

Minutes
Eagle Township Board Meeting
Thursday, October 19, 2023
Eagle Twp. Hall - 14318 Michigan Street, Eagle, MI 48822

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Schafer at 6:00 pm - Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Present:** Trustee Dennis Strahle, Supervisor Patti Schafer, Clerk Laurie Briggs-Dudley, Treasurer Kathy Oberg, absent w/notice Trustee Dick Jones;
3. **Others Present:** Dave Pohl, Clinton County Commissioner; Dave Paxton, Paxton Countertops; Jaclyn Hutchison, Lansing Economic Area Partnership; Emma Bostwick, Lansing Economic Area Partnership; Chris Patterson, Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC
4. **Citizens:** Coreen Strzalka, Leah Horn, Dan Feldpausch, Pam Brown, Connie Iszler, John Iszler, Tyler McCastle, Todd McCastle, Darrin and Debbie Gray, Emily Chase, Cady Ness-Smith, Brad Rich, Dave Peters, Curt and Martha Kenyon, Judy Bronson, Robert Gross, Linn Romanik, Janine Dyer, Becky Theis, Margie Wirth, Sandi VanderBroek, Lori Fountain, Nikki Selleck, Jeff Selleck, David VanderBroek, Scott Smith.
5. **Citizen comments:** Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Clerk Briggs-Dudley 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 agenda item. Roll Call Yes Votes: Trustee Strahle, Treasurer Oberg, Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Supervisor Schafer. No Votes: None. Absent: Trustee Jones. Motion carried.
6. **Citizen's Comments:** None.
7. **Consent Agenda:** Motion by Clerk Briggs-Dudley supported by Trustee Strahle to accept the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried.
8. **Agenda Approval:** Motion by Clerk Briggs-Dudley supported by Supervisor Schafer to approve the agenda as amended. Roll Call Yes Votes: Treasurer Oberg, Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Trustee Strahle, Supervisor Schafer. No Votes: None. Absent: Trustee Jones. Motion carried.
9. **Presentation:** Presentation by Dave Paxton of Paxton Countertops, Emma Bostwick of Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP), and Jaclyn Hutchison of LEAP, regarding the plans to bring Paxton Countertops to vacant property on Grange Road and the request for Eagle Township to establish an Industrial Development District for a potential PA 198 Tax Abatement. Mr. Paxton, Ms. Bostwick and Ms. Hutchison answered questions from the Eagle Township Board and citizens regarding the project and abatement request.
10. **Public Hearing – Paxton Countertops Industrial Development District:** Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Supervisor Schafer to open the public hearing at 6:41 pm on Paxton Countertops request to establish an Industrial Development District. Roll Call Yes Votes: Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Trustee Strahle, Treasurer Oberg, Supervisor Schafer. No Votes: None. Absent: Trustee Jones. Motion carried.

Public Comment:

- Citizen is not opposed to new business, but is opposed to people not paying their fair share of taxes. Opposed to all tax abatements. The community deserves its fair share of taxes. No guarantee of good paying jobs. LEAP is looking to set a precedent in Eagle Township.
- Citizen is not for or against the abatement, but has questions on the dollars that are being considered. \$5.5 million investment vs taxes on \$2.5 million. Is Paxton getting other grants outside of the tax abatement?
- Citizen is in favor of the tax abatement as it will support students coming into skilled trades. Paxton Countertops does quality work and their product would be stamped Paxton Countertops, Eagle, Michigan.
- Citizen is not in favor of offering a tax abatement. Costs are up for everyone. Should have come by yourself without LEAP. Paxton will do fine without receiving a tax abatement.
- Citizen is not in favor of offering a tax abatement. It is a free giveaway and comes out of everyone else's pocket. Our tax dollars are used to pay for free things from the government.
- Citizen stated Mr. Paxton would have done better if he had engaged a lawyer and not LEAP for the request.
- Citizen likes having a small family business wanting to be in Eagle Township. Kind of excited about a tax abatement. Citizen is not happy how this came about in secret with LEAP talking to the attorney and how things are sprung on the township at the last minute. Advocates Eagle Township proceed with caution and wants to know what this means for the township.
- Citizen is opposed to the Paxton Countertop tax abatement. Sets a bad precedent that future businesses could come to expect. Eagle Township does not owe Paxton a tax abatement. Tax abatements are used to attract new business. The Township did not seek out this business. Other businesses came to Eagle Township without requesting a tax break and being a burden to the township. Citizen is also concerned with additional vehicle traffic that will require more road maintenance. Mr Paxton said no possibility of contamination of runoff but all surrounding land eventually leads to the river. Eagle Township wants self-reliant businesses, not those seeking handouts.
- Dave Paxton stated that his business will recycle water and reuse it. They use no caustic chemicals and there will be no soil contamination. Mr Paxton invites people to come to visit his shop.
- Citizen is against the zoning and the tax abatement and is concerned that LEAP was brought in.
- Citizen states the tax abatement is a way of attracting good businesses to the community. After the abatement ends, they will come to full tax level. They will not get the same 18 mil exemption as residents get on tax payments.
- Citizen questioned how many new workers would be added to the business, and if they would be hired from Eagle and surrounding townships. Question if they would be paying \$0 in taxes with the abatement. Twelve years is too long for an abatement. No more than six years with a review at three years. If they are not doing what supposed to do, ask for the abatement back.

- Citizen says abatement doesn't give that much break. The bad economy is causing agricultural people to go under. Questions why LEAP is involved. The precedent to approve a tax abatement bothers him.
- Jaclyn Hutchison stated there were no secret meetings. Supervisor Schafer attended the initial meeting via phone. Mr. Paxton needs to apply to MEDC for other programs/grant opportunities. For 2025, it is estimated that Paxton Countertops would pay approximately \$23,000 in taxes with an abatement of almost \$14,000.
- Dave Paxton states that a reason to move his business to the area is for the local workforce. Kids in the local area know how to work hard and will be paid very well. The people hired by Paxton Countertops will be full-time employees.

Email Comments:

- Citizen has concerns regarding increased traffic in the area. Citizen is not in favor of a tax abatement as the community is not seeking Paxton Countertops, Paxton Countertops is seeking the community. Concern regarding a lit-up sign and the disposal of silt from the cutting of countertops.
- Citizen is not in favor of the tax abatement as the business was already planned to be built at this location before any abatement request. Abatements are positive tools to encourage investments in local communities, and that is not the case here. Based on the projected revenues by Paxton Countertops, it does not seem that a tax abatement is needed.
- Citizen is not in favor of the tax abatement as it will send a message to current and future business owners. No other businesses in Eagle Township have a tax abatement. Paxton has owned property for two years and is now requesting a rushed tax abatement. Schools will be cheated out of tax dollars if the abatement is granted. Teachers are underpaid and using their own dollars for classroom supplies. Portland Schools could use the additional tax revenue. Mr. Paxton says he will create more jobs, but only if his business continues to grow. The abatement is not conditional on Paxton providing jobs.
- No comments were received from taxing authorities that received notice of the public hearing on the Industrial Development District.

Motion by Clerk Briggs-Dudley supported by Treasurer Oberg to close the public hearing at 7:20 pm on Paxton Countertops request to establish an Industrial Development District. Motion carried.

- 11. Discussion to Create Industrial Development District:** Motion by Treasurer Oberg supported by Supervisor Schafer to adopt resolution 10-19-2023-02 to Establish Industrial Development District 2023-1 in Eagle Township. Roll Call Yes Votes: Treasurer Oberg, Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Supervisor Schafer. No Votes: Trustee Strahle. Absent: Trustee Jones. Resolution adopted.
- 12. Site Plan PC-44-23 SP:** Motion by Clerk Briggs-Dudley supported by Supervisor Schafer to recommend approval of PC-44-23 SP updated commercial site plan application for Paxton Products to the Clinton County Planning Commission. Roll Call Yes Votes: Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Trustee Strahle, Treasurer Oberg, Supervisor Schafer. No Votes: None. Absent: Trustee Jones. Motion carried.

13. **LGRFA Report:** Trustee Strahle had nothing new to report.
14. **Commissioner Report:** Clinton County Commissioner Pohl reported that a video surveillance agreement between Clinton County and School Districts of Clinton County was approved. Updated Courthouse Access Policy Amendments were adopted requiring all public visitors to go through security. Budget hearing was held on October 10 approving a balanced budget. Rafael Kasen has been hired as the Clinton County Planning and Zoning director. There will be a public hearing on October 31 at 9 am for an Off Road Vehicle ordinance. There is an open house for the public at the new Road Commission facility on November 21 from 4-6 pm.
15. **Clinton County Utility Scale Solar and Wind Advisory Committee:** Trustee Strahle reported that the advisory committee met on September 28 for a final redline of the proposed utility scale solar and wind ordinances to be submitted to the Clinton County Planning Commission. The Clinton County Planning Commission will meet on October 26 to work on the ordinances.
16. **Eagle Township Planning Commission Report:** Supervisor Schafer reported that Eagle Township Planning Commission did not make a recommendation at their meeting on October 5 on ZC-06-23 VR variance request for property at 15060 W Herbison Rd, Eagle. Supervisor Schafer attended the Clinton County Zoning Board of Appeals meeting on October 17 where the variance request was denied.
17. **Accounts Payable:** Motion by Treasurer Oberg supported by Supervisor Schafer to pay the approved bills as presented as well as all other regular monthly bills. Motion carried.
18. **Granger Landfill Solid Waste Amendment Request:** Motion by Clerk Briggs-Dudley supported by Trustee Strahle to adopt resolution 10-19-2023-01 Approving Amendment to Clinton County Solid Waste Management Plan as amended which includes import/export waste agreements with other Michigan counties. Roll Call Yes Votes: Treasurer Oberg, Trustee Strahle, Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Supervisor Schafer. No Votes: None. Absent: Trustee Jones. Resolution adopted.
19. **Township Hall Repairs:** Clerk Briggs-Dudley reported that downspouts at the township hall were repaired on September 25, 2023. Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Treasurer Oberg to pay the invoice for the downspout repairs before the next meeting if it is less than the \$2000 approved at the August 17, 2023, board meeting, and there is a W9 form on file for the vendor. Motion carried.
20. **Eagle Township Email Vendor:** No action.
21. **ITC Transmission Open House:** No action.
22. **Eagle Township Planning Commission Abatement District motion:** No action.
23. **Fee for Tax Abatement Application:** Motion by Clerk Briggs-Dudley supported by Trustee Strahle to set a PA 198 tax abatement application fee of \$200. Roll Call Yes Votes: Trustee Strahle, Treasurer Oberg, Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Supervisor Schafer. No Votes: SUPERVISOR SCHAFFER None. Absent: Trustee Jones. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Supervisor Schafer to grandfather Paxton Countertop's Tax Abatement application without being charged the new Tax Abatement Application Fee. Roll Call Yes Votes: Trustee Strahle, Treasurer Oberg, Supervisor Schafer. No Votes: Clerk Briggs-Dudley. Absent: Trustee Jones. Motion carried.

24. **Assessor Accessibility Policy:** Motion by Clerk Briggs-Dudley supported by Trustee Strahle to adopt the Assessor Accessibility Policy as presented. Roll Call Yes Votes: Treasurer Oberg, Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Trustee Strahle, Supervisor Schafer. No Votes: None. Absent: Trustee Jones. Motion carried.
25. **Lawyer Policy:** No action.
26. **Election Drop Box Security Camera:** Motion by Supervisor Schafer supported by Trustee Strahle to reimburse the Clerk \$182.30 for the election drop box security camera. Roll Call Yes Votes: Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Trustee Strahle, Treasurer Oberg, Supervisor Schafer. No Votes: None. Absent: Trustee Jones. Motion carried.
27. **Budget Amendment:** Motion by Treasurer Oberg supported by Supervisor Schafer to approve the budget amendment request to pay the Clinton County Treasurer for Board of Review adjustments by moving \$1000 from account 528-919 Refuse Collect/Disposal/Recycle to account 253-956 Clinton County Treasurer. Motion carried.
28. **Printer for Treasurer:** Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Supervisor Schafer to approve a new printer purchase for the Treasurer up to \$700. Motion carried.
29. **Adjournment:** Motion by Trustee Strahle supported by Clerk Briggs-Dudley to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 pm. Motion carried.

Laurie Briggs-Dudley, Clerk