

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 30, 2014**

Supervisor Combs called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. in the Board Room. Present: Supervisor Combs, Clerk Wright, Treasurer Budd, Trustee Hart, Trustee Jahr, Trustee McClanahan and Trustee Miller. Others in attendance: Secretary Montgomery, DDA Director Ireland, Deputy Director-Fire Besson, Assessing Coordinator Stevenson, Senior Director Jordan, and an audience of thirteen (13).

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Treasurer Budd requested removal of Consent Agenda items #1 and #2 [Work Study Minutes of December 15, 2014 and Regular Board Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2014]. Hart moved, Wright seconded to approve the agenda as amended. Carried

**PUBLIC HEARING:** Jahr moved, Hart seconded to open the public Hearing on the 2014 Amended General Fund Budget and 2015 proposed General Fund Budget at 4:03 p.m. Residents commented on time of the Special Board Meeting; 2015 proposed wages in the Supervisors Office, 2015 proposed movement of Public Safety Internet Technology position from the Public Safety Department to the Internet Technology Department; 2015 proposed Fire Department capital outlay budget; 2015 proposed departmental budgets; 2015 proposed Recreation Department wage increase; utilization of landfill funds to balance the budget; Fire Station staffing levels, training and response times; dissemination of draft budget to the public; providing directives and direction to departmental Directors; road dust prevention; museum funding sources and 2014 amended Developmental Services consultant costs. Senior Director Jordan commented on the 2015 proposed Senior Department staffing, wages and increase in the services provided. AFSCME Local 236 President Kurtz commented on AFSCME bargained positions budgeted but not filled and the Clerk's proposed 2015 salary.

At 5:25 p.m. McClanahan moved, Miller seconded to recess for five minutes. Motion Carried.

The Board of Trustees meeting reconvened at 5:30 p.m. Comments from Board members included: the Special Board Meeting time was agreed upon by a majority of the Board of Trustees; the Supervisors Office wages included a 29 hour Executive Assistant and a full time Human Resource position in 2015; the 2015 capital outlay in the Fire Department was for the down payment on a new ladder truck; the 2015 increase in the Recreations wage line item was due to combining Community Services with Recreation; Fire Station staffing levels provide for four employees at both stations 24 hours daily; changes will be made in the budget process to allow for significant improvements; directives and direction to departmental Directors is provided on an individual basis and a commitment is being made to develop a performance review process; a review of the Wayne County roads dust prevention schedule will occur; funding sources for the museum are being reviewed; Developmental Services consultants were needed prior to filling the Director position; landfill funds have been used to balance the budget since its inception and moving forward additional ways to reduce the amount used for general operating expenditures needs to be explored; many variables make up the budget; the Public Safety Department is being adequately funded to satisfy the level of service that the Board has determined the Township needs which is a high level of service; the increase in the Clerk Salary for 2015 was due to the Boards decision to eliminate longevity as a separate item and roll the cap into wages for all eligible Trustees and that all part-time Trustees are being brought to the same wage level; increase in Clerk's office wage line item was to bring a part time union employee to full time as a shared position with the Treasurer's office; the Developmental services 2015 budget includes an additional union position and the 2015 Senior Department budget maintains the current two, 29 hour a week, employees as desired by the majority of the Board of Trustees. Budd moved, Wright seconded to close the public hearing at 6:34 p.m. Carried.

Budd moved, McClanahan supported to open the Public Hearing on 2014 Amended and 2015 Proposed Special Revenue Funds Budgets at 6:35. Carried. Resident commented on the Downtown Development Authority and potential of additional tax capture by extending the district; LDFA consultant fees, legal fees and administrative wages. DDA Director Ireland commented that any attempt to amend the current boundaries would put the DDA in a position that would allow current members of the district to opt out and by keeping it the way it is allows the DDA to do more. Board members commented on: the desire to have the DDA to come back to the Board with a presentation on their budget; the need for a review of the Townships responsibility over the DDA; the re-finance of the LDFA bonds with Board member knowledge of all re-finance options; that administrative wages are reimbursed by the LDFA to township employees for services provided; that the LDFA members are non-compensated; that the Township is spending more money than it captures though the millage; that the general fund balance and the landfill funds are going down; that the board needs to start dialogue focusing on concrete proposals to address funding concerns; that alternative sources of funding are being explored to support the Museum and a financial review should occur in three months and that the percentage of the tax captured in the DDA district comes from other taxing jurisdictions and through the police millage. Miller moved, McClanahan seconded to close the public hearing at 7:20 p.m. Carried.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Residents commented on the proposed Water and Sewer rate increase; expressed concern regarding expenses in the Water Department and requested that the budget be reviewed again in February.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Jahr moved, McClanahan seconded to approve resolution ~~2014-30~~ 2014-33 the 2015 Water and Sewer fee schedule. Roll call vote. Yeas: Combs, Budd, Wright, Hart, Jahr, McClanahan. Nays: Miller. Motion Carried.

Trustee Miller indicated she was voting no because even though some of these fees were justified by increases from external entities she felt there needed to be a deeper understanding of how the additional increases were to be divided up.

Wright moved, McClanahan seconded to approve the 2014 amended Water and Sewer Budget and the 2015 Proposed Water and Sewer Budget. Roll call Vote. Yeas: Combs, Budd, Wright, Hart, Jahr, McClanahan. Nays: Miller. Motion Carried.

Trustee Miller indicated she was voting no because it correlates with the Water and Sewer fee schedule.

Wright moved, McClanahan seconded to approve the 2014 amended General Fund Budget, the 2015 Proposed General Fund Budget and Resolution 2014-32 the 2015 Salaried Employee Wage Schedule. Treasurer Budd requested the motion include: A) Revenues in excess of those noted shall be dedicated to fund balance; B) Fiscal year line items, which are not expensed, with the exception of specified reserve line items, shall revert to net income; C) Approval of appendices noted above as part of the General Fund Budget; D) Revenue as "Tax Administrative Fee" is to continue as in past practice. The allocated millage for Township operations is 4.9144, which represents .9144 mill for Township Operations and 4 mills for Public Safety; E) Adoption by departmental total; F) Van Buren Township Board of Trustees hereby sets the value for capitalization of fixed asset at \$1,000 for items having a useful life greater than one year. The exception would be computer and technology equipment for which items with values less than \$1,000 will be grouped and depreciated as long as the total of the grouped items exceeds the \$1,000 threshold; and G) December 30, 2014 approval supersedes prior resolutions. Roll Call Vote. Yeas: Combs, Budd, Wright, Hart, Jahr, McClanahan. Nays: Miller. Motion Carried.

**DISCUSSION ON THE 2014 AMENDED GENERAL FUND BUDGET AND 2015 PROPOSED GENERAL FUND BUDGET:** Trustee Miller commented that even though the entire Board spent a significant amount of time going over the budget she felt they also needed to look at the Strategic Plan they went over in February and correlate it to the budget; review options regarding the LDFA bonds to a greater degree, have a budget stabilization plan; strengthened the relationship with the DDA and the Department head; that raises for Elected Officials were unnecessary; in the end we are spending more than we should and we need a better process in place. Trustee Jahr commented that he shared some of the comments and concerns made by Miller but indicated he would be voting yes because it was necessary to have the budget in place before the New Year. Trustee McClanahan commented that the delay in the budget process caused a lot of anxiety but in the future we will get better and with that being said we need to approve the budget and work towards a better year. Clerk Wright thanked the entire Board for doing their due diligence in going through the budget process, agreeing to disagree and in the end coming together for a common cause. We are doing our due diligence and spending Township funds and revenues like we should. Trustee Hart commented that he does not believe everyone on the Board can agree on everything in the Budget but that the Board is working very hard and in 2015 some tough decisions will need to be made. Treasurer Budd commented she did not believe we should be taking more from the Landfill than we take in; that we need to get back on track on some of the expenditures and set a budget review date in February. Supervisor Combs commented she will establish a budget calendar according to Michigan State Law so that we are in compliance with everything and so the Board has a chance to consider everything in advance of having to pass anything. Miller also commented that we need to look at the review process on how we evaluate our employees because there is not a process in place. Hart requested an analysis, a comparative of salaries, of equal work within the Township and with other municipalities which would include performance to objectives review. McClanahan stated without a policy we cannot put anything in place. Jahr commented he wanted a time table in 2015 to address the major problems and come up with a long range plan for the Township referencing Visteon Bond payments and finite Landfill funds. A January meeting for long range planning was requested by Trustee Hart.

Budd moved, Hart seconded to approve the 2014 Amended Special Revenue and 2015 Proposed Special Revenue Budgets as being A) Community Development Block Grant as the projects apply to our Township's Fiscal Year, B) Downtown Development Authority, C) Local Development Finance Authority, D) Federal Forfeiture Fund E) State Forfeiture Fund, F) E 9-1-1 Service Fund, G) Landfill Fund, H) Belleville Area Museum and we adopt them as presented taking into consideration that revenue in excess of those noted with be dedicated to fund balance, items not expensed shall revert to net income and this motion supersedes any other budget. Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Combs, Budd, Wright, Hart, Jahr and McClanahan. Nays: Miller. Motion Carried.

Jahr commented that the Special Review Budgets were presented at the last minute, that there was not enough time to go through them in detail and that they should have input on those budgets. He requested attorney guidance on the parameters pertaining to the Townships involvement in the LDFA and DDA budgets. Trustee Miller commented that she is voting no based on previous stated comments and thanked the Board for working so diligently and the residents for their comments.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Supervisor wished everyone the Best of the New Year and a Safe and Happy Holiday.

**AUDIENCE (Non-Agenda Items):** Resident commented that in 2015 he wishes to see the Board move forward, think outside the box, get together, start early and develop a plan.

**CLOSED SESSION:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:** Hart moved, McClanahan seconded to adjourn at 8:06 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

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Leon Wright, Township Clerk

Date: \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Linda H. Combs, Township Supervisor

Approved \_\_\_\_\_.