

2025 Draft Minutes of Regular Meeting of the Homestead Township Board

April 9, 2025

Call to Order: Supervisor Cooley called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

Pledge: Recited

Roll Call: Present: Cooley, Holbrook, Mead & Wilson. Purchase was absent and excused.

Approval of Meeting Agenda: Wilson moved to add Pontem & Alysworth Road to new business and to remove emergency response and place on May's agenda and to add Cherry capital Communications and the Cemetery Ordinance to new business. Cooley supported the motion. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda: Cooley moved and Holbrook supported motion to accept the consent agenda as presented. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Public Comment: Doreen Strang spoke on behalf of Benzie Bus. She explained how the organization is funding, acknowledged appreciation of the millage that was approved in November, 2024, described the fleet and services rendered in 2024. They are hoping to expand services in 2025 by adding Saturday transports and special requests. Copies of the 2024 Impact Report were provided.

Doreen Strang also spoke in regards to a special assessment district for paving the unpaved portion of Homestead Road. She presented a petition to the Supervisor.

Reports:

Assessing: Gunnar Brow filed a written report regarding the March Board of Review and final values for 2025 as submitted to the County and State.

Zoning: Marvin Radtke was present, he reported on the phone & email activity last month and that junk complaints are on the rise. He spoke about the recent MTA conference and was congratulated on his appointment to the MTA Board.

Parks: Supervisor Cooley notified the Board that Cameron Purchase would be doing the opening of the ballpark. Trustee Mead reported that Harp has acknowledged they need to provide additional funds for improvements at the Platte River Park. They will begin fund raising efforts in the very near future. The next HARP meeting will take place at the Platte River Park and one of the topics on the agenda will be the endowment fund.

Planning Commission: Marvin Radtke announced that there is one opening on the planning commission and potentially a second seat that will need to be filled. Mead

reported that the PC will be reviewing the ordinance for any necessary revisions or updates.

County Commission: Commissioner Markey stated that the last County meeting lasted nearly 5 hours, there was a presentation by the Benzie County Road Commission to demonstrate why they need new millage. The County has a new magistrate. Emergency Services has determined that the \$3.00 surcharge it receives is not sufficient to fund their operation and they will be seeking new sources of revenue.

Fire Dept: Fire Chief Markey reported on the number of runs to date, the attendance at the pancake breakfast and the Health Department has approved the kitchen facilities at the Township Hall.

Chief Markey requested that the Board accept a new applicant, Allen Rose, who has both fire and emt credentials. Motion by Cooley supported by Mead to accept the new applicant. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Clerk: Wilson filed a written report with an update on the status of the 941 payroll issues.

Treasurer: Holbrook filed a written report with updates on the new computers, HARP contributions to Platte River Park, working with the auditors & the status of the CDAR accounts.

Motion by Cooley, support by Holbrook to accept the reports as presented. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Mead asked that a contract be prepared for building maintenance and that a separate contract describing the grounds maintenance duties be prepared for review in May.

Finance:

Payables: Cooley moved and Holbrook supported to accept the payables as presented in the amount of \$832.06. Roll Call: Cooley, yes; Holbrook, yes; Mead, yes; Wilson, yes. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Budget Amendments: Cooley moved and Mead supported to make one budget adjustment in the amount of \$2100 to the fire equipment budget. Roll Call: Cooley, yes; Mead, yes; Holbrook, yes; Wilson, yes. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Old Business:

CIP Discussion: Cooley moved and Wilson supported to have Trustee Mead present the Capital Improvements Plan 2023-2029 to the Planning Commission for review and recommendations. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Pontem: Treasurer Holbrook stated that Pontem needed some additional information in order to properly prepare our cemetery software to include the expansion areas of both cemeteries. The fee to Pontem will be \$350 and there will be surveys of each location required. Holbrook moved and Cooley supported to order the survey and forward the information to Pontem. Roll Call: Holbrook, yes; Cooley, yes; Mead, yes; Wilson, yes. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Alysworth Road: Supervisor Cooley discussed her communications with the Benzie County Road Commission in regards to work needed on Alysworth Road. While no exact figures have been prepared, the estimate was about \$270,000 to bring the road up to required standards. There are not sufficient funds available to the Road Commission or the Township to fund this project. It was suggested that a letter be sent to the property owners on the section in question explain the special assessment process to see if there is any interest in pursuing that option. Wilson will draft a letter to be reviewed by Cooley and sent to the property owners.

New Business:

Brine Agreement: Holbrook made a motion to remove CB Drive from the list proposed by the Road Commission and to add Old US 31. It was understood by the Board that this would alter the proposed cost. Roll Call: Holbrook, yes; Cooley, yes; Mead, yes; Wilson, yes. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Homestead Park: Cooley explained that there have been discussions with Lisa Leedy about seeking grants for improvements needed at the baseball fields. There are issues with the dug outs, a pavilion or covered bleachers are needed during inclement weather.

Earned Sick Time Act: The Board will need to adopt a policy in regards to the new Earned Sick Time Act. It was recommended that we contact MTA and area Townships to see if there is a template and/or recommendations in regards to some of the "grey" areas in the act. Wilson will research the matter and get back to the Board in the next few months.

Emergency Response and Debris Management: Tabled until May at the request of Rebecca Hubers.

Cherry Capital Communications: Unbeknownst to the Board, Supervisor Cooley had already responded to the communication from Cherry Capital Communications so this matter no longer required attention.

Cemetery Ordinance: There was a lengthy discussion in regards to the cemetery ordinance which has not been reviewed or updated since 2014. The cost to administer and the cost of grounds maintenance have increased dramatically in the past 11 years, it was felt that the cost of a cemetery lot needs to be increased. There is terminology that needs to be updated and clarifications as to transferring ownership of lots and interment regulations. Also, specific dates need to be provided for removal of decorations. This matter was tabled and will be reviewed in May once the procedure for amending an ordinance has been clarified. Holbrook reported that the new computer for the cemetery management program has been ordered, new flags will be ordered immediately for placement on the lots of veterans.

Public Comment: None offered.

Adjournment: 8:04 pm