

Board of Trustees Update to Planning Commission

September 28, 2021

Submitted by Karen Sikkenga, Trustee

Appointment of New Trustee

The Board of Trustees welcomes Jeff McDole as a new member of the Board of Trustees. Trustee McDole fills an opening created by former Trustee Jim Drolett's resignation in August. Mr. McDole was one of five well-qualified candidates who participated in a public interview process this month. The Board of Trustees is grateful to all five applicants, each of whom would have enriched our board. Trustee McDole's appointment continues until the mid-term election, November 2022.

Trustee McDole, a 20-year resident of Dexter Township, has had a long career enhancing public safety through information technology, first at the University of Michigan's Department of Public Safety and most recently for the City of Ann Arbor's Police Department. As a survivor of the Dexter tornado, he has an interest in helping Dexter Township with disaster preparedness. As an applicant for the role of Trustee, Mr. McDole expressed his commitment to demonstrating that government – particularly local government – can enhance communities and improve people's day-to-day lives.

Master Plan Contract Approval

The Board of Trustees authorized the township to contract with Beckett & Raeder to conduct our master plan. The Master Plan Contractor Selection committee recommended Beckett & Raeder based on consideration of their proposed scope of work, qualifications, price, and schedule. Four qualified firms bid on the contract; the selection committee interviewed our top two choices: McKenna and B&R. Beckett & Raeder offered in-depth community outreach, a comprehensive zoning ordinance review following master plan approval, and a statistically valid survey. While their total price was higher than the other bidders, their hourly rate was comparable, meaning that their larger scope of work drove the overall higher price.

B&R is an award-winning, Washtenaw County landscape architecture firm with experience in township master planning all over the state. The B&R contract will begin immediately and continue for 15 months. We expect the Planning Commission to be fully engaged with the planning process.

Broadband Funding

Trustee Karen Nolte announced that Washtenaw County approved funding to provide broadband coverage for 100% of the County, funded in part with American Rescue (ARPA) funds and in part with Rural Digital Opportunity Funds (RDOF). Fifty percent of RDOF funds must be committed within three years, and RDOF projects must be completed within 5 years to obtain access to the awards, meaning that a significant portion of the work will be completed in five years or less. Dexter Township's financial contribution, if any, has not yet been determined. Our contribution would be funded from our ARPA allocation.

3-Year Strategic Budget

The Board of Trustees is undertaking a strategic budgeting process with the aim of approving a three-year budget. Multi-year budgeting is a financial best practice that will allow us to align our priorities with our resources for the remainder of our term. The process begins on October 9 with a strategic planning session at which the Board of Trustees will establish a mission, vision, and goals for the Township. The goals will be supported by specific tactics, including responsible persons and

a schedule. The strategic planning sessions, to be held October 9 and 10 at Portage Lake Yacht Club, will be open to the public.

The next step will be to establish a purpose for the Township's General Fund balances, which approach \$7M. A portion will be set aside for Rainy Day Funds and a Capital Improvement Fund. The CIP set-aside will be determined based on OHM estimates for maintaining our capital infrastructure for ten years. Remaining balances will be deployed in alignment with our strategic goals. The Supervisor is currently conducting budget meetings with staff and committee chairs. Examples of strategic purposes might include improvements to local roads, land preservation, non-motorized transportation, broadband/cellular connectivity, single hauler, improved recycling, and so on. Although these are only examples, members of the Board of Trustees have been investigating these topics, all of which are appropriate for township governments.