

ST. CLAIR TOWNSHIP

1539 S. Bartlett Rd. St. Clair, MI 48079

Phone (810) 329-9042

St. Clair Township Board Meeting

January 20, 2025

7:00 p.m.

1. **Meeting Called to Order** at 7:00 pm by Supervisor Mahaffy.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** was recited.
3. **PRESENT:** Supervisor Mahaffy, Clerk DiNardo, Treasurer Klieman, Trustees Barck, Boulier, Karas, Rood.
ABSENT: None
AUDIENCE: There were 12 people in attendance (per the sign-in sheet)
4. **APPROVAL OF TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING MINUTES**
 Regular Meeting Minutes of January 6, 2025. Motion to approve the January 6, 2025 Township Board minutes as presented by Trustee Rood and seconded by Trustee Karas. All board members were in favor, motion carried.
5. **BILLS TO BE APPROVED.** Clerk DiNardo presented the Bills to be Approved.

The Treasurer mentioned that Murray Underground Systems was paid \$486,322.94 on Oct. 22, 2024 but never approved by the board. The payment has been added to this list of bills to be approved.

BILLS TO BE APPROVED		
01.20.2025		
GENERAL FUND		
JESSICA LAFORE	HALL RENTAL REFUND	50.00
KARISSA PENZIEN	HALL RENTAL REFUND	50.00
DINARDO, BONNIE	REIMBURSEMENT - NOTARY/OFFICE SUP	336.33
NICKEL & SAPH, INC	DEPUTY CLERK BOND	20.00
SCHWEM'S RUBBER STAMP	DATE STAMPER / NAME PLATES	200.90
PITNEY BOWES INC.	PITNEY BOWES - INK	255.60
BS & A SOFTWARE	CREDIT CARD READER	350.00
MARCO TECHNOLOGIES, LLC	COPIER USAGE	74.78
GARAN LUCOW MILLER P.C.	LEGAL FEES	445.50
TIMM, KELLY	RETAINER FEE COUNTY ASSESSOR	250.00
COMMUNITY EDUCATION NET	JAN INTERNET SERVICE	150.00
ST CLAIR COUNTY RESA	DEC TECH /JAN HOSTING	338.14
21ST CEN. VOICE	SYNOPSIS	82.55
DTE ENERGY STREETLIGHTS	STREETLIGHTS	3,337.27
SEMCO ENERGY	TWP HALL	129.20
KEVINS LAWN CARE	DRAIN INSTALL	3,105.00
PEST CORP	SERVICE & INSPECTION	33.00
CITY OF MARYSVILLE	FIRE / RESCUE	1,200.00
TIMES HERALD	PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE	72.10
PORT HURON MUSEUM	SELFIE STATION	200.00
ZIMMER'S SALES & SERVICE	BOLTS-LAWN MOWER	13.98
AT&T	TOWNSHIP PHONES	233.52
ROAD FUND	TRANSFER	5,000.00
VERIZON	CELL PHONES	44.25
KCI	ASSESSMENT NOTICE POSTAGE	1,916.22
KLIEMAN, DENISE	REIMBURSEMENT - MONITORS	704.18
FNBO	ANNUAL INTEREST	7.55
ST. CLAIR TREASURER	2025 - AERIAL INSTALEMENT FEE	1,000.00
	TOTAL GENERAL FUND	19,600.07

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BUILDING FUND		
BULLOCK, RYAN	INSPECTOR COMMISSION	2,281.12
	TOTAL BUILDING FUND	2,281.12
SEWER FUND		
CORE & MAIN	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	172.22
SEMCO ENERGY	PUMP STATION	35.01
CITY OF ST. CLAIR	SEWER SERVICE FEES	7,394.66
MURRAY UNDERGROUND	SEWER PROJECT (PRIOR PAYMENT #19413)	486,322.94
MURRAY UNDERGROUND	SEWER PROJECT	197,139.18
MRWA	HYDRANT TRAINING	185.00
KCI	UTILITY BILLING POSTAGE	378.77
	TOTAL SEWER FUND	691,627.78
WATER FUND		
CORE & MAIN	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	172.23
CITY OF ST. CLAIR	WATER SERVICE FEES	19,778.96
KCI	UTILITY BILLING POSTAGE	378.78
	TOTAL WATER FUND	20,329.97
	TOTAL All Funds:	733,838.94
PAYROLL OFFICE 01/17/2025		
	INSPECTIONS(TIM KELLY)	1,044.00
	DPW	5,835.29
	OFFICE	5,410.75
	TOTAL OFFICE PAYROLL	12,290.04
1/20/2025 @6 PM		

Motion by Trustee Barck, seconded by Trustee Rood, to approve bills as presented. Roll call: Yes – Supervisor Mahaffy, Clerk DiNardo, Treasurer Klieman, Trustees Barck, Boulrier, Karas, Rood. Motion carried.

6. TREASURER REPORT:

The Treasurer provided a preliminary cash summary, balance sheet, a revenue/expenditure report and a constitutional revenue sharing sheet. These items will be provided at the 2nd meeting of every month for the board to review. This is a starting point and there are many adjustments that need to be made.

Motion by Trustee Barck, seconded by Clerk DiNardo, to approve the Treasurer Report as presented. All board members were in favor, motion carried.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS: Supervisor Mahaffy instructed the audience to come to the podium, say your name and address, and you have 3 minutes to talk to the board.

A. Jerry Leaman – Concerned about payments made and what is still owed to Murray Underground. Expects the board to be the watchdog.

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- B. Lisa Fountain** – Concerned about December 16th meeting minutes in regards to new water meters. Would like to see answers to questions under public comments in the minutes. Mentioned a Facebook post about DPW employee picking up empties.
- C. Lisa Varty** – Mentioned a concern about multiple estimates for the lining of pipes, concerned about who is doing the estimates, concerned about a FOIA request.
- D. Lisa Fountain** – Asked an additional question regarding FOIA.

8. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS:

- A. Supervisor Mahaffy asked the board to allow him and the township building inspector to select 2 or 3 engineering firms that are appropriate for the scope and size of the project.
- B. Supervisor Mahaffy mentioned that there is a small group forming that are concerned about the sound of the train by Magna. Some of the participants are the City of St. Clair, CSX, St. Clair Township and Lisa McClain's office. More information forthcoming. He is hoping some of the same group can help with Murphy Drive issue.
- C. In follow-up to the new water meters, there was not time to add the additional fee to the water bills so it will be added to the next quarterly billing for residents who do not respond to the notification letters sent out to them. The first batch of letters are being sent out on January 20. We are starting with one sub-division at a time. Residents have started to call for replacement.

9. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Resolution 25-04 Poverty Exemption Policy, Guidelines and Asset Test**
The board discussed and approved Resolution 25-04, which is an exemption for residents that have a low income.

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St. Clair Township
2025 Poverty Exemption Policy, Guidelines and Asset Test
Resolution 2025-04

Whereas, MCL 211.7u requires local units to annually adopt a policy, including an income and asset test to be used to approve or deny poverty exemption applications.

Whereas, the principal residence of persons, who the Board of Review determines by reason of poverty to be unable to contribute to the public charge, is eligible for exemption in whole or in part from taxation under Public Act 390 of 1994 (MCL 211.7u); and

Whereas, pursuant to PA 390 of 1994, the Township of St. Clair, St. Clair County adopts the following guidelines for the Board of Review to implement, the guidelines shall include but not be limited to the specific income and asset levels of the claimant and all persons residing in the household, filed in the current and immediately preceding year;

To be eligible:

1. All applicants must submit a copy of the Federal Income Tax Return (1040 or 1040A), State Income Tax Return (MI-1040), and Homestead Tax Credit (MI-1040CR-4) filed in the immediately preceding year or in the current year for all persons living in the homestead. If applicant(s) is not required to file a Federal or State Income Tax return, they must complete and file an Income Tax Exemption Affidavit.
2. All applicants must fill out an "Application for Hardship Exemption" in its entirety.
3. All applicants must be the owner and resident of the property in which tax relief is filed on. They must provide a driver's license or other acceptable method of identification, if requested. They must also provide a deed, land contract, or other evidence of ownership if requested by the Board of Review.
4. Applicant must meet the annually adjusted "Federal Poverty Exemption Guidelines" or alternative guidelines adopted by the Township Board of Trustees. (attached)
5. All Financial Institution balances will be taken into account. The Board will also consider stocks, bonds, life insurance policies, other real estate owned, vehicles, interest income and any additional assets.
6. Gifts and contributions by all persons whether living in the household or not will be taken into consideration for the purposes of establishing exemption eligibility.
7. Non cash benefits such as Medicaid, WIC, food stamps and school lunches shall be considered as household income for purposes of establishing exemption eligibility.

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8. The Board of Review shall follow the guidelines of the local assessing unit in granting or denying an exemption.

9. In accordance with PA 390 of 1994, the Applicant must meet the "Asset Guidelines" adopted by the Board of Trustees. (attached).

10. A person who files for a poverty exemption is not prohibited from also filing an appeal on the assessment and/or taxable value.

APPLICANT: Your application for poverty exemption **will be denied** if:

1. Your Application for Tax Exemption is not filled out completely or includes inaccurate information.

2. Applicant does not otherwise meet the asset levels set by the local governing body.

3. Total Household Income exceeds eligibility guidelines as adopted by the Township Board of Trustees.

2025 INCOME GUIDELINES FOR REQUESTING CONSIDERATION FOR POVERTY EXEMPTION

\$15,060	for individuals
\$20,044	for a family of 2
\$25,820	for a family of 3
\$31,200	for a family of 4
\$36,580	for a family of 5
\$41,960	for a family of 6
\$47,340	for a family of 7
\$52,720	for a family of 8
\$5,380	ea additional person

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A partial exemption of 75% may be granted based on an income level of 10% above the adopted guidelines, and compliance with the asset level test as follows:

\$16,566	for individuals
\$22,484	for a family of 2
\$28,402	for a family of 3
\$34,320	for a family of 4
\$40,238	for a family of 5
\$46,156	for a family of 6
\$52,074	for a family of 7
\$57,992	for a family of 8
\$5,918	ea additional person

A partial exemption of 50% may be granted based on an income level of 15% above the adopted guidelines, and compliance with the asset level test as follows:

\$17,319	for individuals
\$23, 506	for a family of 2
\$29,693	for a family of 3
\$35,880	for a family of 4
\$42,067	for a family of 5
\$48,254	for a family of 6
\$54,441	for a family of 7
\$60,628	for a family of 8
\$6,187	ea additional person

A partial exemption of 25% may be granted based on an income level of 20% above the adopted guidelines, and compliance with the asset level test as follows:

\$18,072	for individuals
\$24,528	for a family of 2
\$30,984	for a family of 3
\$37,440	for a family of 4
\$43,896	for a family of 5
\$50,352	for a family of 6
\$56,808	for a family of 7
\$63,264	for a family of 8
\$6,4,56	ea additional person

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Income shall include, but not limited to, the specific income for the person claiming the exemption, and also anyone living in the principal residence.

Income Includes:

- Money, wages and salaries before any deductions.
- Net receipts from non-farm self-employment
- Net receipts from farm self-employment (the same provisions as above for self-employment).
- Losses from businesses, rentals and royalties and net operating losses which are no longer allowable deductions to household income according to the State of Michigan.
- Regular Payments for social security, railroad retirement, unemployment, worker's compensation, veteran's payments and public assistance.
- Alimony, child support, and military family allotments.
- Private pensions, government pensions, and regular insurance or annuity payments.
- College or university fellowships, and assistantships.
- Dividends, interest, net rental income, net royalties, periodic receipts from estates or trusts, and net gambling or lottery winnings.
- Tax refunds, gifts, loans, lump-sum inheritances, one-time insurance payments, and State and/or Federal non-cash benefits programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, and school lunches.

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St. Clair Township Asset Guidelines Used in the Determination of Poverty Exemptions for 2025

As required by PA 390 of 1994, all guidelines for poverty exemptions as established by the governing body of the local assessing unit **SHALL** also include an asset level test. The following asset test shall apply to all applications for poverty exemption.

The applicant shall not have “**liquid**” assets (excluding the value of the principal residence subject to the exemption request) in excess of **two** (2) times the amount of the estimated tax obligation of the current assessment.

The applicant shall not have **total** assets (excluding the value of the principal residence subject to the exemption request) in excess of **ten** (10) times the amount of the estimated tax obligation of the current assessment.

All asset information, as requested in the Application for Poverty Exemption must be completed in total. The Board of Review may request additional information and verification of assets if they determine it to be necessary and may reject any application if the assets are not properly identified.

Liquid Assets may include but are not limited to:

- Bank accounts
- Stocks and Bonds
- IRA's and other investment accounts
- Pensions
- Money received from the sale of property such as stocks, bonds, a house or a car unless a person is in the specific business of selling such property.

In addition, total assets may also include but are not limited to:

- A second home
- Excess or vacant land
- Rental property
- Extraordinary automobiles
- Recreational vehicles*
- Buildings other than the residence
- Equipment
- Other personal property of value
- Food or housing received in lieu of wages and the value of food and fuel produced and consumed on farms.

** Recreational vehicles include snowmobiles, boats, camping trailers, travel trailers, motor homes, jet skis, motor cycles, off road vehicles, or anything else which may be considered a recreational vehicle.*

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NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Review shall follow the above stated policy, income and asset guidelines in granting or denying an exemption.

6

Motion by Trustee Barck, seconded by Trustee Rood, to approve Resolution 25-04 with making two minor typo corrections. Roll call: Yes – Supervisor Mahaffy, Clerk DiNardo, Treasurer Klieman, Trustees Barck, Boulier, Karas, Rood. Motion carried.

B. Michigan Class

The Treasurer introduced Michigan Class, a local government investment pool that allows public agencies to pool funds together collectively while earning dividends on their investments.

Motion by Trustee Barck, seconded by Trustee Karas, to consider using Michigan Class when funds are available. All in favor, motion carried.

C. Renewal of DeLude Construction Agreement

The board reviewed the DeLude construction agreement and the 2025 Equipment and Labor Call Out Rates. Jon Chopp was introduced. A concern was voiced about Easter being billed at triple time.

Motion by Trustee Karas, seconded by Clerk DiNardo, to accept the DeLude Construction Agreement. All in favor, motion carried.

D. Kennedy Industries

Spencer Hasbrouck from Kennedy Industries gave an update and answered questions about the pump stations. There was discussion on the cost to own versus leasing pumps. Trustee Karas did call and received favorable feedback from other municipalities that use Kennedy's services.

E. Veteran Banner Brackets Purchase

The board discussed the different options of banner brackets.

Motion by Trustee Barck, seconded by Trustee Karas, to purchase the banner brackets for a cost of \$360.00. Roll call: Yes – Supervisor Mahaffy, Clerk DiNardo, Treasurer Klieman, Trustees Barck, Boulier, Karas, Rood. Motion carried.

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F. Resignation of Deputy Treasurer/Utility Billing Clerk

The Clerk read the resignation letter from the Deputy Treasurer/Utility Billing Clerk.

Motion by Trustee Karas, seconded by Trustee Rood, to accept the Deputy Treasurer/Utility Billing Clerk resignation. All in favor, motion carried.

G. Manor Costerisan Water/Sewer Rate Study Discussion

The Treasurer gave an overview of the Rate Study and Points of Interest. She encouraged all board members to read the document or at the very least, the overview. It was mentioned that we should use the term “agreed upon procedure decision making”, not “Forensic Audit”. The board would begin with the water fund to see if there are any issues, if so, we would proceed further. If we go forward, perhaps we should use Manor Costerisan again, because they are familiar with our township. It would be a different department than who worked on the rate study. They would be available to meet with the board as a workshop.

H. Closed session regarding Building Inspector Settlement

Motion by Trustee Rood, seconded by Trustee Karas, to enter into closed session at 8:19 pm for the purpose of the Building Inspector Settlement. Roll call: Yes – Supervisor Mahaffy, Clerk DiNardo, Treasurer Klieman, Trustees Barck, Boulier, Karas, Rood. Motion carried.

<CLOSED SESSION>

Motion by Trustee Karas, seconded by Trustee Rood, to end closed session and re-enter the regular board meeting at 8:33 pm. Roll call: Yes – Supervisor Mahaffy, Clerk DiNardo, Treasurer Klieman, Trustees Barck, Boulier, Karas, Rood. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Karas, seconded by Trustee Rood, to offer the former building inspector compensation that was disclosed in closed session. Roll call: Yes – Supervisor Mahaffy, Clerk DiNardo, Treasurer Klieman, Trustees Barck, Boulier, Karas, Rood. Motion carried.

10. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **MRWA Conference.** There is concern about the lack of money in the water fund and board members would like to figure out the financials before spending more money.

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Motion by Trustee Karas, seconded by Clerk DiNardo, to deny sending the DPW Supervisor to the MRWA conference. Roll call: Yes - Treasurer Klieman, Trustees Barck, Boulier, Karas, Rood, No – Supervisor Mahaffy, Clerk DiNardo. Motion passed and request is denied due to budget constraints.

11. CALL FROM THE TABLE:

- A. Treasurer Klieman – blood drive on January 23, 2025. In regards to an earlier question, Manor Costerisan, there was a compliance letter that we needed to file, our budgets were never completed, our overall budget was not in compliance.
- B. Trustee Barck – asked about BMJ Contract from last meeting, it was signed after removal of section 17; DPW Supervisor/Trustee Barck participated in a zoom meeting to update recreation plan, need for a public forum, there will be an upcoming survey asking for suggestions; working with Ann Marie on the newsletter, goal is to have it out by February 1.
- C. Trustee Rood – MTA Conference was really helpful and learned a lot. Acknowledged other board members for their hard work, particularly two ladies who were praised for their efforts.
- D. Clerk DiNardo – Township will be audited by St. Clair County in the next month for the November election.

12. BRIEF PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS: (not at podium)

- A. Lisa Varty - requesting costs of what was paid in 2024 for DPW. Concerns about the spending of township funds.
- B. Jerry Leaman – questions about who calls Delude, who approves and does supervisor get a report.
- C. Lisa Fountain – questions and concerns about fees for online bill pay, Dollar General property, code enforcement and recorder.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Trustee Karas, seconded by Trustee Rood. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie DiNardo, Clerk