

Minutes  
Eagle Township Board Meeting  
Thursday, November 16, 2023  
Eagle Twp. Hall - 14318 Michigan Street, Eagle, MI 48822

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Stroud at 6:00 pm - Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Present:** Trustee Dennis Strahle, Supervisor Troy Stroud, Clerk Laurie Briggs-Dudley  
**Absent:** Treasurer Kathy Oberg, Trustee Dick Jones
3. **Others Present:** Dave Paxton, Paxton Countertops; Robbin Currie, Chairperson Eagle Township Planning Commission; John Clark, Chairperson Looking Glass Regional Fire Authority
4. **Citizens:** Leah Horn, Eric Rademacher, Mark Higbee, Judy Sena, Dick Sena, Becky Theis, Darrin and Debbie Grey, Ann Kirschke, Tim Kirschke, Diana and Gordy Locke, Denise Renee Dankenbring, Margie Wirth, Sarah and Nick Keilen, Emily Chase, Chelsea Hoppes, Keith Lambert, James Carpenter, Michael J Dyer, Patricia Fuller, Michelle Hoppes, James Carpenter, John Iszler, Connie Iszler, Martha Kenyon, Sandi VanderBroek, David VanderBroek, Linn Romanik, Janine Dyer, George Bedard, Dan Feldpausch, Cori Feldpausch, Pam Brown, Kris Stroud, Leo Stroud, Meghan Helms, Jaclyn Hutchison, Curt Kenyon
5. **Citizens comments:** Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Supervisor Stroud to activate section 5.2.1 of the Board Policy to allow citizen comments for agenda items after Board discussion and prior to Board vote, maximum speaking time of 3-minutes per person per regular agenda items and 5-minutes per person for the public hearing comments. Motion carried.
6. **Citizens Comments:** Citizen not in favor of any tax abatements and does not want to set a precedent in the township.
7. **Consent Agenda:** Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Clerk Briggs-Dudley to accept the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried.
8. **Agenda Approval:** Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Supervisor Stroud to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.
9. **Public Hearing – Paxton Countertops Application for Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate:** Motion by Clerk Briggs-Dudley supported by Trustee Strahle to open the public hearing at 6:08 pm on Paxton Countertops application for Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate. Motion carried.  
Public Comment:
  - Citizen is opposed to the tax abatement as this will set a precedent for future businesses. The township did not ask Paxton to build in Eagle Township. Dave Paxton chose to build here. This business will decrease the value of homes in the area. A tax abatement will only benefit Paxton.
  - Citizen has researched several articles on how governmental units evaluate whether to grant a tax abatement and the effectiveness of tax abatements. There are many criteria used to evaluate tax abatements, and the citizen’s opinion is that the majority of these are not met for the Paxton Countertop abatement. Concerns include: Michigan schools

suffer with tax abatements, issue of inequality for existing businesses vs future businesses, and tax incentives have minimal impact on the overall economic goal.

- Citizen says the purpose of tax abatement policies are to help industrial growth and promote a diverse industrial base. Citizen does not wish to promote and encourage industrial growth in a rural township and does not want to set a precedent for businesses to expect tax abatements in the township. In 2021 the zoning for the Paxton property was changed, and the site plan was approved. There was no mention at that time of wanting a tax abatement. Also, Paxton recently expanded the site plan without having received a tax abatement knowing he would have to pay taxes. Now in 2023 he is asking for a tax abatement. Paxton should pay the taxes as he had originally planned to pay.
- Citizen has concerns on any tax abatement in Eagle Township. Tax abatements are used to encourage economic stability and strengthen the local economy. Eagle Township did not seek out this manufacturing facility to bring in jobs. The size of the facility was increased from 17,500 sq ft in 2021 to 32,000 sq feet in 2023 before any indication of wanting a tax abatement. Why was the size doubled if it is too expensive to build? The taxable value increase was calculated at 1%. This should have been calculated at 5%. Everyone's costs are increasing. Michigan schools suffer at the hands of tax abatements. Eagle Township does not need tax abatements.
- Citizen states that tax abatements are misused in government. Paxton Countertops is a successful business. A successful business has a commitment to do a quality job. Eagle Township does not have a surplus of labor nor is it a disadvantaged area which are two main criteria for granting tax abatements. This business will not provide resources to Eagle Township. Abatements set a bad precedent. Citizen is not for government abatements/handouts.
- Citizen states the property was purchased without a tax abatement. Paxton Countertops can file for a tax abatement but the township does not have to grant the abatement. Citizen is interested to know what criteria would be used to grant a tax abatement.
- Citizen does not want to see a tax abatement granted. This will increase traffic and cause the value of surrounding traffic to decrease. It is no benefit to the township.
- Citizen states that just because costs are high is not a reason for a tax abatement. Paxton came here to build and can do so without a tax abatement.

Email Comments:

- Citizen does not see any benefits being realized by Eagle Township for this business. Lack of jobs is not an issue in our area. Everyone is burdened by costs, higher taxes, and gas prices. Everyone makes tough choices every day on how/where to spend their dollars. Paxton will need to make the same considerations. A tax abatement would be at the taxpayer's expense. Citizen is also opposed to the signing of any future NDAs.
- Citizen states that there should not be any tax abatement for Mr. Paxton as he asked to bring his business to Eagle Township. Eagle Township did not ask him to build here. Doesn't he pay taxes where he is? He needs to pay his fair share of taxes here. Please vote no on the tax abatement.
- Citizen is opposed to this and all tax abatements.

- Citizen is against giving a tax abatement to Paxton. He is in with LEAP, and they are trying to set a precedent. Please vote NO.
- Citizen is requesting the Eagle Township Board deny the application for Industrial Facilities Certificate from Paxton Countertops. Industrial Development Zones and tax abatements are ways to encourage development. Eagle Township has not been actively trying to attract industrial businesses. The property is in a prime location off the expressway, and there is no need to provide a tax incentive for this parcel to be developed. The township should collect the full amount of tax as the business will be using township and county resources. Granting this tax abatement will set a precedent that will be difficult to reverse.
- Citizen requests the board deny this tax abatement application. Citizen is currently building a home and is not getting a tax break. The Paxton facility will cause harm to Eagle's beautiful agricultural land. If Paxton wants to build here, they need to pay their taxes like everyone else.
- Citizen is strongly against any tax abatement and any encouragement of industrial growth. Do not set a precedent for future large scale industrial development. They will build with or without it. We will need every dollar to mitigate the loss of local zoning control regarding wind and solar wasting our farmland.
- No comments were received from taxing authorities that received notice of the public hearing on the Paxton Countertop application for Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate.

Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Supervisor Stroud to close the public hearing at 6:36 pm on Paxton Countertops application for Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate. Motion carried.

10. **Presentation: Dave Paxton, Paxton Countertops** – Dave Paxton stated that he is requesting a boost to get closer to his 10-year plan. He is a local resident and is interested in the workforce in the area. His business supports local schools. He intends to build on his site but is not sure when. The abatement popped up as a possible way to help continue with his plan.
11. **Schedule Special Meeting for Paxton IFT consideration:** Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Supervisor Stroud to set a Special Meeting to be held December 8, 2023, at 6 pm to decide on the Paxton Countertop application for a tax abatement. Roll Call Yes Votes: Trustee Strahle, Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Supervisor Stroud. No Votes: None. Absent: Trustee Jones, Treasurer Oberg. Motion carried.
12. **LGRFA Report:** Chairperson John Clark submitted a report for the Looking Glass Regional Fire Authority that the financial projection shows the LGRFA will be under budget and the balance sheet is positive. Runs are projected at a 3% increase. Eagle Township has had 38% of total runs and Watertown Charter Township 62%. Overall, 75-80% of runs are medical runs. Facilities report: The building is now over 20 years old; maintenance updates are being done to the fire trucks, and a new ambulance is on order.
13. **Commissioner Report:** Clinton County Commissioner Pohl submitted a report that Clinton County was awarded a Broadband grant for part of the proposed project with installation likely to begin in the spring. The County is planning to apply to the next grant cycle to complete the project. The Board of Commissioners approved an Off-Road Vehicle Ordinance for Clinton County. Clinton County

will work with Eaton and Ingham Counties to apply for an EPA grant to support Regional Brownfield Redevelopment. The Board of Commissioners approved a Youth Outreach program offered by Community Mental Health to help youths struggling with stress and anger. Renewal of the Waste Management Rural Recycling program was approved for 2024. There is an open house for the public at the new Road Commission facility on November 21 from 4-6 pm.

14. **Eagle Township Planning Commission Report:** Chairperson Currie reported that proposals for helping with the master plan and zoning cost are being accepted through November 17 at 5 pm. Planning Commission members are continuing to work on the MSU Extension Citizen Planner training. The Planning Commission members are reviewing the 2022 Clinton County Comprehensive Plan to get a jumpstart on a Comprehensive Plan for Eagle Township when a firm is hired.
15. **Election Update:** The election on November 7 went well. We changed how absentee ballots were processed per suggestions from the Clinton County Clerk's office. The Presidential Primary has been set for February 27, 2024, and will include 9 days of early voting at two Clinton County Sites: Bingham Township and Dewitt Charter Township. Regular voting will be held at the Eagle Township Hall on February 27, 2024, from 7 am – 8 pm. The applications for the November election resulted in over 600 people signing up for permanent ballots to be mailed without an application. The Presidential Primary will require a ballot selection mailing as the primary is closed, and the elector must choose either the Democrat or Republican ballot.
16. **Accounts Payable:** Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Clerk Briggs-Dudley to pay the approved bills as presented as well as all other regular monthly bills. Motion carried.
17. **Motion to rescind MEDC NDA:** Motion by Supervisor Stroud supported by Trustee Strahle to authorize the lawyer research and form what is needed to rescind any nondisclosure agreements the Township Supervisor and Board are under. Roll Call Yes Votes: Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Trustee Strahle, Supervisor Stroud. No Votes: None. Absent: Treasurer Oberg, Trustee Jones. Motion carried.
18. **Microsoft Office software for Board Members:** Motion by Clerk Briggs-Dudley supported by Trustee Strahle to purchase annual subscriptions to Microsoft Office 365 Basic for all township board members currently priced at \$99/year. Motion carried.
19. **Minutes from October 19, 2023:** Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Supervisor Stroud to approve the October 19, 2023, minutes as amended. Motion carried.
20. **Quickbooks Payroll:** Motion by Clerk Briggs-Dudley supported by Supervisor Stroud to approve the clerk purchase a Quickbooks Enhanced Payroll subscription for \$650 annual plus \$6/active employee per month (Eagle has 9-12 employees). Motion carried.
21. **Eagle Township Planning Commission requests:** Motion by Supervisor Stroud supported by Trustee Strahle to allow the Eagle Township Planning Commission to help establish guidelines for all land use districts. Motion carried.
22. **Clinton County Broadband Task Force:** Motion by Supervisor Stroud supported by Trustee Strahle to name Trustee Dennis Strahle as the Eagle Township representative on the Clinton County Broadband Task Force. Motion carried.

23. **Eagle Township Treasurer:** Motion by Clerk Briggs-Dudley supported by Trustee Strahle to consider the resignation of Eagle Township Treasurer Kathy Oberg but not accept this until a new treasurer is in place. Motion carried.

Motion by Clerk Briggs-Dudley supported by Trustee Strahle to approve the posting requesting applicants for Eagle Township Treasurer to be posted to the Eagle Township website, at the Eagle Township Hall, and at the Eagle Post Office with resumes to be received by Sunday, November 26, 2023, @ 5 pm with a Special Meeting to be held on November 29, 2023, @ 6 pm for interviews and potential selection. Motion carried.

24. **MTA books for the Supervisor:** Motion by Supervisor Stroud supported by Trustee Strahle to purchase Michigan Townships Association (MTA) Township Essentials book package for Supervisors at a cost of \$252. Motion carried.
25. **Adjournment:** Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Clerk Briggs-Dudley to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 pm. Motion carried.

Laurie Briggs-Dudley, Clerk