

**PUBLIC WORKS, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE\***  
**ST. JAMES TOWNSHIP, BEAVER ISLAND, CHARLEVOIX COUNTY, MICHIGAN**  
MEETING MINUTES FOR October 19, 2022 10:00AM @ SJT GOVERNMENTAL CENTER

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**Attendees:** Bobbi Welke, Cynthia Pryor, Joel Meintsma, Vicky Fingerroot (on call), Diane McDonough, Shelby Harris, Paul Cole

Call to Order, input on agenda, no minutes reviewed of September 21<sup>st</sup> meeting

**Additions to Agenda:** CIP, Winter Shutdowns, Lighthouse Update, Township Campground Update, Property Research, Ice Rink Project, Christmas Decorations, Goal & Priority Board Work Session, Zoning Updates

**PSJA:** Welke shares with Committee updates towards the past due assessment bill sent from Port St James Association. Within the PSJA, St James Township owns 9 properties of which 5 are clearly marked for public use and not charged for assessments. After discussions with 2 members of the PSJA Board, Welke shares that they have agreed not to charge St James Township this bill for any properties owned by St James Township. Harris will share with Welke the minutes from previous joint meetings between PSJA and SJT for further understanding. Welke shares that PSJA is currently seeking out easements needed for the potential future development and continuation of the Donegal Bay Bike Path. More information and collaboration from SJT will come.

Welke also brings to the attention of the Committee an ORV incident that occurred at Mt Pisgah. Discussion of possible solutions such as placing 10 posts along the property's roadway at a cost of \$50/hole dug was presented by PSJA to which the Committee disagrees on account of concern for safety in the winter time with sledding and other winter activities occurring at Mt Pisgah. Cole suggests providing clear regulations to ORV renters and following up on enforcement while McDonough suggests utilizing trail cams. Harris suggests tabling this issue until after the Public Safety Meeting with Deputy Callian to see what the public and other stakeholders suggest to resolve this Archipelago-wide issue to which the Committee agrees.

**Township Engineer:** Welke brings to the Committee a proposal to search for a new Township engineering firm/representative with intentions to secure one that is locally based, can visit the Island when needed and is multifaceted. The Committee agrees, with Cole emphasizing these firms should be involved enough with the Township to suggest and be aware of grants that we could pursue, Fingerroot asking which firms Welke has in mind already and that we can reach out to other Islands for other suggestions, followed by McDonough requesting to hear pitches from these potential firms, that we'll need to budget for this change most likely and that this will need to be brought before the Board for final approval. Welke agrees with all and will begin contacting firms and working on a proposal to be brought before the Board at the next meeting.

**Capital Improvement Plan (CIP):** Welke reiterates from the Planning Commission and past Board meetings the need for the development of a CIP. A CIP will secure the Township a broader option of grants that can aid in future septic, roads, buildings and other infrastructure needs to which the Committee strongly agrees. Cole shares that both the Peaine and St James Township Planning Commissions have voted for a CIP to be created and discussions of following up on this project after the 2022 Master Plan update have already occurred. Pryor shares with the Committee a copy of a Board-approved staff work plan created in 2021 that

categorizes which job rolls take on the various responsibilities to accomplish the goal of developing a CIP, Economic Development Plan and more.

**Public Safety Meeting:** Initially requested by Deputy Callian, Welke shares with the Committee a plan to host a Public Safety Meeting/Discussion including Peaine Township, focusing on the topics of hiring a 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy, the ORV and enforcement issue and introducing the idea to create a Health & Safety Committee.

Actions have begun for Neal Green to begin training at the Police Academy to be certified as the Island's 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy but details concerning budget, collaboration with Peaine & Charlevoix County are still needed.

All ideas to aid in the enforcement and education of ORV use on Beaver Island (and outer islands) will be presented to the Boards and led by Deputy Callian.

Welke informs the Committee the current ideas for a Health and Safety Committee include having representatives from both Township Boards and from each emergency island service- Sheriff, Fire, EMS, Clinic and possibly others, meeting quarterly to discuss needs and give updates concerning health and safety details of the Island. Welke, Deputy Callian (Charlevoix County Sheriff's Department), Ann Partridge (Clinic Manager) and Kathleen Mason (EMS Director) have already agreed to such a Committee, with plans for Welke to continue reaching out to others (Chief McDonough, Supervisor Tilly & others). This Committee will also take on the need for the development of an Emergency Mitigation Plan that is a priority under the 2017 and 2022 Master Plans.

The Committee agrees with all topics, suggesting we invite the Planning Commissions as well and host this meeting *at the BICC on November 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30PM*. Welke and Pryor will begin the work to get the Notice for this meeting out to the public.

**ETIPP Update:** Welke shares with the Committee her take and ideas from the ETIPP meetings she has joined, along with Harris, who is on the BI ETIPP Team, emphasizing we will need to continue working with Great Lakes Energy and educating the public. The Committee is in support of the work overall but want for further education and information concerning this energy topic and future research to be done.

**Waste Management Report:** Welke informs the Committee that the last Waste Management Committee meeting went very well, making headway in directions she feels are good and had established two sub-committees; a Budget Sub-Committee and an Administration Sub-Committee. Currently the WMC includes Welke and Fingerroot as reps for SJT, Travis Martin and Doug Tilly as reps for PT, George Broder, Andy Stebbins and one seat still open. The WMC agreed to focus on a microgrant being offered from EGLE and looks promising for the Island.

**Winter Shutdowns:** Meintsma informs the Committee that the shutdowns of the Twp Campground, Marinas and Public Restrooms are coming along and on schedule.

When and if to close down the Township Hall was discussed by the Committee. Harris states she will be organizing files from there this Winter but will not need much heat or the bathrooms to be on as the project will be very short-term, followed by the Committee suggesting after the November 8<sup>th</sup> voting we move the Board, PC and other public meetings to the Community Center. This will save the Township money and allow the building to be entirely shut down for the winter. The Committee agrees and Meinstma will schedule a time to winterize the building. The Committee then discussed whether or not to winterize/shutdown the old DNR Building to which all agreed that would be the best option and again would save the Township money. Meintsma will schedule a time to accomplish this.

Meintsma and the Committee also agreed to have the new Solar Charging Table stored for the Winter months.

**Lighthouse:** Meinstma informs the Committee the locks on the Whiskey Point Lighthouse have been changed and reassures the Committee that the safety issue of people able to access the outside top of the lighthouse has been taken care of with access no longer an option- even on tours with the Historical Society.

Pryor and Meinstma also share with the Committee how their meeting with Deena Sanford of the National Parks Service went this last month in review of present issues at the Lighthouse: paint, lens protection, safety, historic preservation, visitation counts and glass partition. Pryor states that work will need to be done this Winter with Sanford, Brian Lijewski of the Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program, the BI Historical Society, and the Coast Guard to create a Management Plan for the Whiskey Point Lighthouse.

Pryor informs the Committee of a grant opportunity through the Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program, due November 18<sup>th</sup>, that offers \$10,000 with a \$5,000 match for the repainting and some improvements to the Whiskey Point Lighthouse. Currently the St James Lighthouse Fund has \$5,443.26 which can cover this match and Meinstma has offered and has the experience to paint the lighthouse if we acquire this grant. The Committee agrees this should be sought after with Meinstma as the contracted worker but McDonough asks what options we have to keep the Lighthouse Fund up and prospering as these funds have been provided primarily by transferring monies when available from the General Fund. Pryor suggests the upcoming Township Grant Writer to have the lighthouse as a focus for grants, while Harris suggests reaching out for private donors who would be interested.

Pryor also reminds the Committee the need for a Lighthouse Committee still that meets the Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program criteria of possessing representatives from the Township Board, Historical Society, Township residents and others which she would be interested in joining.

**Campground Gravel Update:** Welke informs the Committee that the gravel at the St. James Twp Campsite is being fully replaced at the parking area and along the driveway where it is needed most. This gravel will not be charged under the State Grant but is coming from the St James Twp gravel stock. Pryor confirms that the final inspection report is still to be completed.

**St. James Twp Property Research:** McDonough shares with the Committee the current status of work involved with researching what properties are owned by St. James Township aka The Township of St. James. More research is needed and will be done by McDonough leading to the creation of a color schemed map for these properties. The Committee suggests requesting the creation of this map from LIAA, who we currently have hired to update our Master Plan, or contacting the Charlevoix County GIS Office.

**Ice Rink Project:** Several Committee members share the interest and repeated requests expressed verbally and through the Master Plan survey for the building of a community ice rink. The Committee discussed the previous attempts to complete and uphold this project in the past, relaying issues of weather, funding and limited volunteer time as the main drivers to its unsuccessful fruition. Committee members suggest utilizing natural resources instead such as the Harbor or having the future grant writer pursue funding options. Harris shares she has started a file for this project already, as it is high on the priority list for the Master and Recreation Plan, and plans to work further with the Planning Commission and Twp Board.

**Harbor Christmas Decorations:** Cole shares with the Committee that the Christmas Decoration Crew of volunteers will start setting Christmas decorations downtown by mid-November.

McDonough shares that the Pocket Garden Decoration Volunteer list is on schedule and she and Heidi Vigil will be helping oversee that project.

**Goal & Priority Board Work Session:** The Committee discusses the scheduling of the Township's annual Goal & Priority Board Work Session and what topics should be included by referencing past meetings such as this. All members decided that the St James Twp Planning Commission will be invited and that the Work Session will be posted with an agenda sometime next week to be held on *December 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:00PM in the Beaver Island Community Center*. Possibly having the Work Session catered and linked with the upcoming Planning Commission Year-end Summary was also discussed.

**Zoning Updates:** A discussion was started concerning needed zoning updates and the steps that will be needed after the 2022 Master Plan update to achieve, enforce and ensure these updates. More to be discussed at a later date.

**Next Meeting:** November 16<sup>th</sup>, TBD time at the Governmental Center Conference Room

**Meeting Adjourned:** 12:02PM

**Notes:**

- Public Safety Meeting November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5:30PM at the BICC
- Twp Board Work Session December 14<sup>th</sup>, 5:00PM at the BICC

\*Public Works Committee established by Township Board on 12.7.2016. Current members: Supervisor Welke, Trustee Cole, Trustee Fingerroot, Administrative Assistant Pryor, Planning Assistant Harris, Maintenance Director Mientsma