

BENZONIA TOWNSHIP BOARD

Approved

PUBLIC HEARING: Opened by Supervisor Barnard. Present: Burns, Barnard, Heller, Rose at 2:46pm on July 9, 2025. Trustee Orr arrived at 2:47. The Treasurer read the purpose of the public hearing: To review the 2025 Truth and Taxation Rate. The Supervisor and Treasurer explained the Headlee Amendment applies and a discussion followed. Public present and comments received; the public hearing was closed at 2:53pm

REGULAR MEETING

July 9, 2025

Meeting called to order by Supervisor Barnard at 3:00 PM.

Present: Barnard, Burns, Rose, Orr and Heller

Absent: None

Staff: Haase, Adams, Nye, Pitcher

Guests: 12

Supervisor led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Burns to approve the agenda as amended, Orr seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

Motion by Burns to approve the minutes from the regular meeting June 11th, 2025, Orr had questions on Adult Use ordinance, legal advice invoices, & zoning ordinances. Barnard explained them to her. Karen made motion to accept the minutes as amended. Orr supports as amended and will submit written statement. All ayes, motion carried.

TREASURERS REPORT: The treasurer presented the report for June 2025.

CLERKS'S REPORT: The Clerk presented the Profit and Loss statement for the General, Fire Department and new township hall funds along with a list of the payables for June 2025. After a discussion, Burns made a motion with Rose supporting and a roll call vote taken. Roll call vote Orr-N, Burns-Y, Barnard-Y, Heller-Y, Rose-Y, motion carried.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT: Barnard presented an estimate from Jeff Louwsma for replacing the bathroom roofs at the park. **Burns made motion to accept the estimate from Louwsma not to exceed \$9500. Rose supports, discussion had, roll call vote, all ayes, motion carried.** Barnard introduced Doug Taylor our listing agent for the current building. Discussion held regarding

current offer from the Benzie Conservation district as well as pending future virtual showing. **Orr made a motion to reject the conservation district offer but allowing them to have a first right of refusal. Rose seconded, roll call vote taken, all ayes motion passed.**

STAFF REPORTS:

1. FIRE CHIEF: Chief Adams stated there were 15 fire and 30 medical calls for a total of 45 for June. YTD calls are 321. Annual DOT and PM's were completed on all the apparatus trucks. Uniform shirts came in. Chief tried to attend the Joyfield Twp meeting but had a run, he did attend Blaine Twp's meeting and provided update.
2. Commissioners Report: Nye stated that it is county budget season, fiscal year starts October 1st. The county facilitated a meeting with their Attorney regarding the Sunshine laws, ie, OMA and FOIA. It was a great meeting and if enough interest would consider doing it again. The Maples is 99% full. July 25th from 5-7pm they are having a 60th birthday bash, public is welcome. Senior resources home health care has a wait list. Friends of Point Betsie still have a \$2 mil gap in funding apron repair work. Ironman is set for Sept 14th 2025. Job openings at the county and are all on the website. Received a request for a letter of support from John Stinson with Homestretch. They are applying for a 1 mil grant to build new apartments in Thompsonville on 15 acres donated by Crystal Mountain. The parks and rec plan needs updated and the committee is asking for public input. There is a survey online. The county has 5 parks.
3. Zoning Administrator: 28 permits issued to date, July 24th WBJPC special meeting regarding ordinance steering committee. Nothing new regarding the sober house on Coate Rd.

BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT: 4 county residents made public comments.

COMMUNICATION: None

PENDING BUSINESS: Attorney Use Policy – discussion was had, special meeting to be set.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Cemetery: No report.
- Parks: Gottardo ballfield work in progress, waiting for Gillison's to extend dog park parking.
- Building and Grounds: No report.
- Fire Department: No report
- Township Roads: No report.
- Community Activities: Cleanup day August 9th 2025 from 7-10am.
- Finance: Burns has asked for a quote for a second license for her deputy so during tax time 2 residents can be helped at once. An estimate was received for upgrading to Icloud as the current.net system is no longer sold. Included in the quote is the cemetery program. The quote of approx. \$21,000 included training and conversion. The annual

fee is approx. \$10,000 per year. Tabled for now. Burns stated that during the last audit the Mike Cool, our auditor, recommended adopting an ACH policy and resolution. We have currently done a few payments by ACH and the potential for more is there. This policy allows the treasurer and clerk to make payments via ACH. **Burns made a motion to adopt the ACH policy and ACH resolution as presented. Rose supports. Roll call vote taken, all ayes, motion passed.**

- Personnel: No report
- Policy: No report
- ZBA: No report
- Blight: Barnard presented written report from Ms. Pitcher. Pitcher met with new magistrate to discuss how to proceed with civil infractions. Attorney Mike Homier recommends a Dangerous Buildings Ordinance to assist with the demo of the Bolton property and other situations. Eldridge Rd had one roll-off taken away but progress has slowed. Owners say working on it and Mary will give them more time before issuing an infraction. Narrow Guage Rd cleanup has stalled. The previous owner is selling on land contract and has a pending case in district court.

NEW BUSINESS: Barnard presented the Dangerous Buildings Ordinance. **Burns made a motion to adopt the Dangerous Buildings Ordinance and Resolution as presented, Rose seconded, roll call taken, all ayes, motion passed.** Barnard addressed the minutes from June 11th 2025 where the board went into closed session. It should have been stated that it was to discuss a written legal opinion by our attorney in accordance with MCL15.268H. A reenactment was held as follows. Burns made a motion to go into closed session, with Rose supporting. Roll call vote taken, all ayes, motion passed. Regarding Truth in Taxation - **Burns made a motion to implement the maximum allowed as presented in the Truth in Taxation public hearing. Rose second. Discussion had, roll call vote taken, all ayes, motion passed. Burns made a motion to approve the resolution to adopt the millage rate. Rose second, roll call vote taken. Motion passed.**

EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT: public comments received.

Supervisor adjourned the meeting at 4:53 P.M.

Submitted by:

Diana L. Heller, Clerk

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

- ❖ Motion passed to replace the park bathroom roofs.
- ❖ Motion passed to reject the offer for current building.
- ❖ Tabled BS&A estimate for tax system upgrade & cemetery program addition.
- ❖ Motion passed to adopt an ACH policy.
- ❖ Motion passed to adopt a Dangerous Buildings Ordinance.
- ❖ Motion passed to collect maximum tax allowed per the Truth in Taxation public hearing.
- ❖ Motion passed to approve the resolution to adopt the millage rate.