

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN
Environmental Commission
Wednesday, November 15, 2023
MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at **6:00 p.m.** in the Denton Room by **Chairman DeBuck**.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Chairman DeBuck, Commissioner Ross, Commissioner Gibson, Commissioner Merritt, Commissioner Yob, Trustee Boynton

Absent/Excused: None.

Staff: Director Akers, Director Lockett, Secretary Zantop

Audience: One (1)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion Commissioner **Ross**, Second Commissioner **Gibson**, to approve the agenda of November 15, 2023, as presented.

(5) AYES –DeBuck, Ross, Gibson, Merritt, Yob, Boynton

(0) NAYS

Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion Commissioner **Ross**, Second Commissioner **Merritt**, to approve the minutes of September 20, 2023, as presented.

(5) AYES – DeBuck, Ross, Gibson, Merritt, Yob, Boynton

(0) NAYS

Motion Carried.

COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Commissioner Yob and Ross asked about the PFAS signs. Director Akers will update the Commission once he hears back from the Huron River Water Shed Council.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Various Environmental Related Issues Update

Denton Road Bridge

The design engineering for the bridge is continuing. The funding will be distributed to the County and the County will administer the project. The timeline to complete plans and turn

them over to the County is March 1st. Construction is anticipated to start in late summer/fall of next year. The mussel survey was completed and they did not find any habitat for freshwater mussels. An endangered water lily was found along the causeway and those areas were marked on a survey. They are working with the DNR to avoid disturbing those areas during construction. There will be a sidewalk on the bridge and on both sides of the causeway. The height will be the same as the Belleville Road Bridge. It will be a two-span bridge with one pier in the middle. The Township is working on a public update and a survey to get public feedback for the decorative elements on the bridge. Commissioner Ross asked what the cost is. The cost estimate done by the engineering company with contingencies is around \$9.2 million. Commissioner Gibson asked about the width of the sidewalks because it will be a path of the Iron Belle Trail. On the bridge and causeway, the sidewalks will be 5ft. They will connect to the sidewalks that are existing east towards the City of Belleville. Commissioner DeBuck asked what is the route of the Iron Belle trail. The planned route starts at Rawsonville and Grove. It goes to the S I-94 Service Drive into Van Buren Park. It will cross Van Buren Park onto Old Denton Road then tie in on Denton Road. It will cross the Bridge and run through the City of Belleville then along Huron River Drive all the way to tie into the Metro Park. The planned route is available on the Township's website.

Solid Waste

The Township is working on sending out information on transitioning between 96 and 64 recycling and trash carts. Commissioner Gibson asked about the household hazardous waste day. Township staff is working with Republic to get an estimated count. Commissioner Gibson stated it was run differently from other years and there were a lot of people in line. Commissioner Gibson received a postcard about the deep injection well in Romulus and asked if the Township got anything about it.

2. Meeting Schedule

Motion Commissioner **Gibson**, Second Commissioner **Merritt**, to approve the 2024 meeting schedule as presented, with the exception of June 19th as being a holiday.

(4) AYES – DeBuck, Ross, Gibson, Merritt, Yob, Boynton

(0) NAYS

Motion Carried.

3. State Legislation - Solar and Wind Farms

Director Akers overviewed House Bill 5120 which was passed by both the House and Senate. The bill would apply to wind energy facilities or solar energy facilities with a nameplate capacity of 100 megawatts or more and to energy storage facilities with a nameplate capacity of 100 megawatts or more and an energy discharge capability of 200 megawatt hours or more. The biggest change for local municipalities is it preempts the authority with local zoning regulations to effectively have a say in where these facilities are located. There are still questions on how it will be implemented. The Commission discussed the Bill and EV/energy storage batteries.

Chairman DeBuck asked how many substations are in the Township. Director Akers will follow up on this.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS:

Commissioner Gibson asked if the Commission wanted to meet a half hour early for December's meeting for the annual Holiday meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to Adjourn **Merritt**, Second **Boynnton**, Meeting adjourned at **6:51 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kendyl Zantop
Recording Secretary