

**PINE GROVE TOWNSHIP MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**September 1, 2021 7:00 p.m.**

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Clerk Meert.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **Roll Call: Present:** Richardson, Meert, Sell, Hephner      Absent: Smith  
    Also Present: Catherine Kaufman, Attorney, Jake Eccleston, Attorney  
    Deputy Supervisor: Jim Niemi
4. **Appointment of Mediator for Board Meeting:** *Motion made by Meert, supported by Sell to appoint Hephner as the Mediator for the Board Meeting. All yes, motion carried.*
5. **Consent Agenda:** *Motion made by Richardson, supported by Meert, to approve the consent agenda All yes, motion carried*
6. **Monthly Bills:** *Motion made by Hephner, supported by Richardson to approve the monthly bills from August in the amount of \$535,895.15 as presented. \$500000.00 was moved to Consumers Credit Union CD's. September bills in the amount of \$8451.12 as presented. All yes, motion carried.*
7. **Public Comment:** Zag stated that he lives in the third house from the Township building. Zag stated that there is a terrible blight problem right next door to the township hall, a problem with mice, rats, and snakes, vehicles that are untagged and don't run, a camper in the back that people stay in sometime and has a generator that runs 24/7. Zag stated that he and his neighbor have made complaints and nothing seems to get done. Hephner stated the township is aware of these problems and that the township zoning ordinance enforcement officer is working on these issues right now and it will be resolved and thanked Zag for his comments. Steve Schultz from BCI just wanted to follow up on the application process for the ARPA and make himself available for any questions the board may have at any point in time. Hephner stated that the township is working on the application process and will let BCI know when those details have been worked out. Kathy Garrett from the Kendall Store, wanted to complain about the barking dogs in town. Kathy stated that she had a yard sale a couple of weeks ago and that she endured 3 days of a constant howling dog, not a barking dog, but howling. Kathy stated that she closed her yard sale down early because she could not take it any longer. Kathy stated that she called the Sheriff's office the next night and they sent the Animal Control Officer and the dog howled the entire time the officer was there, approx. ½ hour. Kathy stated that she got new windows that she cannot open due to the howling from the dogs. Kathy stated that the dogs barking and howling start at 4:30 in the morning. Kathy stated that she came home from work yesterday afternoon and stood in her driveway and started recording the dogs barking but there was so much traffic flying by that you couldn't hear the barking dogs. Kathy stated that periodically she can smell the dog poop burning which is a health hazard. Kathy stated that she has a copy of the ordinance and it states they have to have 5 acres and they do not have to 5 acres. Hephner thanked Kathy for coming in and voicing her concerns and stated that it would be turned over to the Ordinance Enforcement Officer.
8. **Correspondence and Reports:**
  - A. **Sheriff's Report:** none
  - B. **Fire Board:** Kehoe stated they were finalizing the cost recovery process.
  - C. **Library:** Meert stated that the estimate for the refurbishing came in at about 3 times what they originally planned and will be looking at some other options.
  - D. **Planning Commission:** Next PC meeting on Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>. Richardson stated that the PC would like to make a recommendation to the board to make text amendment changes in the ZO to make sure that rentals under 30 days are not prohibited. *Motion made by Hephner, supported by Richardson, to have the Planning Commission and staff prepare the ZO text amendments that will clearly allow rentals under 30 days and hold a Public Hearing on those text amendments. All yes, motion carried.*
  - E. **Treasurer's Report:** General Checking: \$1,103,805.06 T&A: 10,082.70  
Savings: \$199,928.03, Tax: \$87,874.74
  - F. **County Commission Report:** submitted

**G. Road Commission:** none

**H. Ambulance:** none

**I. KABA:** none

**J. Ordinance Enforcement Officer** – A written report for August was submitted earlier in the day. Smith, OEO, stated in regards to the burned trailer home, that in order for a home to be condemned, the building inspector needs to be able to see into the house or the home has to have so much damage that the inside can be seen from the outside, then he can make the determination that it is unsafe. Since Fire Reports do not include any information on damages on the inside of the building, the building inspector only has the fire report and what he can see on the outside, therefore, the trailer will remain a boarded-up structure. OEO Smith stated that he has been trying to contact the owner of the property with no success. Sell stated she would look up tax records to see if the taxes are paid up to date. Attorney Kaufman stated that another way to access the property would be an Administrative Search Warrant through the courts to be able to get inside to assess the damage. If it is determined that the structure is unsafe and the owner refused to do anything about it regardless of a court order, the courts would ultimately hold the township accountable for tearing down the structure at the townships cost. Hephner stated that the board would like Tim to start working on the junk order for the house next door to the township hall and also the CR390 property regarding the junk car in the front yard. If we get no response for clean-up of the vehicle, she would like to review the costs of getting the property condemned at the next Board Meeting. Tim stated that he feels that the building inspector should be called to do a building inspection to find the condition of the structure as well as taking care of the junk and blight. After a lengthy discussion, just starting the process on the junk car is to be addressed for now on CR390 property.

**9. Old Business:**

- 1. Recycle Center Employee Schedule and Wages:** Hephner and Sell worked on the recycling center wage and fee schedule. They would like to mail it out to taxpayers and post it in various places so that non-residents of Pine Grove will be aware of the changes. They also would like to make new signs and post them at the Recycle Station to be effective 1-1-2022. The Pine Grove Property owner's card can be obtained from the Pine Grove Township Office or from the Recycle Station attendants. Board members were asked to take a current card and provide what changes they believe should be made for the new ones. Sell stated that the two attendants make different wages and believes that they should be making the same wages. Sell also stated that the attendants should go back to the work schedule of each working every other week by themselves. ***Motion made by Meert, supported by Sell to have the recycle station attendants work every other week each and increase the wages of one so that they receive the same wage. Roll Call: Richardson - no, Sell – yes, Meert – yes, Hephner – yes. 1 no, 3 yes, motion carried.***
- 2. Appoint Fire Board Representative:** At this time, there are no applications, table until next month. If there is anyone interested, please submit a resume by next month's meeting to Clerk Meert.
- 3. Fire Board Contract with Gobles (new Contract):** Meert asked if she had to have a new contract signed and Attorney Kaufman stated that it renews automatically so it does not have to be resigned.
- 4. ARPA Application Form:** Attorney Kaufman stated that she had her associate, Attorney Jake Eccleston, look at the county's form. Some grammatical recommendations were made for consideration. Hephner stated that there was the county's application and then Supervisor Smith made another application and submitted to Attorney Kaufman. Attorney Kaufman stated that they worked off the application that was submitted by Supervisor Smith and did not compare it to the county's application. To give everyone

time to think about the application and what the process might be, this will be put on next months agenda. Hephner asked Attorney Kaufman to make the suggested changes to the application before the next meeting.

5. **Adoption of Ordinance 90 Revision: Table until next meeting.** The Fire Chief will review and report at the next meeting.

10. **New Business:**

1. **DeMann Special Assessment:** Sell stated that according to the county, she has to get permission to put the cost of a clean-up onto a property tax bill. Attorney Kaufman stated it would be appropriate for the board to approve adding the cost of the clean-up, onto the property tax bill. *Motion made by Hephner, supported by Sell to add the cost of cleanup totaling \$3,165.00 to Arnold DeMann's Winter Tax Bill in a line item to be determined later. Roll Call: Richardson – yes, Meert – yes, Sell – yes, Hephner – yes. All yes, motion carried.*
  2. **Contracting Officer Few Hours Per Week:** Richardson stated that the speeding has ramped up through Kendall and wondering if Pine Grove should contract with the Sheriff's Dept. for a few hours a week. Hephner stated that Pine Grove should reach out to the Sheriff's Office to see what they can provide and what could be contracted. Meert stated that she would make sure the Sheriff's representative attends the next meeting.
  3. **Noise Ordinance:** Board stated that Pine Grove Township does not have a noise ordinance. Attorney Kaufman stated that she has heard the same thing from the Planning Commission. Attorney Kaufman stated that she will provide a template for a Noise Ordinance for Pine Grove.
11. **Public Discussion:** Randy King stated that he was at the Planning Commission where Kathy Garrett made a complaint. Randy stated that since that night, he has put one of the dogs in the house and the other dog was farmed out to another kennel. Randy King stated the weekend that Kathy was complaining about, she was right, but he has since taken measures to take care of the barking dogs. Randy King also stated that he was accused of burning dog poop but stated that it is not him, it is his neighbor who is burning baby diapers in two burning pits.
12. **Member Comment:** None

*Motion made by Richardson, supported by Meert to adjourn. All yes, motion carried.*

**Adjournment: 8:50 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Michelle Meert, Pine Grove Twp. Clerk