

## **CALL TO ORDER**

The regular December 5, 2013 meeting of the Buchanan Township Board of Trustees was called to order by Supervisor Jane Mitchell at 7:00 pm.

Members Present: Jane Mitchell, Supervisor; Cathy Ganus, Clerk; Janet Dehring, Treasurer; Lynn Ferris and Thomas VanAntwerp, Trustees.

Members Absent: None.

Others Present: Berrien County Sheriff's Deputies Chad Frantz and Nick Von Koenig; eight (8) township residents; one (1) staff; and no members of the press.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The *Pledge of Allegiance* was led by Trustee Lynn Ferris.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the November 21, 2013 minutes was approved as presented.

## **ADDITIONS / CORRECTIONS TO AGENDA**

None.

## **BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

## **SHERIFF'S REPORT – October, 2013**

Berrien County Sheriff's Deputy Nick Von Koenig presented the Sheriff's Report for the month of October, 2013. During that time, 48 complaints were handled, one ticket was issued, and four arrests were made within Buchanan Township. As of November 30, 2013, the Berrien County Sheriff's Department Narcotics Unit has made 136 arrests within Berrien County for drug-related offenses.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

*Chief Elected Officials Council Meeting – December 6, 2013 – St. Joseph City Hall*  
*West Michigan DNR Grant Workshop – January 14, 2014 – Kalamazoo – 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.*  
*Hand-On-Rate Study Workshop – January 29-30, 2014*

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

**Motion by Dehring, second by Ganus, to approve General Fund check # 8927 to and including check # 8958 totaling \$21,481.31 as well as Fire Fund check # 5426 to and including check # 5435 totaling \$2,796.56. Roll call vote showed unanimous approval, motion carried (5-0).**

## **REPORTS**

### *Fire Report – Tim Jesswein*

Mitchell inquired as to the status of the capping of the water hydrants within the Fire Station. Jesswein reported he will have quotations ready by the first of the month. Mitchell also requested that Jesswein secure two additional quotes for the installation of four-inch (4”) well.

Jesswein praised Fire Captain Steve Mullen in rendering assistance to a Township resident who had fallen in his yard during the recent storm. Mullen stayed with the victim until SMCAS could arrive.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### *Property Tax Issue*

Mitchell advised that Buchanan Township Assessor Nancy Williams had investigated the property tax situation regarding the park parcel within the Crescentview subdivision. Williams reported that the Township Board of Review cannot issue refunds; however, the Township can submit a form to the Michigan State Tax Commission (STC) to request that they (STC) remove the assessment for 2011; however, since the law changed in June, 2013, that is the furthest the Township can go back. It should be noted that the Board of Review can waive the 2012 and 2013 taxes. Mitchell will contact Township counsel for further direction.

Township resident Lori Pawielski questioned why a private transaction would be the subject of a Township Board meeting. Mitchell advised that the assessor made an error in adding the property to the tax rolls during the 2010 Township-wide reassessment. Pawielski stressed that she and her husband are not restricting and have never intended to restrict residents of the Crescentview subdivision from accessing the lake – the purchase of the private park from Samson/Skelley was to have better control over those people who do not reside within the subdivision from accessing the lake at all hours of the day and night and leaving refuse lying around. The Quit-Claim deed filed by the Pawielski’s stipulates that the park shall remain as it was originally deeded in 1965 for the enjoyment of the residents of the Crescentview subdivision.

Township resident Marjorie Trapp stated the residents of Crescentview have never paid taxes on the private park. She and her husband are senior citizens and the fact there are unknown individuals on the lake at any given time is a safety/security concern for them.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mitchell advised that contained in the Board packet are the final drafts of the agreement for sewer service (draft 4) and agreement for water service (draft 5). She requested that Board members review the drafts and provide feedback. The next Joint Water/Sewer Board meeting work session has been set for December 19, 2013 at 7:00 a.m. at the Buchanan City Hall.

December, 2013 Board of Review will meet on Tuesday, December 10, 2013 at 5:30 p.m.

Jesswein reported that the Buchanan Township Firefighters will not be holding their Annual Food Drive this year as the American Legion is holding a “Stuff a Bus” campaign. Instead, firefighters will hold a food drive in February, 2014 in an attempt to assist local food banks until the Letter Carrier’s Food Drive in March or April. Jesswein stated that those who still wish to donate a turkey or ham should contact the Fire Department and they would see that the perishable food items are delivered to Redbud Area Ministries (RAM).

**CITIZEN COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:47 pm.

Cathy A. Ganus  
Buchanan Township Clerk