

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 3, 2015**

Supervisor Combs called the meeting to order at 7:00 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 and an audience of three (3).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Budd moved, Wright seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: McClanahan moved, Hart seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. [Regular Board Meeting Minutes of February 17, 2015; Work Study Session Minutes of February 17, 2015; Closed Session Minutes of February 17, 2015 Prepaid List of February 20, 2015; Prepaid List of February 26, 2015; Voucher List of March 3, 2015; Approval of Resolution 2015-07 "Prohibition Against Using Accrued Time While Still Working for the Township" Employee Policy]. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC HEARING: None

CORRESPONDENCE: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: McClanahan moved, Hart seconded to approve the Administrative Assistant/Benefits Coordinator Job Description and approval of the Personal Services Agreement between the Township and Nicole Sumpter to fill the position. Roll Call Vote. Yeas: Combs, Budd, Wright, Hart, Jahr and McClanahan. Nays: Miller. Motion Carried.

REPORTS: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Trustee Miller announced the Wild Game Dinner at Trinity Episcopal Church Saturday, March 14, 2015. Doors open at 4:00, dinner at 5:00. Tickets: \$25 Adult & \$15 age 6-12, children under 5 free. All proceeds to benefit Trinity's Journey to Adulthood upcoming youth program mission trip; Clerk Wright thanked the Van Buren Civic Fund for their generous donation of \$28,000 to complete the wrought iron fencing at Tyler Cemetery. The Civic Fund had also donated the funds needed to start the project and the fence will be fully completed this year; announced that cemetery clean-up will begin March 23, 2015 and run through April 2, 2015. Receptacles placed on graves such as flowerpots, religious items and similar objects will be discarded if not removed by March 20, 2015. New items may be displayed beginning April 3, 2015. Supervisor Combs reminded residents to "spring forward" by setting their clocks one hour forward on Sunday March 8, 2015.

AUDIENCE (Non-Agenda Items): Trustee McClanahan read a letter from Adam Byrd "resident and community activist" who referenced an article in the *Belleville Area Independent* labeled "7th Annual Report to Taxpayers". The resident was disappointed with the leadership of the township "for allowing an employee to gross \$215,000.00 in a single year" and urged the board to discontinue "wasteful spending". Supervisor Combs response is as follows: Dear Mr. Byrd your correspondence was received by the entire board however it contained some minor misrepresentations. Although we all agree on transparency the salaries, as published, were inaccurate. The cross training of police officers came about as a way to fill

vacancies in the fire department at a time when the recruitment of firefighters was at an all-time low. The resulting blended rate pay was a mandate from the Police Officers Labor Council union based on a federal ruling that provides a premium rate for those persons performing both jobs. The problem was exacerbated recently by the Affordable Care Act which limits the use of part-time employees such as paid on call firefighters to 29 hours a week. The Township Board and the Public Safety Director continue to work diligently to find solutions for this issue. For example we recently passed a resolution that no longer allows persons to be employed in more than one position within the Township. Tonight we passed a resolution to prevent dual employed persons for using accrued leave time to work the other position. We have also passed an 18 hour policy which says that police and fire personnel can only work 18 consecutive hours after which they must take at least a 6 hour break. The Public Safety Director and his staff are looking at policy revisions as well. We are currently in contract negotiations with the POLC and the Michigan Association of Fire Fighters and are exploring further ways to deal effectively with this issue. As an employed Police Officer and President of the POLC local you certainly are in a position to be part of the solution. The Van Buren Township Board is not engaged in wasteful spending. We are, in fact, stretching the dollars as far as possible but in doing so we must adhere to the collective bargaining agreements and therefore are compelled by law to honor the blended rate until another is option is discovered. We have made significant progress with the policy adjustments and resolutions that have been implemented. As with all Township residents we appreciate your concern and commitment to making Van Buren Township great place to live, work and play. Sincerely Supervisor and Board of Trustees.

ADJOURNMENT: Miller moved, McClanahan seconded to adjourn at 7:27 p.m. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Leon Wright, Township Clerk

Date: _____.

Linda H. Combs, Township Supervisor

Approved: