

JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP
24725 Jefferson Center Street
Cassopolis, MI 49031

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2025

Call to Order: Supervisor Hass called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Brunner-present, Bundle-absent, Gillam-present, Hass-present, Mendenhall-present.

Additional attendees: Ron Bellaire, Jay Stoltz, Sharon Kantz, Debi Bailey, Dacia Kirkland, Frank Kujawa, John Ritzler, Dallas Austin, Jacob Purlee, Melissa Purlee, Michael Grice-County Commissioner, Brian VanderWerf

Pledge to the flag: Recited

Correspondence: None

Public Comment-Agenda Items only: None

Approval of Agenda: Moved by Brunner, seconded by Bundle to approve the agenda with the addition of items: Clean-up quotes for Township Clean-up Day and Budget Amendment. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: Moved by Hass, seconded by Mendenhall to approve the minutes of February 13, 2025. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Moved by Bundle, seconded by Gillam to approve the treasurer's report as presented. Motion carried.

Payment of Bills: Moved by Mendenhall, seconded by Bundle to approve the payment of bills as presented. Motion carried.

Unfinished Business:

1. Supervisor Hass updated the board that the Cass Co. Road Commission applies one coat for the Dust Control Program annually.

New Business:

1. Dr. Ritzler, Superintendent of Cassopolis Public Schools, gave a presentation on the bond proposal that will be placed on the May 6, 2025, ballot.
2. Supervisor Hass reviewed the proposed road projects for Summer 2025 in the township. The contracts are for Mill & Fill for all roads in Woodfield Hills Contract #25-03-03 through #25-03-08, Overlay for Indigan Ln. Contract #25-03-15, 3" gravel for Mullen Rd. Contract #25-03-14 and Evan St. Contract #25-03-13 and the Countywide Dust Control Program for 2025. Moved by Brunner, seconded by Bundle to approve the proposed road projects at a cost of \$627,510.17 and to move the previously approved additional funds of \$300,000.00 from the money market acct. to the roads acct. to offset the large project costs.

Roll Call Vote: Gillam-yes, Hass-yes, Bundle-yes, Brunner-yes, Mendenhall-yes

3. Clerk Brunner handed out a quote and information about BS & A Financial services for consideration by the board. The township is currently using an unsupported desktop version of QuickBooks for the General Ledger and Accounts Payable. This is not sustainable, and the Township Board will need to consider options. BS & A is ideal for fund accounting, but the Board could also decide to move to QuickBooks Cloud which would be a less expensive alternative.
4. Clerk Brunner informed the Board that the Financial Audit for FY 2023-2024 has been completed. Copies of the Audit will be available for review and discussion at the next Board meeting.
5. The Township Board reviewed and approved the following Board of Review Resolutions for 2025:

Jefferson Township Board Resolution
Poverty Exemption Income Guidelines and Asset Level Test
Resolution #2025-3

WHEREAS, the adoption of guidelines for poverty exemptions is required of the Jefferson Township Board; and
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 Jefferson, Cass County adopts the following guidelines for the Board of Review to implement. The guidelines shall include the specific income and asset levels of the claimant and all persons residing in the household;

To be eligible, a person shall do all the following on an annual basis:

- 1) Be an owner of and occupy as a principal residence the property for which an exemption is requested.
- 2) File a claim with the Board of Review, accompanied by federal and state income tax returns for all persons residing in the principal residence.
- 3) Assets include real estate other than the principal residence, personal property, motor vehicles, recreational vehicles and equipment, certificates of deposit, savings accounts, checking accounts, stocks, bonds, life insurance, retirement funds, etc.
- 4) Produce a valid driver's license or other form of identification if requested.
- 5) Produce, if requested, a deed, land contract, or other evidence of ownership of the property for which an exemption is requested.
- 6) Meet the federal poverty income guidelines as defined and determined annually by the United States Department of Health and Human Services or alternative guidelines adopted by the governing body providing the alternative guidelines do not provide eligibility requirements less than the federal guidelines.
- 7) The application for an exemption shall be filed after January 1, but one day prior to the last day of the December Board of Review. The filing of this claim constitutes an appearance before the Board of Review for purposes of preserving the right of appeal to the Michigan Tax Tribunal.

The following are the 2024 federal poverty income guidelines which are updated annually by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The annual allowable income includes income for all persons residing in the principal residence.

November 19, 2024

Size of Family Unit	Poverty Guidelines
1	\$15,060
2	\$20,440
3	\$25,820
4	\$31,200
5	\$36,580
6	\$41,960
7	\$47,340
8	\$52,720
For each additional person	\$5,380

An Asset test will also be considered. The guidelines are as follows:
Assets to the total household may not exceed the amount of \$15,000.00.

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

Moved by Brunner, seconded by Bundle to adopt Resolution #2025-3 Poverty Exemption Income Guidelines and Asset Level Test.

Roll Call Vote: Hass-yes, Mendenhall-yes, Brunner-yes, Bundle-yes, Gillam-yes. Resolution adopted.

Jefferson Township
Resolution to Set an Alternate Date for the July Board of Review 2025
Resolution #2025-4

WHEREAS, Section 53b of the General Property Tax Act, MCL 211.53b, requires a Board of Review that meets in July to meet on Tuesday following the third Monday in December; and

WHEREAS, assessors who work for multiple townships are not always able to attend the Board of Review meeting for each township when they meet on the same day; and

WHEREAS, Public Act 122 of 2008, effective March 13, 2025, allows an alternate July Board of Review meeting date during the week of the third Monday in July; and

WHEREAS, it will benefit the residents of Jefferson Township to have the assessor available to assist the Board of Review and taxpayers in processing tax appeals and poverty exemption's;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that any day, the week of the third Monday of July has been selected as the meeting date of the 2025 July Board of Review by the Jefferson Township Board on March 13, 2025.

Moved by Bundle, seconded by Hass to adopt Resolution #2025-4 – Alternate Date for the July Board of Review 2025.

Roll Call Vote: Mendenhall-yes, Gillam-yes, Bundle-yes, Brunner-yes, Hass-yes

Jefferson Township
Resolution to Set an Alternate Date for the December Board of Review 2025
Resolution #2025-5

WHEREAS, Section 53b of the General Property Tax Act, MCL 211.53b, requires a Board of Review that meets in December to meet on Tuesday following the second Monday in December; and

WHEREAS, assessors who work for multiple townships are not always able to attend the Board of Review meeting for each township when they meet on the same day; and

WHEREAS, Public Act 122 of 2008, effective March 13, 2025, allows an alternate December Board of Review meeting date during the week of the second Monday in December; and

WHEREAS, it will benefit the residents of Jefferson Township to have the assessor available to assist the Board of Review and taxpayers in processing tax appeals and poverty exemption's;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that any day of the week of the second Monday of December has been selected as the meeting date of the 2025 December Board of Review by the Jefferson Township Board on March 13, 2025

Moved by Mendenhall, seconded by Brunner to adopt Resolution #2025-5 – Alternate Date for the December Board of Review December 2025.

Roll Call Vote: Hass-yes, Brunner-yes, Gillam-yes, Bundle-yes, Mendenhall-yes

6. Clerk Brunner advised the Board that she would like the Planning and Zoning Commission to review the Zoning Ordinance for possible amendments regarding accessory buildings in the RR zone. The current ordinance leaves some questions to what is permissible.
7. Appointment of new board members to the Planning & Zoning Commission and to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Moved by Gillam, seconded by Mendenhall to appoint Dallas Austin to fill the vacancy left by Kathy Wishart's resignation on the Planning & Zoning Commission, to appoint Donna Curtis to fill the vacancy left by Gerry Bundle's resignation on Zoning Board of Appeals, and to appoint Della Bundle as the Township Board's voting member and secretary to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Motion carried.
8. Training for members of the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals. Discussion. Moved by Brunner, seconded by Bundle to schedule and pay for training for P & Z and ZBA. Motion carried.
9. Trustee Bundle would like to get a quote from another company to potentially provide services for the Township Clean-Up Day. She has spoken with the owner of Integrity who would like an opportunity to

provide this service. They do take tires and we were not able to offer that service last year. She will bring the quote to April Board meeting for consideration.

Inspectors Reports:

1. **Zoning/Code Enforcement:** Steve Allen was present to give his report.
2. **Building:** No report submitted.
3. **Plumbing/Mechanical:** No report submitted.
4. **Electrical:** Ron Bellaire reported that it has been slow in the Township.

Emergency Services/Utilities Reports:

1. **Cass Ambulance:** We are still in contract negotiations with SMCAS. Next meeting is April 24, 2025.
2. **Central Cass Fire Department:** Next meeting is in April.
3. **Edwardsburg Fire Department:** Next meeting is in April.
4. **CAUA:** Next meeting is March 17, 2025.

Township Board Reports:

1. **Planning & Zoning Commission:** Next meeting April 16th at 7:00 pm
2. **Zoning Board of Appeals:** No business
3. **Construction Board of Appeals:** No business.
4. **Board of Review:** Dallas Austin reported that the BOR hearings on March 10th and 11th went well. They were able to assist a few residents with issues. No appeals.

Public Comment:

1. Several residents who reside on Mullen Rd. and Evan St. voiced concern and frustration with the condition of their roads.
2. County Commissioner, Mike Grice, is open to bringing up the need for a County Millage for Ambulance Services.

Next regular Board of Trustees meeting: April 10, 2025, at 6:30 pm

With no other business before the Board at 7:51 p.m. Moved by Brunner, seconded by Mendenhall to adjourn. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Brunner, Clerk