

OCQUEOC TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING

June 8, 2023

The regular meeting of the Ocqueoc Township Board was held on June 8, 2023 at the Township Hall. All board members were present – Jerry Counterman, Jerome Isaacs, Shari Pomranke, Susan Radka and Pam Schaedig. Also present were Joel Jaroch, and Nancy and Tom Gall.

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Counterman at 7:00 p.m. and began with the pledge to the flag. The agenda was distributed and approved. The minutes of the May meeting were read and accepted as presented.

Schaedig gave a report on the May 24 Onaway Ambulance Board meeting. Coordinator Hyde again mentioned health insurance for employees – right now Cheboygan pays 75%, and they are 3 medics short. They talked about having employees shop on the Health Care Marketplace and them getting a “fulltime employee retention bonus” to cover part of the cost. His Basic crew in Onaway is OK for now. Now a Paramedic must train at a college, where they used to be able to train in-house (Hyde is qualified to teach, and could teach at a college, but not in-house due to regulations). They are talking to legislators about changing it back to the way it used to be. The Echo Unit is having the police paraphernalia taken off and moved to the new vehicle so it can be taken to Onaway, hopefully next month. What to be done with the old unit will have to be decided. Onaway send out 3600 brochures, and receives 500 back, at a revenue of \$30,000, which is a good percentage. Cheboygan sends out 23,000 and receives only \$40,000 from that, and Rogers City receives about \$40,000, also. Any on Medicaid has their ambulance trips covered, so don't need the coverage. In Cheboygan a new ambulance was purchased for \$177,000 (ordered in 2021 and received in 2022), and the same rig now costs \$220,000. Hyde will check on moving savings to CDs with a higher interest rate.

Radka gave a report on the Ocqueoc Outdoor Center meeting. The memorial for Dolores Merchant was well attended. After June they will get a quote for putting in a floating dock for kayaks/canoes. The next meeting will be June 28 at the MSU Extension office at 1:30.

A small group from the Ocqueoc Lake Advisory Committee met to prepare an information sheet and petition forms to send to property owners, with June 15 being the deadline for returning them. If approval is given from owners of 51% of the total land area, the next step would be a public hearing. Radka had information from 2008 when there was an Ocqueoc River Watershed Committee. July 15 there will be a workshop put on Huron Pines, which is an environmental organization, with information on invasive species.

Counterman gave a report on the May 30 P. I. Elec & Gas Liaison committee meeting. They are working on updating lines and fiber optics for internet services. Rates will be increasing. There is concern about the shutting down of coal and gas plants generating electricity, potentially causing periodic blackouts.

Counterman talked to the County Road Commission Superintendent about getting a portion of the gravel pit on Cheboygan Plains Highway for a transfer site. He will bring it up to the road commission board.

Isaacs and Pomranke will work 8:00 a.m. – 11:30 on Large Item Day July 8, and Radka and Schaedig will cover 11:30 – 3:00. Joel Jaroch offered to help that day, also.

Township funds received from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) were discussed. Several items were mentioned to use the funds for. A motion was made by Schaedig, seconded by Counterman, to have Radka purchase a power point projector and a screen, to be used at upcoming public hearings, at a cost of approximately \$310. M.C. Other possible items mentioned were tables and chairs, a new display case for the front of the hall, a new side door, fixing the ramp, and clearing and fencing if a new transfer site is chosen.

Assessor Berg suggests that the board adopt the following resolutions regarding personal property:

Ocqueoc Township Resolution and Policy for the Canvass of Personal Property

The basic goals of the yearly personal property canvass are:

- To identify new businesses and also check for businesses that may have closed;
- To update assessment rolls for errors and omissions so that future periods will reflect proper amounts;
- To ensure a personal property statement is mailed to each taxpayer or potential taxpayer
- To aid property owners in understanding reporting and filing requirements
- To help create equity in taxation by assuring that everyone pays their fair share

The personal property roll for the local unit will be maintained in accordance with this policy. Any reference to the assessor shall be interpreted to mean any employee of the local unit or contractor/company performing assessing functions or any designee of such an employee.
Identification of Personal Property (Personal Property Canvass)

Routine Annual Property Inspections:

The Assessor performs annual inspections of at least 20% of properties in the local unit. During these inspections the assessor will identify any new taxable personal property and review existing personal property parcels associated with the real parcels visited.

Annual Personal Property Canvass:

During the month of December, either while the assessor is conducting final inspections of construction in progress or separately, they will physically canvas the local unit for taxable personal property.

Additional Personal Property Searches:

Additional efforts made by the assessor to identify personal property the assessor may include, but are not limited to, a review of the DBA records from the County Clerk's office for new or existing DBA business licenses and conducting an internet search via web maps to identify businesses without personal property assessments.

OCQUEOC TOWNSHIP RESOLUTION AND POLICY FOR THE AUDIT PROCEDURES REGARDING GRANTING OR REMOVAL OF REAL PROPERTY EXEMPTIONS

The Municipality, headed by the Assessor, is charged with locating, identifying and valuating all taxable real property and personal property within the Municipality in order to provide a fair and equitable basis for taxation.

The assessing office maintains descriptions of real property, maintains maps showing the ownership and tax districts for the Municipality, and processes property tax exemptions.

Property tax exemptions are granted based on three elements:

- (1) Property ownership
- (2) Property use, and
- (3) Statutory definition

Taxpayers receiving an exemption may be required to apply through the assessing office or other designated office. Michigan State Law includes a range of mandatory exemptions and optional exemptions available for residential, commercial and industrial property.

The assessing office conducts annual reviews and maintains information for those properties that are exempt from taxation to determine whether such properties continue to qualify for an exemption. The annual review of exemptions ensures that properties are correctly assessed and validates the ownership and usage of the properties; some mandatory exemptions were not reviewed since the assessing office has no option but to grant the exemption.

Active monitoring of changes to recorded title, public information review, and periodic field inspections are included as part of the annual review of exempt property. The primary elements of an exemption determination are based on the ownership and use of the property depending on the type of exemption.

Assessing staff reviews property ownership as part of the first consideration for an exemption determination. Secondly, assessing staff confirms that the property is in use for nonprofit exempt purposes. In the case of a senior citizen, disabled veterans and residential exemptions, there are specific requirements related to occupancy and other criteria related to each exemption.

Assessing staff annually reviews exemption determinations employing three elements depending on the type of exemption.

First, all property ownership records are monitored to confirm continuance of ownership to the exempt entity or person through review of ownership records held at the Register of Deeds

Personal Property Parcel Maintenance

Processing New Personal Property Parcels:

When a new personal property parcel is identified through routine property inspections, personal property canvass, notice from a taxpayer, or any other means, the following steps will be followed:

- 1) A parcel number will be assigned
- 2) The business name, physical address, and mailing address will be entered on the parcel. If the mailing address is unknown, the physical address will be used
- 3) The appropriate class and school district will be identified and assigned to the parcel

When it is discovered that previously assessed or exempt personal property is no longer located in the local unit, the parcel will be retired in BS&A for the following assessment cycle.

Personal Property Forms

Personal Property Statements:

Annually on or before January 10th Personal Property Statements will be mailed in accordance with MCL211.19.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township of Ocqueoc hereby adopts the Resolution and Policy for the Canvass of Personal Property Policy as required by the State Tax Commission.

The foregoing resolution offered by board member: Pam Schaedig

Seconded by board member: Jerome Isaacs

And supported by roll call vote.

Ayes: Schaedig, Isaacs, Radka, Pomranke, Counterman

Nays: None

As Clerk of Ocqueoc Township, I do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a resolution adopted by Ocqueoc Township at a regularly scheduled board meeting dated June 8, 2023.

Pamela Schaedig, Clerk

June 8, 2023

Second, annually staff inspects over 5% of properties and notes any changes to exempt properties for review.

Third, the division monitors public information concerning exempt properties and owners.

The Assessing office also strives to maintain exemption files with sufficient documentation to support the decision to grant the exemption. For example, religious exemption files need to include copies of articles of incorporation, Internal Revenue Service determination of nonprofit status, usage statement, contracts for use of the property by other than the applicant organization, and financial disclosures.

Exemption records are maintained in two ways. The primary system is the Assessing.NET computerized data system that retains information regarding ownership, location, physical description, inspection dates, staff comments, and exemption status. This system is generally adequate and contains sufficient data to administer the exemptions.

The second data system is a paper file system that includes the original application and the documents and correspondence that supports the exempt status. The primary source for documenting an exemption is the paper application that is submitted along with supporting documentation.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township of Ocqueoc hereby adopts the Resolution and Policy for the Audit Procedures regarding Granting or Removal of Real Property Exemptions Policy as Required by the State Tax Commission.

The foregoing resolution offered by board member: Jerome Isaacs

And seconded by board member: Pam Schaedig

And supported by Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Schaedig, Isaacs, Radka, Pomranke, Counterman

Nays: None

As Clerk of Ocqueoc Township, I do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a resolution adopted by Ocqueoc Township at a regularly scheduled board meeting on June 8, 2023.

Pamela Schaedig, Clerk

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A discussion followed about short-term rentals. An ordinance from Presque Isle Township was distributed. Schaedig will try to get more information from MTA about whether the state or local municipalities are allowed to have control of them.

Salary discussion followed. A motion was made by Radka, seconded by Counterman, to raise the deputy treasurer's yearly salary from \$50 to \$300 to be on call. M.C.

The expense report was reviewed.

Treasurer Pomranke gave the financial report.

A motion was made by Radka, seconded by Schaedig, to sign a contract with Suburban Propane for LP gas at a rate of \$1.899 until May 30, 2024. M.C.

The board approved Supervisor Counterman to sign a letter of approval for Bearinger Township to apply for the Michigan Fire Equipment Grant on behalf of Bearinger and Ocqueoc, and the Ocqueoc Bearinger Fire Department. This grant is for departments with at least 50% of members being either volunteer or paid-on-call. Each township could possibly be eligible for \$10,000 for their fire department. Deadline for applying is July 10. Eligible purchases must be made between August 1, 2022 and September 31, 2023. Eligible purchases are turn-out coats and pants, hoods, helmets, boots, SBCA masks, gloves, safety vests, radios, batteries, and thermal imaging cameras.

Michigan Municipal League has raised the replacement value of the township hall from \$269,000 to \$492,000.

A motion was made by Isaacs, seconded by Radka, to pay bills and adjourn. M.C.
The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Schaedig, Clerk