

Au Train Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes
July 8, 2024 6:00 pm - 8:12 pm

Roll Call:

Board Members Present: Supervisor Michelle Doucette, Clerk Mary Johnson, Treasurer Kristy Cota, Trustee Jake Miller and Trustee Tom Balmes. Also Present: Ryan Walther, Donna Shields, John Carr, Scott and Peggy Smith.

Supervisor Doucette opened our July 8, 2024 meeting at 6:00 p.m. leading us with the pledge.

Approval of the Agenda:

Moved Doucette/seconded Cota to **approve the agenda**. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes:

Moved Doucette/seconded Johnson to **approve the minutes of the June 17, 2024 Regular Board Meeting**. Motion carried.

Pay Bills:

Moved Johnson/seconded Cota to **pay bills**. Johnson, yes; Cota, yes; Doucette, yes; Miller, yes; Balmes, yes. Motion carried. (General Fund #17187-17208; Fire Fund #9190-9201; Garbage Fund #2136-2137; Road Fund #3016).

Financial Reports:

Clerk Johnson presented the June Financial Reports, which were reviewed. Reports are provided to Board Members prior to the meeting.

Board Member Reports:

Treasurer - Balance as of June 30, 2024: General Fund \$316,556.92; Fire Fund \$279,727.91 + CD \$53,385.38; Garbage Fund \$326,979.56; Road Fund \$217,286.42.

Treasurer Cota noted that Summer Tax Bills were sent July 1st. The direct link for BS&A Property Information lookup was made available from the website. Upcoming hall rental for Au Train Landowners Association on July 27th from 7-9:00 pm. Funds from the Sault Ste Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians for government services (\$1,500.00) and the grant for Valley Spur (\$10,165.61) were received. Funds from the County for 2024 CFR, \$7,572.27 and 2023 NFR, \$16,818.53 were received. There was a \$50.00 donation received for the Fire Department from Shauver.

Clerk - Since the June Meeting I have answered several emails, responded to FOIA requests, returned phone messages or forwarded to appropriate Board Members. Several emails from Mr. Newton over the past 10 days have been received. I will not be responding to his questions or emails respectively unless there is a specific FOIA. Some of these emails he shares with other Board members but many are only to me, with the title of FOIA Coordinator, Webmaster and Clerk.

Daily tasks continue for the August 6th Primary. Absentee Ballots were mailed to permanent ballot voters on July 1st and additional AV's were mailed today. The Public Accuracy Test for election equipment will be July 13th at 10:00 am. With the upcoming stamp price increase, 1000 2 oz. stamps for the November General and future elections were purchased at a cost of \$920.00. 1st Class Forever stamps are currently 0.68 and going up to 0.73. Moved Doucette/seconded Cota to **purchase 10 rolls of Forever Postage Stamps at a cost of \$680.00**. Doucette, yes; Cota, yes; Balmes, yes; Miller, yes; Johnson, yes. Motion carried.

Another Parcel Division application was received for property along Joes Lake. After review by Attorney Nordeen, it was determined that access is from a private road and a Prescriptive Easement Statement will once again be requested.

The website server migration is complete and work with Kelly Marketing on the transfer to the .gov domain will be this week. Final preparation for the FY 2023-2024 Audit will be completed for the July 22nd start date.

Trustee's - Trustee Miller noted that the Pickleball Court installation has been delayed due to schedules and weather. It was also noted that GFL's truck broke down and pickup today as delayed. Trustee Balmes provided information from a previous MTA monthly publication regarding roads within the Township not maintained by the Road Commission. According to the article, the Township has no statutory responsibilities to develop or maintain these roads.

Supervisor - Supervisor Doucette provided her report. An Easy Dock Dealer was located in Manistique. They should be able to assist with ordering the parts needed for the Heritage Trail Dock repairs. Information regarding the road sign replacement project was provided. A review of the road system and additional signs needed will be completed within the next couple of months. At this time there are at least 25 signs that need to be ordered. Discussion regarding the Beach Life Station project was made. Complaints about the 16 Mile Lake Road project, observed on Facebook, were forward to ACRC Engineer Bob Lindbeck. A scrap tire event will be held in Onota Township on September 13th and 14th. Additional details will be provided when available. There were phone calls from TV6 and the DNR regarding the recent heavy rains, the water spillage at the Forest Lake Dam and concerns about possible failure of the dam. The Moorman vs Moorman Hearing date was continued until July 23rd. The Ridge Road CUP Resort Hearing was held and we should have a decision by the Judge within 30 days.

Phone calls continue and are numerous regarding GFL garbage collection, cart placement, replacement and allocation requests for those who indicate they never received one.

Special Presentation: None

Public Comment: An email comment was received from Duane Newton and shared with the Board prior to the meeting.

Boards/Departments:

Zoning Administrator/Planning Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals- ZA Lindquist was unable to attend the meeting. The monthly Zoning Administrator report was received and is on file. It was reviewed and discussed by the Board. The Planning Commission has a Special Meeting scheduled for July 15th to continue work on the Zoning Ordinance and receive a presentation by CUPPAD on Solar Energy and preliminary survey results. The Zoning Board of Appeals held a meeting on June 25th to hear a variance request from Gattiss. The variance was approved.

Assessor/Board of Review - Assessor Fuess provided an emailed report to the Board. July Board of Review is scheduled for July 17th at 6:00 pm.

Maintenance Department: Ryan Walther provided an update on maintenance items. He met with Premium Sheds at the cemetery for the delivery. Terry Beauchaine will be completing the new electrical system needed. Also met with Steve Barr regarding the Pickleball Court installation and contacted Miss Dig. Additional maintenance and mowing projects are being completed as needed.

Fire Department: Member Ryan Walther provided a report via text from Chief King. There were two calls this past month, a fire alarm on Maple Grove Road and an electrical fire on Hayward Road. Pump testing is scheduled for July 26th. The Wex Fuel Fleet Account was approved and cards were received today. One card will be assigned to each truck. This will allow more efficient accountability. Recall notice has been received for the Rescue Rig Truck. Chief King will be scheduling the repairs, which will need to be done in Wisconsin.

Unfinished Business:

1. Litigation update/Ridge Rd. Planning Commission CUP Approval - Supervisor Doucette addressed this Hearing as part of the Supervisor's Report.
2. Assessing Poverty Guidelines Exemption Amendment - Clerk Johnson noted that an Amendment to the approved Poverty Guidelines Exemption was requested by the State of Michigan during the recent AMAR review. (See Attachment #1)
3. Cemetery Ordinance Review - The amendments to the Cemetery Ordinance were presented as discussed at the June Board Meeting. (See Attachment #2)

New Business:

1. Correspondence - Presented and reviewed.
2. Zoning Board of Appeals Alternate - Alternate(s) for the Zoning Board of Review are needed. Clerk Johnson will post on the website, Facebook and Munising Beacon. Letters of interest will need to be submitted for consideration. The deadline will remain open until position(s) filled.

Public Comment: Public Comments were received John Carr and Donna Shields.

Board Member Comments: None

Next Meeting: The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for August 12, 2024 at 6:00 pm.

Adjournment: Motion Johnson/seconded Doucette to **adjourn at 8:12 pm.** Motion carried.

Submitted by Mary Walther Johnson, Clerk



Mary Walther Johnson

APPROVED DATE: August 12, 2024

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AU TRAIN TOWNSHIP - GUIDELINES RESOLUTION FOR POVERTY EXEMPTION (Attachment #1)
Resolution No. 2024- 001 (As Amended)

WHEREAS, the adoption of guidelines for poverty exemptions is required of the Au Train Township Board;
and

WHEREAS, the principal residence of persons, who the Supervisor/Assessor and Board of Review determines by reason of poverty to be unable to contribute to the public charge, is eligible for exemption in whole or in part from taxation under Public Act 390 of 1994 (MCL 211.7u); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to PA 390 of 1994, the Township of Au Train, Alger County adopts the following guidelines for the Board of Review to implement. The guidelines shall include but not be limited to the specific income and asset levels of the claimant and all persons residing in the household filed in the current or immediately preceding year;

To be eligible, a person shall do all the following on an annual basis:

- 1) Be an owner of and occupy as a principal residence the property for which an exemption is requested.
- 2) File a claim with the supervisor/assessor or Board of Review, accompanied by federal and state income tax returns for all persons residing in the principal residence, including any property tax credit returns filed in the immediately preceding year or in the current year or a signed State Tax Commission Form 4988, *Poverty Exemption Affidavit*.
- 3) File a claim reporting that the combined assets of all persons in the household do not exceed the current guidelines. Assets include but are not limited to, real estate other than the principal residence, personal property, motor vehicles, recreational vehicles and equipment, certificates of deposit, savings accounts, checking accounts, stocks, bonds, life insurance, retirement funds, etc. – See Asset Test Requirements, Below.
- 4) Produce a valid driver's license or other form of identification if requested.
- 5) Produce, if requested, a deed, land contract, or other evidence of ownership of the property for which an exemption is requested.
- 6) Meet the federal poverty income guidelines as defined and determined annually by the United States Department of Health and Human Services or alternative guidelines adopted by the governing body providing the alternative guidelines do not provide eligibility requirements less than the federal guidelines.
- 7) The application for an exemption shall be filed after January 1, but one day prior to the last day of the December Board of Review. The filing of this claim constitutes an appearance before the Board of Review for the purpose of preserving the right of appeal to the Michigan Tax Tribunal.

ASSET TEST REQUIREMENTS: Total Assets should not exceed \$50,000 in True Cash Value for eligibility for poverty exemption. This excludes the homestead being claimed, essential household goods (clothing and furniture), and the first \$5,000 of the market value of the claimant's motor vehicle.

Au Train Township may consider and require an applicant to list any of the following types of household assets to determine the person's eligibility for a poverty exemption:

- Second home with different Parcel ID#
- Land with different Parcel ID#
- Vehicles (\$5,000 allowed for vehicle of claimant)
- Recreational Vehicles, such as campers, motor homes, boats, ATV's, snowmobiles
- Buildings other than residence with different Parcel ID#
- Jewelry
- Antiques
- Artwork
- Equipment
- Other personal property of value
- Bank accounts over \$1,000.
- Stocks
- Money received from the sale of property
- Withdrawals of bank deposits and borrowed money
- Gifts, loans, lump-sum inheritances and one-time insurance payments

The following are the 2023 Federal Poverty Income Guidelines which are updated annually by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, effective January 17, 2024. The annual allowable income includes income for all persons residing in the principal residence.

Federal Poverty Guidelines Used in the Determination of Poverty Exemptions

<u>Size of "Family Unit"</u>	<u>2023 Federal Poverty Guidelines</u>
Household of: 1	\$15,060
2	\$20,440
3	\$25,820
4	\$31,200
5	\$36,580
6	\$41,960
7	\$47,340
8	\$52,720
For each additional person, add	\$ 5,380

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the supervisor/assessor and Board of Review shall follow the above stated policy and federal guidelines in granting or denying an exemption, ##unless the Board of Review determines there are substantial and compelling reasons why there should be a deviation from the policy and federal guidelines and these reasons are communicated in writing to the claimant.## (This Section was redacted July 8, 2024)

The foregoing resolution offered by the Au Train Township Board Member Johnson

and supported by the Au Train Township Board Member Doucette

Upon roll call vote, the following voted:

"Aye": Johnson, Doucette, Cota, Miller, Balmes

"Nay": None

The Au Train Township Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

Dated this 12th day of February, 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the supervisor/assessor and Board of Review shall follow the above stated policy and federal guidelines in granting or denying an exemption.

The foregoing resolution offered by the Au Train Township Board Member Johnson

and supported by the Au Train Township Board Member Cota

Upon roll call vote, the following voted:

"Aye": Johnson, Cota, Doucette, Balmes, Miller

"Nay": None

The Au Train Township Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

Dated this 8th day of July, 2024.

_____ Date: July 8, 2024

Mary Walther Johnson, Clerk

AMENDMENT BY RESOLUTION OF THE AU TRAIN TOWNSHIP CEMETERY ORDINANCE DATED July 8, 2024 EFFECTIVE September 1, 2024, AS APPROVED BY THE AU TRAIN TOWNSHIP BOARD.

The following Sections were amended:

Section 4: Purchase Price and Transfer Fees

Each burial lot shall cost (See attached Fee Schedule), for a lot size of 5'x10'.

Section 5: Grave Opening Charges

The opening and closing of any lot, prior to and following a burial therein, shall be determined. See attached fee schedule for current cost. The Township Board, from time to time by resolution, may periodically alter the foregoing fees to accommodate increased costs.

Section 6: Markers or Memorials

A permanent identification marker is required at each lot site when there is placement of remains. All markers or memorials must be of stone or other equally durable composition. All large upright monuments must be located upon a suitable foundation to maintain the same in an erect position. The footing or foundation upon which any monument, marker or memorial must be placed, shall be the responsibility of the lot owner, arrangements must be made for approval with the sexton.

Only one monument, marker or memorial shall be permitted per burial lot, with the exception of veterans, and a family monument, which can be within a lot, but individual markers would be permitted.

Section 12: Cemetery Hours

The cemetery shall be open to the general public, with seasonal access.

Effective Date:

This amendment to the ordinance shall take effect on September 1, 2024, No less than Fourteen (14) days after the date of publication. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

Appeared for publication on: August 16, 2024 in the Munising Beacon.

Cemetery Ordinance Amendments

RESOLUTION No. 2024-009

Au Train Township, Alger County, Michigan

WHEREAS, The Au Train Township Board has the authority to amend certain Ordinances as determined within such Ordinance or by Resolution;

WHEREAS, as reviewed, The Au Train Township Cemetery Ordinance, dated April 8, 2008, amended April 13, 2015, required additional revisions and the addition of a Fee Schedule

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Au Train Township Cemetery Ordinance Amendments and Fee Schedule are approved.

This resolution offered by board member Cota

Supported by board member Doucette

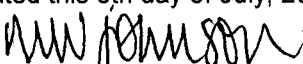
Upon a roll call vote, the following voted:

Aye: Cota, Doucette, Balmes, Miller, Johnson

Nay: None

The Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

Dated this 8th day of July, 2024.



Mary Walther Johnson, Au Train Township Clerk