

Meeting of the Sparta Township Board

Sparta Township Hall – 160 E Division St – Sparta MI 49345

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April 10, 2025 – 7pm

Present: Supervisor Dale Bergman, Clerk Marcy Savage, Trustees Jason Bradford, Bill Goodfellow, Barb Johnson, and Rob Steffens.

Also present: Library Director Merri Jo Tuinstra, Sue Blackall, and Recording secretary Katy Shelton.

Absent: Treasurer Ashley Johnson

1. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. **Additions or corrections to the agenda:** None. Motion by B Johnson with a second by Goodfellow to approve. Motion passed unanimously.
4. **Public comment for agenda items:**
None.
5. **Approval of the minutes and treasurer's report:**
 - a. **Approval of the minutes of March 13, 2025:** Motion by Savage with a second by B Steffens to approve. Motion passed unanimously.
 - b. **Treasurer's Report:** Motion by Goodfellow with a second by B Johnson to approve. Motion passed unanimously.
 - c. **Building Department monthly report:** this is informational only. Trustee Goodfellow asked if the building inspector could give the Board an update once a quarter.
6. **Business items:**
 - a. **Approval of bills:** The board discussed several items in the report including attorney's fees, millage, Fire Department, SRA, and the library. Motion by B Johnson with a second by Steffens to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

- b. **Kent Conservation District** – Ryan Wilemski: Mr Wilemski was present to explain what his organization does. It involves addressing resource concerns, erosion, etc, with agricultural producers. He also talked about invasive plants.
 - c. **Library lighting and electrical work:** Library Director Tuinstra was present to explain this. There is an estimate of \$1187.55 for adding lighting in the library by the Large Print section as well as extending and adding some outlets. Trustee Steffens asked what percentage of library patrons were township residents as opposed to village residents. The Library Director said that she would find out. Motion by B Johnson with a second by Goodfellow to approve. Motion passed unanimously.
 - d. **Expense Reimbursements:** Treasurer Johnson asked for this to be discussed. She had said that Sparta's reimbursement rates are too low as compared to surrounding counties. She provided a spreadsheet with various municipalities' reimbursement rates. The consensus of the board was to update Sparta's reimbursement rates to match those of Grand Rapids. Clerk Savage will do this.
 - e. **Principles of Governance:** This was a description of the principles of which the Township Board pledges to abide. Each board member will sign the statement, and it will be kept on file at the township office.
 - f. **Boyd rezoning:** Abby and Kyle Boyd were present to discuss this issue. Their property is currently zoned Ag-1, and they would like it to be changed to Ag-2. The Planning Commission as well as Planner Yeomans are in support of this. They say that it will simplify the process of building the house that the Boyds propose. Motion to approve the recommendation of the Planning Commission to rezone this property made by Bradford with a second by Savage. Motion passed unanimously.
7. **Other informational:** Trustee B Johnson gave an update on the cemetery project. She said that Beaver Tree has started cutting down various trees. John Kozal, 9356 Laubach, discussed the Boy Scouts. Trustee Steffens gave an update on the Sports Park. He said that it

will be opening on April 26th. He also said that practices are starting within a week, and the bathrooms will be opened. It was mentioned that the signs for the Spring clean up are in front of the township office. The board liked the signs. Clerk Savage said that the recent MTA classes she and other board members attended were very interesting and informative. She said that the township needs to devise a policy regarding sick days.

8. **Public Comment:** Sue Blackall said that the Myers school will be open during Spring clean up and that they will be providing cookies.
9. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 7:37pm by Savage with a second by B Johnson. Motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by Katy Shelton, recording secretary.