

CALL TO ORDER: Supervisor Julian called the regular meeting of the Kasson Township Board to order at 7:00 pm, with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Members Present: Greg Julian – Supervisor, Dana Boomer - Clerk, Julia Carter – Treasurer, Roger Noonan – Trustee, Tad Carter - Trustee
Member(s) Absent: None
Staff Present: Tim Cypher – Zoning Administrator

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA – The board briefly discussed the agenda. Craig Brown from the Road Commission will speak under Presentations. **Noonan moved to approve the agenda as amended. J. Carter seconded. All in favor, motion carried.**

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

MINUTES – The board discussed the minutes from the regular meeting on August 14, 2024. **Noonan moved, T. Carter seconded to approve the August 14, 2024 regular meeting minutes as presented. All in favor, motion carried.** The board discussed the minutes from the special meeting on August 28, 2024. **Noonan moved, J. Carter seconded to approve the August 28, 2024 special meeting minutes as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**

PERTINENT COMMUNICATIONS: None

PRESENTATION – Leelanau County Road Commission/Craig Brown: Julian and Noonan met with Craig Brown in late August regarding the roads. They discussed priority roads for reconstruction and maintenance, and Valley Road was determined to be one of the primary roads to be addressed, from Maple City Road to Bellingher Road. The LCRC determined that the first half mile of Valley Road, from Maple City Road to Tower Road, would be possible to reconstruct in 2025. Brown covered the current status of the road – it is considered to be in poor shape. He believes the base of the road is in good shape, but that freeze/thaw cycles have resulted in substantial breakage in the sides of the road. He provided three estimates – one for heavy wedging, one with chip seal and heavy wedging, and one with wedging with an overlay. The estimates are \$151,950, \$179,650 and \$231,400 respectively. The LCRC is not able to provide a percentage match at this time, but this may change as policies change – Brown will let the township know. Brown would recommend going with option 2 at this time, as the largest improvement for the best price.

Brown summarized other projects in the township that the Road Commission will be undertaking in 2025, including work on other sections of Valley Road and Tower Road. Noonan asked about Hill Road in Maple City; Brown said they have talked briefly about decommissioning part of this road; Noonan asked that this move forward. Noonan said that Fritz Road between M-72 and Baatz Road is another priority, as well as the remainder of Valley Road.

Noonan moved to approve to contract with the Leelanau County Road Commission for Option 2 for the rebuilding of the half mile of Valley Road between Maple City Road and Valley Road in the amount of \$179,650; second by T. Carter. All in favor, motion carried.

Noonan moved, J. Carter seconded to apply the remainder of the township ARPA funds to the Valley Road project. All in favor, motion carried.

Brown will work on getting plans and numbers for the other projects brought up. Brown then moved to a discussion of the Kasson Center/Newman intersection, which has numerous problems. The current plan is to narrow the intersection, slow it down, and turn it into a full three-way stop. The Road Commission has been working on surveying and marking the intersection, and will be notifying neighbors before beginning the project. They are trying to hit a happy medium between making the intersection safer while still giving the large trucks the room they need to make the corner appropriately. The board had consensus that this was needed. Julian passed along the condolences of the board to the Road Commission on the passing of John Popa.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

- a) **TREASURER'S REPORT:** J. Carter had previously submitted the treasurer's report to the board. Receipts total \$429,785.29. Disbursements \$375,397.75. Balance \$1,214,876.03.
- b) **BUDGET REPORT:** Boomer presented a budget report for August. The board briefly discussed.
- c) **BILL APPROVAL** – Boomer presented the updated check detail. The board briefly discussed. **J. Carter moved to pay the bills as presented; seconded by Noonan. All in favor, motion carried.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a. **Cemeteries/Park** – Julian stated that the Township Park gate near the porta-john is not working well, and has had historical issues. He is expecting an estimate from Dave Murphy for repairing the gate hinges, and Noonan will also take a look at it. Julian also called Consumers Energy regarding the tree cutting that was done on the property when they installed the new pole, but has not yet received an explanation for why additional trees were cut.
- b. **Sidewalk & Parking Ordinances** – Julian stated there is will be an on-site meeting with the contractor and Gosling Czubak next week. The work is scheduled to start the end of September. The down payment for the work is being made tonight.
- c. **Olivia Drive Waterpoint** – Boomer has been in contact by email and phone with Tom Thomasma/By the Shore regarding the water point. She has received verbal permission for the driveway work, but has not yet received written permission; she will be continuing to pursue this. Thomasma mentioned that the property may be being sold to a new developer – J. Carter stated that she thinks it may have already been sold. Boomer will continue to look into this.
- d. **Road Projects 2025/2026** – This was mostly covered under Presentation. Extensive planning needs to continue for a long-term project for fixing the roads.
- e. **Fire Station Design** – The fire board had their meeting last week, and they are looking at this closely. They do not recommend Kasson Township moving forward with a design at this time, due to unknowns about operational costs and staffing. The fire board wants to come up with a plan over the next several months to look at these topics, but not until after the new boards are in place and the interlocal agreement is finalized.

The board had an extensive discussion on how to move forward. Boomer is unhappy that the Fire Board has waited until after a contract for conceptual drawings was signed before expressing opposition. Julian states that the Fire Board would like to look at operational costs and staffing before Kasson moves forward with conceptual work. Boomer thinks these two can be done concurrently, and that operational costs cannot be fully determined until after a conceptual design is finished. When she asked Doornbos whether he had met with the architect as previously requested, he stated that he was told by Fire Board members after the meeting that it was not appropriate for him to meet with the architect at this time.

Boomer and Noonan feel that the current station is overly full and that western Kasson Township has inadequate response times from any mutual aid stations. The Fire Board had extensive notification that the process of contracting with a design firm for conceptual design and capital funding options research, and could have entered an opinion before a contract was signed.

Boomer feels the Kasson Township Board should communicate their concerns to the Fire Board in writing. She prepared a draft letter for review (see attached). The board reviewed and made no changes. T. Carter clarified that the main request in the letter is for the board to allow Doornbos to work with the design firm – Boomer stated yes, that is what is being requested at this time.

Noonan moved to send the draft letter to the Fire Board; J. Carter seconded. In favor: J. Carter, T. Carter, Noonan, Boomer. Opposed: Julian. Motion passed.

Noonan thinks the board should continue to move forward with the conceptual design process. Julian thinks that moving forward with the design process is acting against the Fire Board's wishes and the interlocal agreement. He believes the Township Board should wait until the Fire Board has completed their exploration of funding, staffing, and other issues. Boomer does not agree that moving forward is against the interlocal agreement, as while the interlocal agreement states that the Fire Board determines the specifications for the station, there is nothing stating that a township cannot provide them specifications to review to make that determination.

The special meeting previously scheduled for September will be postponed. Julian will reach out to Ray Kendra to inform him of the postponed meeting and see how long the contract can be pushed back.

f. Other Unfinished Business - None

NEW BUSINESS –

- a. Board of Review Alternate Appointment –** Boomer and Julian stated that there was confusion about Board of Review appointments and that Frank Sellgren was never officially appointed to his position as a Board of Review alternate. They recommend the rectification of that error at this meeting. **T. Carter moved, Boomer seconded to appoint Frank Sellgren as the Board of Review Alternate from January 2024 to December 2026. All in favor, motion carried.**

- b. Snowplowing Bids** – Boomer recommended that the board go out for bids for snowplowing for the next contract. The board agreed. The bid request for snowplowing for the hall and fire department waterpoint in Maplewood Commons will be sent to the Enterprise and distributed to interested parties.
- c. Spectrum Fiber Optic Proposal** -Julian has been working with Spectrum to get a quote for service. The quote for the first year was \$99.99 per month, then up to \$115/month by the third year. The township is currently paying \$150/month for Brightspeed. The service provided by Spectrum will be substantially faster than what the hall currently has, and Spectrum provides a wireless backup service that kicks in automatically if the fiber service goes down. **Noonan moved, T. Carter seconded to move to Spectrum for internet and phone service. All in favor, motion carried.**
- d. Other New Business** - None

REPORTS: Planning Commission (PC) – The PC is continuing to look through the Zoning Ordinance, mostly with respect to changes recommended by Cypher.

Zoning Administrator (ZA) – Cypher had previously submitted written reports to the board. He summarized his activities over the last month. He stated that he has been having issues with people not sending checks for their permits. He is starting with making sure he has a check number before issuing a permit, and may need to move to making sure he has a check in hand before issuing a permit. The board appreciates the recent tree planting by Elmers along Baatz Road.

Supervisor – Julian summarized his activities for the month.

Assessor – Standard assessing business is ongoing. Krombeen is working on preparing for the annual audit.

Fire Board – The Fire Board meeting was held last week, and operations are going smoothly there. They are in the midst of negotiations for the new union contract. The fire department audit went well and the final report was presented to the Fire Board by Tobin representative Poortenga. Meetings for the remainder of the year have been moved to the first Thursday of the month at 2 pm.

Clerk/Elections Report – Boomer reported preparation for the November election is beginning. Absentee ballot applications will go out this week and ballots will start being distributed the week of September 23. Boomer, Julian and J. Carter agreed to hold an Election Commission meeting to appoint election inspectors after the October regular meeting. The new computer in the hall office has been set up for use by the assessor. The clerk/deputy clerk will continue to use their existing computer until a new Quickbooks license is purchased – Boomer and J. Carter are looking at options that would allow both of them to access the software, and will report back over the next couple months. Boomer had Bay Area Fire & Safety to the hall to check and update the fire extinguishers, and is now on their list for what should be an annual inspection.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Hall Use and Buildings and Grounds Reports – Noonan reported that there have been two birthday parties at the hall, and the Davis Lake Association will be using it next month. It is also rented once later in October. There was a treatment for mice, and may need to be a second one based on the populations being seen.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Chris Hauke – There should also be a fire extinguisher in the large hall room.

Chase Pasicznyk - Regarding the snowplowing bids, other townships are looking at starting bids, so looking at this sooner is better. The door to the men's room should also be on the fix-it list.

Mike Lanahm – He thanked the board for looking at the roads, as it's been a while since an organized plan has been on the agenda. He also thanked the board for their work on the fire station design and moving the process forward with the Fire Board.

BOARD COMMENT: Roger Noonan – There's a nice fund balance, but let's spend it wisely. There have been a lot of deer hit – he and his family are trying to get some of them moved off the road. Julian stated that there are a lot of moving parts on the fire design issue, and he thinks that the Township Board can continue to work with the Fire Board on this issue. He also asked for thoughts and prayers for Rich Zywicki, injured in an accident.

The next regular meeting will be Wednesday, October 9 at 7 pm.

Motion by Noonan to adjourn, second by J. Carter / **All in favor, motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.

Submitted by:
Dana Boomer, Township Clerk

September 11, 2024

Cedar Area Fire and Rescue Board

Cedar Area Fire and Rescue Board Members:

Over the last several years, discussions have proceeded regarding the construction of an additional fire station for Cedar Area Fire and Rescue on the western side of the CAFR service area. In early 2024, the Kasson Township Board began taking steps to move forward with exploratory work regarding the construction of such a station. The CAFR Board has been apprised of these steps at their regular meetings since early 2024. We want to ensure that everyone is on the same page with regard to the process that the Kasson Township Board has been following, and to mitigate concerns regarding that process.

Kasson Township has two main reasons to be interested in moving forward with the construction of a new fire station in the western portion of the Cedar Area Fire & Rescue service area:

1. Western Kasson Township, and specifically southwestern Kasson Township, is not adequately served by the current arrangement of stations in the region. Distances from the current CAFR station in Cedar are long, and distances from potential mutual aid stations in Empire, Glen Arbor, and Almira Township are not substantially shorter. A new station in this area would substantially shorten response times to properties in western Kasson Township, including a large stretch of M-72 and an ever-expanding number of residential, commercial, and industrial properties, above and beyond what can be accomplished by the current service level or even by expanded mutual aid agreements.
2. The current station in Cedar was originally built as a volunteer station and has been added onto over the years. While the building was well-built for its original purpose and has served the area well over the years, CAFR has grown to the point that the station now lacks the ability to fully accommodate meetings, training, and even allowing the current volume of staff to efficiently complete their day-to-day work. On its own, the current station can no longer meet the needs of the professional, full-time department that the CAFR Board continues to develop.

As the CAFR Board was informed at their July and August regular meetings, the Kasson Township Board has spent the summer exploring options for contracting with a design firm to prepare conceptual drawings and explore funding options for the construction of a new station. On August 28, 2024, Kasson Township contracted with Environment Architects for these stages of the project. The Kasson Township Board acknowledges that there are still many steps to take in the exploration process for the funding and potential construction of a new station. What is expected to come out of the process being undertaken with Environment Architects is a picture of what Kasson Township is interested in building for CAFR and how its construction might be funded. We believe that having this initial picture of a potential station will allow for more targeted discussions and accurate estimates of staffing needs and operational costs. The Kasson

Township Board requests that the CAFR Board allow the fire chief to continue working with the Kasson Township Board and with Environment Architects to provide requested information regarding the conceptual design of a second station.

The Kasson Township Board is interested in building a station to satisfy the needs of the CAFR service area both today and in the future. Our area has an ever-increasing number of structures, residents, visitors, commercial occupancies, and target hazards. The Kasson Township Board urges the CAFR Board to move forward with the exploration of options for operational funding, staffing partnerships, mutual aid partnerships, ideal locations, and other items related to the construction of a second station.

Thank you in advance for your communication, and for all of your previous and ongoing work and discussion on this topic.

Sincerely,

The Kasson Township Board