos, Moran, Korth, DeMarco, Damstra, Hurwitz); No- 0; Absent- None. Motion Carried. 7-0.**

Resolution R-120924-4: A Resolution to Re-Appoint Justin Knapp to the Downtown Development Authority Board with a Term Expiring December 31, 2028

Supervisor Korth stated support for the request. **Moved by Trustee Hurwitz, supported by Treasurer Moran. Roll Call: Yes- 7 (Carter, Proos, Moran, Korth, DeMarco, Damstra, Hurwitz); No- 0; Absent- None. Motion Carried. 7-0.**

Resolution R-120924-5: A Resolution to Re-Appoint Mike Terwilliger and Jacob Heglund to the Compensation Commission

Manager Suchy stated that the Compensation Commission meets every two years to review the salary of the elected officials, and these members are seeking reappointment to the commission. Trustee Proos stated that there were conversations last year if this commission was really needed and is seeking to table the appointments. Proos stated that the time that goes into the work and believes the current compensation is not fair. Manager Suchy stated the ordinance can be rescinded allowing the board to discuss the elected official's compensation as an agenda item at a future board meeting. Board members discussed previous work with the compensation commission, its independence from the board, COLA increases, and what would occur if there was no action on the item tonight. Suchy stated that if there were no action tonight it was not an issue, but a decision needs to be made in early 2025 as the Compensation Commission normally begins meeting in February. Supervisor Korth stated that the compensation is extra for the service to the community. Korth stated the township board should table the discussion to gain a better understanding of the commission but requests it not impact the budget planning process. **Moved by Trustee Proos, supported by Clerk DeMarco to table the appointments until additional information can be provided by staff.**

Discuss the Potential Cancellation of the Township Board Meeting Scheduled for Monday, December 23, 2024

Manager Suchy informed the board that two meetings scheduled in December, and the second one has been canceled every year due to the proximity to the Holiday. **Moved by Trustee Proos, supported by Hurwitz to cancel the December 23, 2024, regular meeting of the Township Board. Motion Carried. 7-0.**

Consider Award of Ada Park Annual Tree Care Maintenance to Wittenbach Services for an Amount Not to Exceed \$11,425.00.

Parks and Recreation Director Deason presented the annual contract. Supervisor Korth inquired regarding plans for the replacement of any trees that are being removed. Director Deason stated that Wittenbach utilizes certified arborists on their team, and staff is working closely with experts regarding preventative maintenance to prevent removal in the future. **Moved by Treasurer Moran, supported by Trustee Carter to award the contract to Wittenbach Services for an amount not to exceed \$11,425.00. Motion Carried. 7-0.**

Agenda Addition: Trail wayfinding Signage Schedule Update- Jim Cook, Metro Signs.

Jim Cook referenced provided schedule and gave brief update regarding stalled progress. He stated that installation can work throughout winter and the weekends to install all sign types quickly. Trustee Proos stated that timeline was not met previously, with no penalty however the project must be done timely and is concerned the township is being ignored. Cook reassured board and stated his frustration with the delay. He stated assembly would occur on-site in Metro Sign's Ada office for additional staff oversight on the project.

Agenda Addition: Consider Yellow Bald Cypress for all Trail Wayfinding 6"x6" and 8"x8" posts for an additional cost of \$8,035.00 Plus Shipping.

Cook discussed wood types, stating the correct wood has been sourced and is ready to be cut. Board members agree to utilize the higher quality wood. Treasurer Moran stated that Corbin Design and Metro Signs have been positive partners, regardless of delays and would act on the recommendations outlined. Cook announced that Metro Signs would cover the cost increase if the Board wanted to move forward with the Yellow Bald Cypress. Cook announced the updated project schedule is anticipated completion date in February. **Moved by Trustee Proos, supported by Treasurer Moran to approve the additional cost to be covered by Metro Signs. Motion Carried. 7-0.**

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Township Manager Report – December 4, 2024

Manager Suchy announced that the community church property is set for approval for the Township Hall property purchase. He stated we are set to close after the first of the year, with paperwork signed before the end of the year.

B. Assessing Department Report – December 2, 2024

C. Building, Facilities & Grounds Department Report –

D. Fire Department Report – November, 2024

E. Historical Society Executive Director Report – December, 2024

F. Parks & Recreation Department Report – December, 2024

G. Planning Department Report – November, 2024

H. Engineering Monthly Report – December 4, 2024

I. F&V Operations & Resource Management Utility Report – November, 2024

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Supervisor Korth stated that the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals are short board member appointments. He stated he will talk with members of the board between now and the January 13, 2025 meeting.

Trustee Carter stated that the topic of paving natural beauty roads will only increase in frequency as Ada grows. He encouraged the board to discuss specific policies for paving those roads for uniform improvement throughout the Township.

Clerk DeMarco wanted to thank staff and the township for a warm welcome.

Trustee Proos apologized for overstepping and wants everyone up to speed. Thanked the new board members for their work and dedication to the community.

CLOSED SESSION

There was no Closed Session.

OPPORTUNITY FOR ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Trustee Proos, supported by Trustee Carter to adjourn the meeting.

Ada Township Board Regular Meeting

December 9, 2024

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The meeting was adjourned at 9:44 P.M.

Date: January 13, 2025

Jo DeMarco, Township Clerk