

**CARROLLTON TOWNSHIP BOARD
DEPARTMENTAL MEETING
Monday, February 14, 2022**

<u>Roll Call:</u>	Supervisor Abney	Present
	Clerk Fritz	Present
	Treasurer Thurston	Present
	Trustee Douglas	Present
	Trustee Westphal	Present

There being a full board present, Supervisor Abney called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Also in attendance: Director Craig Oatten and Office Manager Megan Weaver.

Acceptance of Agenda:

It was moved by Westphal and supported by Thurston to accept the agenda as presented. There being all ayes, the motion carried.

Public Comments: None.

Pending Business:

Mr. Rimun Kouza, owner of Carrollton Center, asked the board members if they could wait for his property manager to arrive who was running late. It was board consensus to move on with the agenda and come back to Pending Business #1 – Carrollton Center.

Oatten stated that he had met with both Building Inspector Jim Gray and Weaver, and they were looking at revamping the non-owner occupied inspection requirements. The proposed changes would be brought to the board during the budget process next month.

Oatten handed out updated information on the planned road construction projects and maintenance for 2022. The N. Michigan road project (from Schust south to Shattuck) that will be funded by both Federal and State dollars was awarded to the low bidder, Ace-Saginaw Paving Company. That project was scheduled to begin in the spring and be completed in phases to conclude in October. The pre-construction meeting would be held at Carrollton Township and Oatten would update the board with the date and time as soon as he was notified.

Oatten continued that while the Township Board had previously approved three projects for 2022 to be funded with the road millage, he would like to add a fourth project: Bauer Dr. (from Shattuck north to the dead end) with a preliminary estimate of cost of \$78,287.50. Oatten explained that he would like to confirm that number with the Saginaw County Road Commission as he knows there are drainage issues there. Discussion followed. It was moved by Douglas and supported by Abney to approve the Bauer Dr. road project contingent to the final cost estimate remaining at \$78,287.50. There being all ayes, the motion carried.

Oatten addressed Mr. Kouza, his attorney Mr. Douglas Swatosh, and property manager Bill Lucio about the condition of Carrollton Center (previously Skyway Plaza). He explained that at

one time it was a thriving shopping center, and the residents of Carrollton would like to see it that way again. He asked the gentlemen to explain what their vision was for the property including a financial commitment and timeline.

Mr. Kouza explained his frustrations to the board in trying to get renters to fill the building. He stated that 80% of the inquiry calls are for medicinal and recreational marijuana businesses. The other 20% were people with no credit. He told the board that if they approved recreational marijuana tonight, he could have the complex filled by the following day. Mr. Kouza said it was not like he wasn't trying. The Save-A-Lot store was going to leave, and he bought them out and totally restored and remodeled the store. He spent \$11,000 cleaning up after the owner of the thrift store left and has not received any payment from her. He also had spent \$65,000 on repairing the parking lot in front of Save-A-Lot and the dollar stores and updated all the lighting to LED.

Westphal asked Mr. Kouza what happened with the pharmacy that was supposed to locate there. Mr. Kouza responded that the deal fell through after he spent over \$20,000 getting the space ready for them. He further explained that he cannot continue to lose money, so he will only build spaces to suit for those that have good credit and a signed lease. Most of the people that inquire have no credit; so, he asked if anyone knew of any businesses that need a space to rent, to send them his way as he would give them a "sweetheart deal" that could possibly include free rent for the first year.

Abney stated that the main concern was the current condition of the structure and property. Who would inquire on renting there when it's in such a state of disrepair? Kouza responded that he was fixing the list of items that had been requested by the Township. This spring, his plans include a new roof on the southern end of the building, painting the building located on the north side (by Skyhaven Ct.), landscaping of the parking lot islands and painting the curbs. Abney asked how Kouza advertised for leasing the building. Kouza responded that he has a real estate company that does that for him; but with the Covid pandemic, more and more people work from home and they're not renting anymore. Discussion followed. Kouza asked the board to recommend the best real estate company in the area.

Fritz asked Kouza if he had ever heard the phrase "if you build it, they will come". Kouza replied that he had, but he didn't believe in that theory. Every renter needs a different build-out. He was not going to build when he had no leases and no renters with credit. Fritz stated that the building needs to be fixed and the parking lot is terrible. There must be a plan put in place to make the building suitable for businesses to locate there. Discussion followed.

Douglas told Kouza that he was sorry that he was going through this frustration. He was not aware, and he appreciated Kouza coming to the meeting to explain it. He suggested Kouza contact Saginaw Future for assistance in obtaining renters for the buildings. Kouza asked for Saginaw Future's contact information. He reminded the board members that he had only been the property owner for three years. He had to deal with the thrift store mess, Save-A-Lot, the pharmacy deal falling through, and then Covid hit. It's been a very trying time and he would appreciate the Township assisting him with getting in contact with the right people to help him rent the spaces. Discussion followed.

Westphal asked about the back side of the building and the maintenance of the alleyway in case emergency vehicles needed to get back there. Lucio stated that he kept it plowed in the winter, but they were having issues with people dumping their garbage back there. All the homes that border the back alleyway have gate access through the fencing and a resident was caught dumping garbage on video. Lucio had called the police and the officer gave the resident a warning.

Oatten asked Kouza if he preferred the contact information for Saginaw Future to be sent to him or his attorney. Kouza asked that all information be sent to his attorney, Mr. Swatosh and he provided his cell phone number to everyone and told them to call if they had any questions or concerns in the meantime.

New Business:

Oatten asked the board to raise the vehicle impound release fee for the Police Department. When people want to pay after office hours, it would be much easier to raise the amount to \$80 so that his officers wouldn't have to make change. Discussion followed. It was moved by Fritz and supported by Westphal to amend the FY 2021-2022 Fee Schedule by increasing the Police Department's Impound Release Fee from \$75 to \$80 (copy attached). There being all ayes, the motion carried.

Weaver presented a request from Steven and Laura Sanderson (3833 Gladstone) to purchase the Township-owned land located next to their property. The report for the property located at 3700 Cleveland (vacant land) was reviewed. The property was approximately 1.785 acres in size. Discussion followed.

It was moved by Thurston and supported by Douglas to set the minimum bid at \$5,500 for the Township-owned land located at 3700 Cleveland (PIN #11-12-4-05-1312-000) and to receive bids by Monday, March 14, 2022, with the bid to be awarded at the Township Board meeting that same day. There being all ayes, the motion carried.

Public Comments:

Rose King, 3427 N. Michigan, stated that she would like to see more done in recruiting school crossing guards. She believed the rate of \$11 per hour was not enough. Discussion followed. Oatten stated that he would be doing a comparison with other communities to see about raising the rate. Thurston stated that the pay increase should not wait until the budget process and asked Oatten to bring the comparisons to the next meeting on February 28.

Director Comments/Updates:

Oatten stated that he had received an email from a resident that would like to start a community garden. He would be meeting with her in the coming week.

Oatten asked the board members to make sure to read the article reference the ARPA funds in the latest Township Focus magazine as this would be a topic of discussion during the budget process.

Weaver informed the board that over \$260,000 in property tax payments had been received that day (due date). The Township will continue to collect 2021 property taxes (with penalty) until February 28, 2022, and then all delinquents will be handed over to the Saginaw County Treasurer on March 1, 2022.

Board Comments:

Westphal stated she was concerned about the crossing guard pay and thought it should be no less than \$25 per day. Westphal continued that she had a beautification committee that she was putting together for the spring.

Fritz passed out Oatten's annual performance evaluation forms to the other board members. He created a new format this year and he would like them completed and returned to him by the end of March.

Thurston stated that she was happy that Mr. Kouza finally showed up and there was good conversation about getting him connected to the right people. She reminded the board members that Mr. Kouza still needs to be held accountable for the code and safety issues on his property and the condition of the buildings.

Douglas stated that he was also happy the Mr. Kouza attended the meeting; however, he felt that his focus was on the north building, when he should be focusing on the parking lot and the condition of the other larger building to the south (roof replacement, mold remediation, etc.).

Abney stated that he would like to keep the pressure on Mr. Kouza. He was glad to hear that they had plans to finally paint the north building.

Adjournment:

It was moved by Thurston and supported by Westphal to adjourn. There being all ayes, the meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry W. Fritz, Clerk

Public in attendance:

Rimun Kouza	Owner of Carrollton Center
Douglas Swatosh	36510 Goddard Rd. Romulus, MI
Bill Lucio	Carrollton Center

Joan Douglas	1828 Kelly
Rose King	3427 N. Michigan
Dave Brushaber	3780 Bauer