

FIFE LAKE AREA UTILITY AUTHORITY (FLAUA)

Regular Meeting - Minutes

Wednesday, April 20, 2022, 6:00 p.m. 231-879-3565  
Fife Lake Township Hall, 134 Morgan Street, Fife Lake, MI 49633

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Tom Gray called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** President Gray called Roll.

**Present:** President Tom Gray, Vice President Marilyn Hayes, Secretary Leigh Gifford, and Commissioners Ron Broering, Tom Hempsted, and Dave McGough. A quorum was established.

**Absent:** Treasurer Jodi Thayer and Commissioners Jim Gifford and David Gill.

**Others in Attendance:**

Mr. Ray Ravary, Compliance Officer  
Ms. Kay Held, Recording Secretary

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Additions:

Under Committee Reports, Personnel Committee: Add Approval of 4-13-22 Personnel Committee Minutes.

**Board Action:**

Ms. Hayes made a motion to approve the Agenda as amended. Mr. Broering seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:**

**Acceptance of Regular Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2022:**

**Board Action:**

Ms. Hayes made a motion to accept the Minutes of the March 16, 2022, Regular Meeting as presented. Mr. Hempsted seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Mr. Gray, Mr. Broering and Ms. Gifford abstained from voting as they were absent from the March meeting.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

**Treasurer's Report – Financial Report of March 2022, and Payment of Bills:**

The March, 2022, Treasurer's Report was distributed in advance of the meeting for Board review.

Mr. Broering inquired about H&R Block time entries of several dates regarding review of audit documents. Our contract with H&R Block includes two hours of time, with the remaining as billable. There was Board discussion and agreement about the audit and what the annual review would likely entail.

**Board Action:**

Mr. Broering made a motion to approve the Financial Report as presented. Mr. Hempsted seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

**Payment of Bills: March, 2022, Bills Payable:** There was Board discussion regarding Bills Payable.

The Great Lakes Energy electric bill seemed high, considering we aren't irrigating. However, pumping volume was very high (double), reaching 80,000 gallons in one day. Typical has been 60,000-80,000 gallons/day recently.

There was discussion about possibly including a note in user bills inquiring about excessive sump pump activity as energy costs have been considerably higher.

Compliance Officer Ravary will inquire with Rural Water how other municipalities deal with sump pumps putting ground water into the system.

**Board Action:**

Ms. Hayes made a motion to approve the March, 2022, bills as presented. Mr. Broering seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

Hayes-Y, Broering-Y, Gray-Y, L. Gifford-Y, McGough-Y, Hempsted-Y. Motion carried.

President Gray provided a signature on the report which will be delivered to H&R Block by Mr. Ravary tomorrow.

**GUESTS:** None.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Personnel Committee:**

The Committee held a meeting on Wednesday, April 13, 2022. Minutes are enclosed in the April meeting packet.

**Board Action:**

Ms. Hayes made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2022, Personnel Committee meeting as presented. Mr. Broering seconded the motion.

YEAS: All. YEAS: None. Motion carried.

The following recommendations for wage increases were made in the Personnel Committee Minutes:

“Therefore, it is the recommendation of the Personnel Committee that employee wages be set as follows effective May 1, 2022, until further review and/or action by the FLAUA Board:

Ray Ravary – increase hourly wage to \$26.00 with four weeks of vacation each year, effective May 1, 2022.

Chris Houghton – increase hourly wage to \$20.00 with an anticipation that he will work up to 15 hours per week, effective May 1, 2022.

New Hires- begin at an hourly wage between \$15.00 and \$18.00, based on experience, knowledge, etc.”

**Board Action:**

Ms. Hayes made a motion to accept the personnel committee recommendations as outlined in the Minutes of 4-13-22 regarding employee wage adjustments. Mr. Broering seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Hempsted-Y, McGough-Y, Hayes-Y, Broering-Y, Gray-Y, L. Gifford-Y. Motion carried.

Mr. Ravary initiated discussion that he had asked for a performance review in October, 2021; that did not happen until April, 2022. He stated to the Board that at the Personnel Committee meeting he asked and was informed he would be granted a partial retroactive pay increase as the review was delayed. The retroactive nature of the increase was not noted in the Personnel Committee Minutes; the effective date was stated as May 1, 2022.

There was considerable Board discussion with divided opinions. The Board discussed in lieu of a financial increase, he was previously provided additional vacation weeks as he had been unable to use his vacation time for two years. He agrees his vacation now being returned to four weeks per year is correct.

Ultimately the Board agreed to revisit this at the May meeting as Treasurer Thayer was not present this evening. She is on the Personnel Committee and was present at the April 13, 2022 meeting.

**Steering and Operations Committee:** No meeting. No report.

**Compliance Officer/FVOP Report:** The Compliance Officer Report was distributed in advance of the meeting. Mr. Ravary also reported on the following:

A Ferric Chloride delivery is coming tomorrow; approximate expense of \$3,000. This past week the pond jumped 3'; that is ok.

Jay did not make it out today to work on the meter; however, Mr. Ravary spoke with him. He is going to replace the wiring as a troubleshooting measure. Mr. Ravary suggested adding 3' of flexible conduit as well. We may not have to buy a new meter; Jay will put it into diagnostic mode.

There was discussion again about the need and request for a flat bottom boat (14' long, approx. 4-5' wide) for use in getting out on the big pond and to the Solar Bee. It will need to accommodate 3-4 people and have a pump and tank affixed to it. This would allow us to spray the pond ourselves, saving \$3-4k per spray. Compliance Officer Ravary holds the appropriate permit. He and Board members will look for a used boat; none has been seen lately.

**CITIZEN COMMENT:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Explore New Legal Counsel:**

Compliance Officer Ravary has sent query letters to prospective attorneys with municipal experience, as directed, per discussion at last month's meeting. Further discussion and action was tabled to next month when there is a greater Board presence.

**2021 Audit Review/Approval:**

This was tabled to next month as it was not yet completed.

**State of Michigan LEP (Limited English Proficiency Plan):**

Ms. Thayer was looking into this; it was tabled to next month when Treasurer Thayer is present.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Asset Management Plan:**

There was Board discussion about long-term needs.

Compliance Officer Ravary provided an updated Asset Management Plan for Board review. He will also email to Board Members. This will be presented for approval at next month's meeting.

Compliance Officer Ravary is having trouble getting bids for the fencing project. Apple Fence did not have an interest in a 6' farm fence; only a chain link fence. Mr. Ravary believes this project could be completed this summer, but with assistance.

**Asset List:**

Compliance Officer Ravary and Treasurer Thayer have been preparing an asset inventory list of items valued over \$50. The list is complete; he will forward to insurance agent Paul Olson.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

President Gray received correspondence from Ms. Ginger Van Conet of Michigan Rural Water Association and read it aloud. They conducted a free energy assessment on April 7, 2022. A report from the assessment will be submitted within 6-8 weeks with any recommendations for cost savings. She was able to meet with Compliance Officer Ravary during that assessment.

**CITIZEN COMMENT:** None.

**OUTSTANDING TASK LIST:**

The Outstanding Task List was reviewed. New items were added for individual and Board follow-up.

Compliance Officer Ravary confirmed the Fleis & Vandenbrink letter has been sent, requesting transfer of records to our possession before they are eligible to be destroyed. At the May meeting, discuss whether they have responded yet.

**BOARD COMMENT:**

President Gray commented about employment needs and the statistic of 1.7 jobs available for every person looking for work. He reiterated the importance of getting a part-time person in place to assist Compliance Officer Ravary for a minimum of 15 hours so he can focus on the critical tasks of his job. He asked Board Members to consider any people they know of who may be available. Mr. Ravary has also posted on Facebook.

Mr. Ravary stated at the Personnel Committee meeting they also discussed marihuana, suggesting not testing for it as it is now a legal substance. There was Board discussion, inquiring whether there is an FLAUA policy in place regarding this. Mr. Ravary will contact our insurance agent, Mr. Paul Olson to inquire about this.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Broering made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Gifford seconded the motion.

VOTES: YEAS: All. NAYES: None.

The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

**Submitted by: Kay Z. Held, Recording Secretary**