

HARTLAND TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING FINAL MINUTES  
February 25, 2025 – 7:00 PM

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Fountain at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Roll Call**

PRESENT: Supervisor Fountain, Clerk Ciofu, Treasurer Horning, Trustee Lubeski, Trustee McMullen, Trustee O'Connell, Trustee Petrucci

ABSENT: None

Also present were Township Manager Mike Luce, Finance Director Susan Dryden, and Public Works Director Scott Hable.

**4. Approval of the Agenda**

**Move to approve the agenda for the February 25, 2025 Hartland Township Board meeting as presented.**

Motion made by Trustee Petrucci, Seconded by Trustee McMullen.

Voting Yea: Supervisor Fountain, Clerk Ciofu, Treasurer Horning, Trustee Lubeski, Trustee McMullen, Trustee O'Connell, Trustee Petrucci

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

**5. Call to the Public**

No one came forward.

**6. Approval of the Consent Agenda**

**Move to approve the consent agenda for the February 25, 2025 Hartland Township Board meeting as presented.**

Motion made by Treasurer Horning, Seconded by Trustee O'Connell.

Voting Yea: Supervisor Fountain, Clerk Ciofu, Treasurer Horning, Trustee Lubeski, Trustee McMullen, Trustee O'Connell, Trustee Petrucci

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

- a. Approve Payment of Bills
- b. Approve Post Audit of Disbursements Between Board Meetings
- c. 02-11-25 Hartland Township Board Regular Meeting Minutes

**7. Pending & New Business**

- a. Settlers Park MCMBA trail update

Tom Hermann and Marc Cope of the Motor City Mountain Biking Association (MCMBA) came forward to provide an update on the Settler's Park mountain bike trail system. Mr. Hermann stated the MCMBA maintains thirteen different trail systems in the Detroit area of over 100 miles of trails. He provided a Settler's Park Usage Report that included pictures from the Settler's Park trails and

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went into a discussion of how they measure the usage of the trails, not just for mountain bikers, but also for walkers and hikers. He gave a brief overview of Strava app used by cyclists, runners, and other outdoor athletes, and went on to explain how they extrapolated the data to estimate the usage of Settler's Park trails. He provided data on three segments of the trails, the West Side Story, the Recovered Kidneys, and the Mayflower segments. He provided usage estimates for a nine-month period ending on December 31, 2024, stating the West Side segment had 8,780 user attempts, and the Recovered Kidneys segment of 4,329 user attempts. He stated it was more difficult to estimate the Mayflower segment as it is the whole 6.7 mile trail system. He then presented Strava heatmap data of activity for Settler's Park, the Township, and larger areas that included other area parks. Supervisor Fountain stated we are working on interconnectivity issues within the Township and are looking for data that would help with this issue. Mr. Cope pointed out that the heat map for the connection from the High School to Settler's Park was very bright and that connection was only a year and a half old which is an example of "if it is built people will use it". Mr. Hermann stated they have contributed 332 hours of volunteer time to the maintenance of the trail and thanked the Township for their assistance in helping out with mowing and such. Mr. Hermann stated this is classified as a local park trail and it is very popular with younger and newer riders and families.

b. Public Works Tractor Purchase Letter of Intent

Public Works Director Scott Hable indicated that Tri County equipment has stated a delivery date for the utility tractor will be looking to purchase will be June or July. He stated we are seeking the approval to send a signed letter of intent letting them know we are very interested in this purchase and this will be enough to have them begin production of the tractor for a June/July delivery. This does not involve any funds at this time. The tractor will come with a front end loader, a brush hog, pallet forks and a back blade for grading. It was the consensus of the Board to issue the letter of intent.

c. Municipal Bond Tax-Exempt Status Resolution

Finance Director Susan Dryden gave a brief overview of the potential legislation for eliminating tax-exempt bonds. She stated Hartland Township has been issuing tax exempt bonds for over 40 years and this issue comes up from time to time as Congress looks to increase revenues. She gave a brief history of legislation that allows for tax exempt bonds and stated if the tax exempt bonds are eliminated all of our residents will pay more for the bonds issued by the Township. She stated we are trying to get our message out to our State and Federal legislators to state that this is very important for local communities to continue to provide the infrastructure needed for their communities. The higher interest rates, if tax-exempt bonds are eliminated, may require cost cuts or the reduction of projects local communities may need. She stated that the GFOA, MML, MTA and MAC are encouraging their members to pass this resolution. Trustee Petrucci inquired as to whether the Hartland Deerfield Fire Authority (HDFA) should support this and Director Dryden recommend they do so as bonding may be in the future of the HDFA. Manager Luce stated the more support we can get from the local communities will be very beneficial. Director Dryden stated that, depending on bond market conditions, the elimination of tax exempt bonds could add three to four percent to bond interest costs. She also stated she envisioned a sunset provision if this were to occur, which could lead to a rush of bond projects that would drive up construction costs similar to the AARP situation. She stated that bonding must coincide with the project and bonding early is not an option that can be utilized, due to arbitrage rules.

**Move to approve the Resolution of Support for Municipal Bond Tx-Exempt Status**

Motion made by Treasurer Horning, Seconded by Trustee Petrucci. Roll call vote taken.  
Voting Yea: Supervisor Fountain, Clerk Ciofu, Treasurer Horning, Trustee Lubeski,  
Trustee McMullen, Trustee O'Connell, Trustee Petrucci  
Voting Nay: None  
Absent: None Motion Passes: 7-0-0

d. Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Hartland Township Budget Review

Manager Luce stated we are reviewing the FY2025-2026 General Fund budget tonight. The General Appropriation Act, which is the public hearing and the adoption of the budget, will be held at the first Board meeting in March, and the FY2024-2025 final budget amendments are to be approved at the second Board meeting in March. He then provided an overview of the FY2025-2026 revenues highlighting the minor increase in property tax revenues as housing values increase and the increase in state shared revenue. He also highlighted Professional Review Fees, which are deposits from developers for engineering services. These funds are paid out to our third-party engineering firm as the developments progress through the construction process. He then reviewed the appropriations for each of the departments for FY2025-2026. Notable items highlighted were the corrected Merit Pool number, offset by taking the Project Specialist position from full time to part time and Contingencies in Administration, and additional expenses for Contracted Services and Legal Fees for potential Michigan Tax Tribunal cases in Assessing. Manager Luce highlighted the increase in hours request for the Cashier in the Treasurer's budget and a brief discussion was held on the combined projected wages for the current fiscal year for the Deputy Treasurer and Cashier, and the additional requested hours. Treasurer Horning provided a spreadsheet to the Board of the hours needed for the Cashier and provided a brief overview of the computations. Clerk Ciofu stated he had issues with the hours that were used for the current fiscal year, the additional hours added for short term leave issues during the current fiscal year, and the number of additional hours being requested for FY2025-2026. Treasurer Horning gave an overview of items not getting done this current year and a brief discussion was held on credit card processing. Manager Luce then resumed the review of the remaining departments leading a brief discussion of the Police Protection, the budget revenue collections from Hartland Consolidated Schools (HCS) and Charyl Stockwell Academy (CSA), and the potential meeting of the Livingston County Sheriff's Department (LCSD), HCS and CSA as to future of the LCSD Contract with the Township. He also highlighted the Professional Review Costs placeholder amount that is the offset of the Professional Review Fees in Planning & Zoning. Manager Luce stated the net budget surplus for the proposed FY2025-2026 is \$23,963.

Clerk Ciofu inquired as to consideration of former Trustee Germane's request for additional funding for the HERO Center and Treasurer Horning inquired as to the same for the Senior Center. A brief discussion was held on potential increases and the current contracts and it was the consensus to have the Admin Committee discuss this and come back with a recommendation. Trustee McMullen inquired as to the Farmer's Market budget being zero in Parks & Recreations and Treasurer Horning stated that she is retiring from the Farmer's Market as they now two individuals willing to take over the Market, one who became Certified. She also stated the Hartland Chamber is willing to act as the fiduciary for the Farmer's Market going forward. She stated, if agreeable to the Board, that she will bring to the next Board meeting the closing of the Farmer's Market bank account and the transfer of funds to the Chamber. Trustee Lubeski inquired as to the Capital Outlay in Parks & Recreation regarding the \$2400 for the baggers for the mowers and Director Hable stated that this is one half the cost of a bagger with the other half in the Cemetery Department Capital Outlay as they shared the costs of mowing. Clerk Ciofu stated that the surplus of \$26,963 takes the Fund

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Balance to \$4.3MM and inquired as to possibly moving this surplus to the Administration Department to make the Project Specialist a full time position as we have been discussing the need for this position for several years. Supervisor Fountain stated we have a goal of having twenty percent of revenues go to Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and he calculated that this budget is around fifteen percent. Manager Luce stated the budgeted transfer to Capital Improvement is a conservative estimate and it usually comes in higher than that. He stated the the FY2024-2025 surplus of \$243,203 was originally budgeted at around \$19,000. Director Dryden stated that if the actual surplus trends last year's surplus we should wind up a little short of our twenty percent goal.

Manager Luce then reviewed the remaining funds of Liquor Law Enforcement, M-59 Road Improvements, Millpointe Road Debt, Bullard Lake SAD, Cable TV Fund, highlighting the Capital Outlay for new computer equipment for the Township Hall, NearMap, and GIS, and the Road SADs Fund. Supervisor Fountain inquired as to the discussion we held on a new server and whether this will be funded out of PEG fees. Director Dryden stated that a portion of the new server will be PEG funds, but a portion related to BS&A will come through the Capital Improvement Fund. Manager Luce stated that the new potential Communication App will be funded through PEG fees.

**8. Board Reports**

Trustee O'Connell - No report.

Trustee Lubeski - No report.

Trustee McMullen - No report.

Trustee Petrucci - Stated he met with Communications Director Melynda Bernardi to put together a Veterans Memorial slide show for the website and he asked residents to submit photos of veterans when they were in the service and a corresponding picture of them today to be included in the presentation. He stated we would like to have the pictures submitted by the end of March.

Clerk Ciofu - No report.

Treasurer Horning - Stated tax collection ends on Friday, February 28, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. and the Treasurer's Office will be open during that time for tax collection only, and that no other Township Departments will be open on that day.

Supervisor Fountain - No report.

[BRIEF RECESS]

**9. Information / Discussion**

a. Manager's Report

Manager Luce stated he, Trustee Petrucci, and Trustee O'Connell met with Nik Rajkovic of WHMI regarding the Veterans Memorial and he stated there was good conversation as to why and what we are doing with the Memorial. Manager Luce stated he sent him some renderings of the monument and stated parts of the conversation will be aired on Sunday with a possible article in the paper. Manager Luce stated he sent out the rendering of the M-59 interchange landscape plan from Planning Commissioner Sue Grissim to the Board. Consensus of the Board that the plan was extremely well done and was very impressive, however financial considerations may not allow for full buildout. Manager Luce has discussed this with Commissioner Grissim and he will schedule a Board work session to discuss the next steps. Manager Luce stated that Oakbrooke Apartments has been issued a permit to repair the roof of the building damaged in a fire a year or so ago. He stated we also received a conceptual plan for a Kroger Gas Station on the Waldenwoods property on M-59. Manager Luce stated we will have the renewal of the Support Emergency Operations Plan

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supporting the Livingston County Emergency Operation Plan/Emergency Action Guidelines in the event of disaster or severe emergency on the next Board meeting agenda.

**10. Adjournment**

**Move to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.**

Motion made by Clerk Ciofu, Seconded by Trustee McMullen.

Voting Yea: Supervisor Fountain, Clerk Ciofu, Treasurer Horning, Trustee Lubeski, Trustee McMullen, Trustee O'Connell, Trustee Petrucci

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Submitted by

Larry N. Ciofu, Clerk