

CASCADE CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PERSONNEL & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
March 10, 2021 at 9:00am
Held via Zoom Remote Conferencing Software &
Large Conference Room at Township Hall
2865 Thornhills SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546

Members Present: Supervisor Lesperance, Treasurer Peirce, Trustee Koessel

Others Present: Township Manager (TM) Ben Swayze, Manager of Assessing Service (MAS) Jennifer Genter

Call to Order: Trustee Koessel called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Business: The Personnel & Finance Committee discussed the following items:

1. Approval of the February 10, 2021 Meeting Minutes

TM Swayze explained that per the committee policy, the committee is responsible for approving the minutes.

Motion by Supervisor Lesperance, supported by Treasurer Peirce to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

2. 2021 Cascade Township Poverty Exemption Guidelines

MAS Genter reviewed the changes to the poverty exemption guidelines from the State. Many of the changes are required and have already been included in the updated document. MAS Genter explained that the Township Board will need to decide whether eligible applicants can apply for a 25%, 50% or 100% reduction of their taxable value. Prior to the changes in PA 253 of 2020, 100% was the only option. Discussion ensued.

MAS Genter reiterated that current applicants are eligible for 100%. She also indicated that the Township rarely gets applications for the program. The committee agreed that keeping the 100% exemption for qualified applicants is the best course of action.

Motion by Treasurer Peirce, supported by Supervisor Lesperance to recommend the Township Board approve the 2021 Cascade Township Poverty Exemption Guidelines with the 100% option. Motion carried.

3. Proposed Contract with ITP for Bus Service (May 15, 2021 – September 30, 2021)

TM Swayze reviewed the proposed contracts for bus service. TM Swayze explained that in December 2020 the Township received proposed contracts with the Rapid for the 28th Street and 36th Street service. While the contract year typically begins in in October, the Rapid had agreed to extend the contracts at the previous rate for 3 additional months while they worked

on adjusting rates based on State and Federal funding levels that they expected to fluctuate due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The proposed contracts received in December contained a 12.08% increase from \$68.48 to \$76.75. At the time the Township indicated to the Rapid that the increase was not acceptable and that we would need to come up with alternatives, including altering the physical route, altering the route frequency or altering the funding models, before the Township would consider the new contracts.

After review the potential alternatives, The Rapid has agreed to a funding model that takes into account the “revenue hours” model in Cascade rather than the Township bearing the “full bus cost” model that had been previously utilized. Under the full bus cost model, the Township was responsible for paying the full amount of the additional bus that had to be added to Route 28 in order to serve Cascade. Under the new revenue hours model, the Township will only pay for the time the bus is actually in Cascade Township, effectively sharing part of the cost of the service with the Rapid.

The resulting savings is \$57,943.18, or 37.2% over what it would have been utilizing the old model. It should be noted that this savings is for the 28th Street route only, the 36th Street route already was serviced under the revenue hours model. If approved it is anticipated that the savings would be allocated to the general fund portion of the payments.

Discussion ensued regarding the value of the bus system to the Township residents and businesses. Question was raised regarding shortening the bus route or altering service hours. TM Swayze indicated that if the “revenue hours” model is adopted altering the route and/or hours may reduce costs further. TM Swayze indicated that the recommendation would be for the DDA to cover 75% of that contract – but that would need to go to the DDA for further discussion.

Motion by Treasurer Peirce, supported by Trustee Koessel to recommend the Township Board approve the contracts with the ITP for Bus Service. Motion Carried 2-1 (Lesperance dissent)

4. Cash Flow Statements

TM Swayze and Treasurer Peirce reviewed the cash flow statements that had been produced by Deputy Treasurer Sourine. Discussion ensued.

No action, review only

5. Position Realignment

TM Swayze gave an update on the potential realignment of the Deputy positions.

No action, review only

Adjournment: Motion by Treasurer Peirce, supported by Supervisor Lesperance to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:14 am

Approved by the Personnel & Finance Committee – 4.14.21

DRAFT