

**Bear Creek Township Special Meeting
January 18, 2022**

- I. Time: 3:34p.m.
- II. Roll Call: Golding, Urman, Hoffman, Keiser, Radatovich
 - a. Others Present: Mitch Brown, Al Welsheimer
- III. 2022/23 Budget Discussion

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the township wages for the upcoming fiscal year. It was discovered during budget time last year how far behind the market rate Bear Creek's wages are. Last year, the board took incremental steps towards bringing people up to market rate, with the intention of continuing to take those steps this year as well. Radatovich shared some information with the board regarding the difference between a cost of living adjustment, traditional raise, and a market rate adjustment. For the last several years, the board has always given a small wage adjustment in the amount of the cost of living adjustment and considered it a raise. Doing this for so many years is what has put Bear Creek so far behind the market rate. From an economics perspective, Radatovich shared the factors in determining wage. These factors include risk/liability/responsibility, specialized skill, productivity, education, and experience. Radatovich shared each person's current wage, and their current wage with the cost of living adjustment (which is 5.9% this year per the Social Security Administration). She shared a salary survey from Grand Traverse County, which allowed the board to review the wages of other township employees and officials in similar sized Northern Michigan townships. Lastly, she shared a comparison between Bear Creek and two other similar sized Northern Michigan townships, which compared the duties, hours, and wages of employees. She noted that the labor market has changed and unskilled positions are now paying \$18-21/hr frequently. The positions at Bear Creek are specialized and the wages need to reflect that.

The board started by reviewing the deputy clerk and secretary wages. The market rate for this position (based on similar sized Northern Michigan townships) is \$18-22 per hour. The board agreed to increase the deputy clerk and secretary wages to \$21/hr.

The board reviewed the supervisor salary. The market rate for this position (based on similar sized Northern Michigan townships) is \$51,000-55,000. The board agreed to increase the supervisor salary to \$21,000. The board reviewed the assessor salary. The market rate for this position (based on similar sized Northern Michigan townships) is \$15-20 per parcel, and Bear Creek has 5200 parcels (which comes to \$78,000-104,000. The board agreed to increase the supervisor salary by 6%, to \$69,722.35. In addition, because the assessor no longer qualifies for an HSA account, the board agreed to give the assessor \$2,100 in place of an HSA, and \$4,000 of a cost share based on lower health care rates.

Next, the board reviewed the clerk salary. The market rate for this position (based on similar sized Northern Michigan townships) is \$51,000-55,000. The board agreed to increase the clerk salary to \$52,000.

The board reviewed the election wages next. The board agreed to increase the election wages to \$17/hr.

The board reviewed the treasurer salary. The market rate for this position (based on similar sized Northern Michigan townships) is \$51,000-55,000. The board agreed to increase the treasurer salary to \$38,000. The board reviewed the building department secretary salary. The board agreed to increase the building department secretary salary to \$22,000.

The board reviewed the deputy treasurer wages. The board agreed to increase the deputy treasurer wages to \$17/hr.

The board reviewed the trustees wages. The market rate for this position (based on similar sized Northern Michigan townships) is \$7,500-7,800. The board agreed to increase the trustees wages to \$8,000.

The board reviewed the per meeting stipend. The board agreed to increase the per meeting amount to \$65/meeting for all committees with the exception of planning commission, which will be set at \$75/meeting (due to lengthy meetings). The Planning Commission chair will make \$100/meeting and all other committee chairs will be increased to \$85/meeting. The Emmet County Zoning Administrator, who assists at Bear Creek Township meetings, will make \$110/meeting. The board reviewed the electrical inspector wages, which are broken into an hourly wage and a per inspection wage. The board agreed to increase each of those to \$39/hour (or inspection).

The board reviewed the building inspector wage. The building inspector was brought in at market rate last year, so the salary should be fairly close to what it needs to be, but will need to be adjusted for cost of living. The board agreed to increase the building inspector wage by 6%, which brings it to \$60,950.

The board reviewed the fire chief wage. The market rate for this position is \$74,000-117,000. The median is \$81,500. The board agreed to increase the fire chief wages to \$80,000.

Keiser shared that he met the county grant writer and she is willing to work with Bear Creek to match some of our ARPA funds. The county is looking to leverage their ARPA funds and is looking for partners for housing, recreation, and other areas. Going forward, we will need to address the Spring Lake Park bathroom remodel this year. It may be possible to use some of our ARPA funds on that.

The next budget meeting will be February 7, 2022 at 3:30pm.

IV. Adjournment: 5:31pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Emma Radatovich

Emma Radatovich, BCT Clerk