

Minutes of  
Makanda Township Board of Trustees  
October 12, 2021  
Makanda Township Fire Station #2  
Giant City Road

**CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL:** Supervisor Sara Lipe called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Supervisor Lipe and Trustees Clay Kolar, Debbie Stanley, Fred York, Michael Holub and Clerk Regina Einig. Also present were non-voting Officials: Road Commissioner Ed Hoke and Fire Chief Jimmy Bilderback.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS:** There were none.

**MINUTES:** Regina read the minutes of the September 14, 2021, Board of Trustees meeting. Sara corrected the minutes under Approval of Bills by Fund: change “unemployment insurance bills” to “worker compensation bills” and change “IDES” to “Liberty Mutual.” Under the supervisor report, Sara suggested the inclusion of another sentence regarding the changing to payroll responsibilities to Sara: “Sara offered to be take the payroll responsibilities prior to the new term but Regina declined the offer.” Regina added the statement: “Regina said that she was unaware at the time that the responsibilities belonged to the Supervisor.” The minutes were approved as corrected.

**FUND BALANCES:**

Makanda Township	Fund Balances as of 10/12/21	Receipts since 9/14/21	Remaining Budget
Fire protection	61,998.55	107.95	92,249.31
Fire protection capital fund	68,350.15	1.66	146,487.72
General Assistance	95,958.72	3.94	94,569.00
New Bridge	19,706.24	.69	35,679.69
Road and Bridge	44,144.96	678.95	84,807.45
Town	102,111.45	491.38	60,830.60
Brian R. Pierce 517 Memorial Fund	<u>570.01</u>	<u>450.01</u>	

**Approval of Bills by Fund**

Town bills. Fred asked to pull the bills to Diederich Insurance and the Worker Compensation bills. Diederich because we are still waiting for the underwriters to get back to us and the Liberty Mutual bill because they still have the old board members listed, although Sara has informed them of the changes. Fred moved to pay the remaining town bills and Clay seconded it. Sara asked if she could attend the TOI conference if her schedule allows. It was agreed to include that in the bills. The motion passed unanimously. Fire Department bills: we are taking out the Liberty Mutual bill. Fred moved to pay the remaining bills and Debbie seconded it. The motion passed unanimously. Sara moved to pay the Road and Bridge bills. Clay seconded it. The motion passed unanimously. There were no New Bridge or General Assistance bills.

**Reports:**

### Fire Department

Chief Bilderback reported that they had two fire calls, 7 EMS calls, one service call, one traffic crash, for a total of eleven runs and we are down to seventeen firefighters.

### Highway Department

Ed completed install of culvert at 44 Heather Lynn Lane, costs are not in yet. They will be posted on the web site as soon as those costs are in.

Completed spraying of bridge railings and signs and of Johnson Grass on roadsides

Replaced missing "Stop Ahead" sign on the south end of Springer Ridge, a "Weight Limit" sign also at the end of Springer Ridge, and a vandalized stop sign on Peach Valley Drive.

Dangerous dead trees on Wagon Wheel Lane, one removed, two others in process. The tops have been cut by Egyptian Electric down below the power lines that were close. All that remains is to finish downing the trunks and removing debris.

Completed an inventory of all signs and dates of install.

Leased a John Deere tractor that will be delivered next week. Leased with a loader so we have that piece of equipment available to us. This lease is for 1 year. Total year lease is \$9,100

Bought a used ten' Bush Hog, single batwing mower to mow roadsides. Hopefully, it will last 2-3 years while I save up money to buy a new one.

Sara said that she had received a notice regarding a status hearing regarding the Sheppard Lane case. She asked what that was about. Ed said that there would be a hearing but that the township has nothing to pursue and that, as far as he is concerned, the matter is dead.

### Supervisor

Sara announced that Regina did not want to do the payroll responsibilities anymore so Sara will be taking back those responsibilities. (Clarification from Regina: According to the handbook of the Township Officials of Illinois, those duties are assigned to the supervisor.) Sara offered to take the payroll responsibilities prior to the new term but Regina declined the offer. Regina said that she was unaware at the time that the responsibilities belonged to the Supervisor.

Regarding an official address for the Township: Sara has been in contact with TOI officials, and they said that we could create an official address if we wanted to, but no one must use it.

Sara and Debbie attended the General Assistance training institute last month. It was a good refresher for Sara. She said we are required to offer General Assistance, but there is another program we could offer, called the Emergency Assistance program. It could be used only once in a period that we determine and could be used for things such as utilities, rent, or perhaps transportation. She is still gathering information. Also, there is news about the MAC insurance that we purchase every year. As long as the Affordable Care Act is in force, we should not have to have that. The caveat is that if the Supreme Court strikes it down, townships would be liable for medical expenses again. Sara recommends that we should keep it for now, but that it is an expense that we might be able to do away with in the future. Sara also announced that the auditors have said that the audit is almost complete.

A member of the public asked if the salary for the clerk should be reduced because of the decreased responsibilities. Sara said that about 20 years ago the clerk's salary was doubled because of the increased responsibilities. But salaries are set for the term, so the current clerk's salary remains the same. We can decide when the next term approaches if we want to reduce the salary.

Assessor – no report.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Township official address and office location for elected officials.

Clay made a motion for assignment of official address for all township business, location of township records, and official offices of township office holders of supervisor, clerk, highway commissioner, and assessor. It reads as follows:

Motion is made for:

1. The official address for all township business shall be fire station #1.
  2. That the back room at fire station #1 will be the office location for the supervisor, clerk, and highway commissioner and all the respective township records for those offices.
  3. That the assessor's office shall remain at its present location in station #2.
  4. That office items necessary for the conduct of official township business be purchased, to include, but not limited to, tables or desks, computers, necessary software, printers, scanners, file cabinets and locks as needed, and as determined by the township office holder.
  5. That township business conducted by the supervisor, clerk, and highway commissioner requiring computer use be conducted on computers owned by the township.
  6. Establishment of this township office shall be completed by October 22, 2021, that is, a week from Friday.
- Debbie seconded the motion.

Discussion ensued of an hour and 25 minutes. The following is a summary of some of the issues raised.

The township officials stressed the importance of having an official presence in the community. The elected clerk and highway commissioner need an appropriate place to work.

There were options presented in opposition to the idea of the taking of the back room at station 1. They were:

1. Status quo. The clerk shares an office with the fire chief at station 1 and the highway commissioner and supervisor work from their homes.
2. Erecting a small building outside of station 1, not to include a bathroom.
3. Use of a portion of a corner in the training room at station #2.
4. Removing a file cabinet from the chief's office and turning a desk around to allow more room to move around. The clerk and highway commissioner would be allowed to use the top surface only of the desk that was moved.
5. Assessor John Dickson offered to move his office from station #2 to a small building adjacent to station #1. Officials could take his office in station #2.

The discussion addressed the fact that the fire department says it is necessary to have a room for the live-in person who should be on duty on five nights a week. The idea of the live-in is to provide a means for faster response times at night. There is currently no live-in person.

After this extended period of discussion Clay amended his motion as follows:

As to point 6, change the date from October 22 to November 12, the Friday after the next board meeting. If, in the event that no agreement can be arrived at by the parties involved, this will take effect. Mike seconded the motion. Vote: Trustees Holub, Kolar, Stanley, and York voted yes, Supervisor Lipe voted no. Motion passed.

2. We cannot vote on the proposed revised budgets for Town, Road and Bridge, and New Bridge at this meeting but will do so at the November meeting.

3. Clerk bonding status. Motion regarding access to all township bank accounts, CD's, and financial records for the purpose of appropriate oversight and checks and balances. Michael moved that Fred York be bonded under Liberty Mutual with the same coverage, \$550,000 dollars, as supervisor Sara Lipe. Cost will be \$550 a year. Fred will pay for it, using his \$720 trustee salary. Jackson and Gray Insurance Agency will provide the bond. (Also, Fred York will be added to all township accounts with access and signature authority, in the event that supervisor Lipe is unable to complete the financial commitments and responsibilities of the township. Further, clerk Regina Einig will not be bonded but will continue second signature supervision, as required by law, in the same manner as the prior clerk.

After some clarification supervisor Lipe said that part of the motion is illegal because, by Illinois law, only the supervisor is allowed to handle the township's money. She still questioned what Fred wanted and he said access to the bank accounts. Debbie seconded the motion. A discussion ensued about quotes from various insurance companies.

Michael amended his motion as follows: Motion that Fred York be bonded with Liberty Mutual with two bonds of \$450,00 and \$100,000, the same as supervisor Lipe. Cost will be \$550 per year. Fred will pay for it using his \$720 trustee salary. Jackson and Gray Insurance Agency will provide the bond. Also, Fred York will be added to all township accounts. Further, clerk Regina Einig will not be bonded but will continue second signature supervision, as required by law, in the same manner as the prior clerk. Trustees Holub, Kolar, Stanley and York voted yes. Supervisor Lipe voted no. Motion carried.

#### 4. General Assistance

General Assistance Committee Meeting on October 6th, 2021

In attendance were Debbie Stanley, Jill Adams, and Julieta Monteiro-Leitner

We reviewed what we learned at the General Assistance conference on Sept. 24th, 2021, in Effingham, IL.

We discussed that we would invite Supervisor Lipe to meet with the GA committee so we can learn more about the GA program in Makanda Township. Possible dates to meet are October 19th, 20th, 21st, 26th, 27th, or 28th in the morning at Giant City Park shelter #3 or wherever convenient for Supervisor Lipe to meet.

Minutes by Trustee Debbie Stanley

#### 5. Broadband Report

The broadband committee has devoted substantial time to researching both funding opportunities and success stories from other jurisdictions in obtaining assistance from both state and federal resources. There are numerous approaches to making broadband service both more readily available and more affordable. This ranges from grants to install service where it doesn't currently exist and upgrade current service that is inadequate to subsidies for both the cost of the service and the necessary equipment to access it. We are still

evaluating what is the best fit for our township's situation. Although there have been a few townships that have succeeded in doing so, they have mostly been more heavily populated. Cunningham Township in Champaign County is a prime example.

Most of the success stories have taken place at the county level or even through a consortium of counties. We have been corresponding with Julie Peterson of the Jackson County Board on this subject. Julie is also the County's representative on the Greater Egypt Planning Commission, a five-county association. We are exploring with her the most effective use of resources to pull together a grant application that would provide funds for upgrading internet service that would include Makanda Township. She reports that there has been discussion at that level about broadband. In addition, we are talking to Board member John Randleman on this subject. We are prepared to throw our time and whatever knowledge we can toward whichever entity decides to pursue the money necessary to accomplish this effort.

As a representative for the Township's broadband committee, Jim Renshaw attended the September meeting of the Jackson County Board. It was announced at the board meeting that a couple of substantial grants for infrastructure (\$19 million) had been secured, but nothing that included broadband. Unfortunately, the Board went into executive session before there was an opportunity to ask for action in this area. So, we are still in the correspondence stage at this time. In short, this is a work in progress.

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#### 6. Dirt and Rock Storage

Clay moved that the highway commissioner be allowed to use the southwest corner of the fire station #1 property for equipment and material storage as long as that storage does not impede in any manner, the fire department vehicles with leaving from or returning to the fire station. Michael seconded the motion. The discussion that followed was concerned with how much material Ed wanted to store, how long it would be there, and why the lot on Halliday drive is not more appropriate. Trustees Holub, Kolar, Stanley and York voted yes. Supervisor Lipe voted no. Motion carried.

#### 7. Firehouse live-in protocol and record keeping.

The board asked if they could get information about the protocol and history of the live-in. When asked if the fire department kept a record of when the live-in is actually present, the answer is no.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Gary Heern announced that he will be contacting the Illinois Attorney General alleging that trustee Clay Kolar violated his promise to abstain from votes involving Sheppard Lane when he voted to pay the bill for the law firm at last meeting.

Mrs. Pierce, moth of Brian Pierce Jr., wanted a clarification that all monies collected for her son's memorial fund be kept in the fire department for training. The board assured her that the board had exactly the same intention and would not use any of the funds for other purposes.

ADJOURN: Clay moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Michael. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Regina Einig, Clerk

Attachment 1 – Bills by Fund

Fire protection		1,396.52
Egyptian Electric	Station 2	211.71
Ameren Illinois	Station 1	260.03
Ameren Illinois	Station 2	48.53
South Highway Water District	Station 1	22.25
South Highway water District	Station 2	22.25
Mediacom	Station 1 internet & phone	176.76
Mediacom	Station 2 Internet	60.99
Liberty Mutual	Workers Comp. Insurance	594.00
Town		5,830.+18
Payroll	see agenda	
Country Life Assurance	Jimmy's IRA	200.00
Verizon	Assessor monthly service	25.02
Diederich Insurance	Clerk bond for 2 <sup>nd</sup> signature	1,925.00
Lee Newspapers	Legal ad	45.67
Liberty Mutual	Workers comp. insurance	3,633.00
Ill. Dept. of Employment Security	Unemployment tax	1.49
Assessor Expenses 2021		599.69
<b>Verizon</b>	Assessor monthly service	225.18
John Dickson	Mileage & supply reimbursement	374.51
Road and Bridge		
Napa Auto Parts	Tools	59.97
Coleman Lawn Equipment	Equipment	418.63
Diedrich Implements	Bush Hog	4,000.00
Ed Hoke	Misc. Invoice reimbursements	289.65
Makanda Fire Department	Wrench reimbursement	21.75