

**Township of Thetford
Public Hearing Special Assessment Meeting
Board of Trustees
September 23, 2015
6:30 P.M.**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Board of Trustees.

There was a moment of silence in observance of all military past and present.

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Kerr at 6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Supervisor Kerr, Clerk Pennington, Treasurer Ayotte, Trustee Gunnels, Trustee Cousineau, Trustee Stevens, Trustee Congdon

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Chief Robert Kenny, Attorney Robert Swartwood, Officer Jason Pletscher, Officer Erick Eckles

Supervisor Kerr welcomes the residents, has the residents look for a packet that was handed out. Thetford Township Information and the history of how the fire and police are funded. On page four (4) tells you where your taxes go, about 2.7% comes back to the township so if you pay \$1000 in taxes about \$27.00 dollars go back to the township. Also talks about a Special Assessment vs Millage and includes fire and police runs. On the page 7 shows you the estimated balance at the end of December 2015 that is will be a -\$58,789.77. I think a lot of people are asking why a special assessment and why now? Didn't you know it was coming, yes, we knew it was coming, previous board knew it was coming. And what happened we just kicked the can down the road, we didn't do anything about it. We tried a mileage, mileage for fire and a mileage for police that didn't work out to well. Right now the elected officials have given up their benefits and just codified our ordinances. We don't have to provide fire and police those are permissive services, the only thing the state makes us provide is assess properties, collect taxes and hold elections. Since here we are looking at December 2015 we are looking for a bridge, hoping that after that the residents will come up with a plan on how to pass a mileage if they choose. This board cannot campaign or run a mileage but the residents can.

The supervisor states that the next order of business is the consideration of the assessment roll for a Special Assessment, which has been prepared by the supervisor, chief assessing officer of the district and the treasurer in accordance with the resolution of the township board adopted August 24, 2015 and had been noticed for public hearing for September 23, 2015.

The township clerk reported that notices of the hearing on said assessment roll had been given by publication in the Genesee herald on September 2, 2015 and by first-class mail to each property owner of record as shown on the assessment rolls of the township within the special assessment district on September 8, 2015. Affidavits of such publication and mailing were presented and ordered filed as a part of the minutes of this meeting.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the district within the cost of fire prevention and police protection is proposed to be assessed is described as follows:

Township wide to include thirty six (36) square miles bordered Willard Road, Frances Road, Vassar Road, and Saginaw/Dort Hwy to include all improved Residential, all improved Commercial, all improved Industrial and all improved Agricultural properties.

Motion Treasurer Ayotte, supported by Clerk Pennington to open the public hearing at 6:45 p.m. Motion Carried

At the request of the supervisor, the clerk presented a proposed assessment roll which had been previously filed with her. A summary of the comments were made. The supervisor received 4 letters from residents with one with really good questions that was given to our attorney, with our attorneys answers to his questions. If the special assessment is to go through and you want to appeal it you would have to send a letter or speak tonight in opposition to it.

At this time the public hearing is opened:

- Cathy Kujacznski - I have seen the good, the bad and the ugly. I am for the police and the fire department being here into our township. They haven't just been here for the township but they have help with County and State. It's just not our township that they are helping. What a praise to have them here. With crime on the raise and our department, Sheriff Department and or State department they are letting them go. Being a committee and having our own police and fire is a good thing. The fire department is a plus, if you have a fire it's just terrible just knowing there in the area is a great thing. Please conceders on having a police and fire here if it's an assessment or a mileage down the line. They are a good thing.
- Linda Forsytek - been here since 98, this all started when Luther Hatchett was in office, as a township we didn't want police therefor took funds moved them around and now we have police. It's been snow balling ever since. I am not totally against having police and possible fire but I live within my means, I think this township, the board is over spending our money. What we have currently we can never, never maintain, you are going to keep taxing, taxing and taxing. I haven't received a raise in years. I don't know where you think you are going to get the money, I think you people the board needs to scale back. You are trying to get more, more officers, more this, and more that. You need to think about scaling back instead of continuing on this path because it's heading to a collision course. You are already in debt, I don't see how you are possible going to funds. If it is correct back in 2007 police was defeated you had an election, in 2013 for the fire it was defeat. You are not taking the consideration of the township in consideration. Time and time again we have said no and you continue on an uphill course.

Supervisor Kerr explained the Humvees on that they are retired military equipment and they costed nothing to the township except fuel when they are used.

Linda Forsytek - is it true that you can increase our taxes? Is it not true that each year you can raise it 0.999% without a hearing so in seven years are taxes could double.

Supervisor Kerr we could go up or down 10% without a public hearing. Special Assessment is a fee.

- Richard Myers - Handed the board a piece of paper (Clerk Pennington date stamped it and attached to the minutes) it was a 45 year old study. Really, really feel this situation should be voted on by the people. They are the ones doing the paying. To get back to the Humvees but is it my understanding and I didn't see the area wish I did but my understanding those Humvees were just a convenience that is was available and that you could of did is with a two wheel truck.
- Stan Piechnik Sr - hate coming to a public hearing, residents that come to public hearings because they are showing you that they don't trust the board, they don't trust on what you are doing. That's why they are here they don't trust you. I would like to compliment Eileen she is a good government employee, they told me that my health care was free and it's not. You can make these things and make these statements. But if you put one dime into that Humvee it's not free anymore. This is the third public hearing I have been too, first one was water park this is a Rural area and we were going to put in a water park, second was a gun range next to the cemetery. This is where the trust falls down, you don't have control over your police department there is no over sight. He comes in he says he needs this and you say you can have it. How many times do we have to say no? My understanding Public Act 33, we do have the right to petition to put this on the ballot. Is that correct? I was on this board for four years and I sat over there. I would say every time we are going broke. I called for workshops and we never had them. Eileen you have been on this board for 20 plus years and for you to say you were aware of it and nothing was ever done. I have never seen this board stay within the budget. More money you have the more money you spend. Resident and businesses are going through hard times, nothing is like it used to be. Our first police Chief Kulcher I asked him, how many police officers do you think we need? He said you can never have enough. And that is a very true statement, that's an honest statement 40, 50 will someone's life will always be in danger. And when we say what one life is worth you cannot measurer that by dollar. We have to be realistic just like a business is realistic. We have to stay in our means. Not a complaint but this said all land owners have an opportunity to petition, does that mean if you have two parcel do you get two votes? Owner of a business but don't live in the township?
- Dale Kujacznski Jr - Wow, really. You got Flint coming right up on our back door and Saginaw coming through the front door. I support this, I really do and I am

really tired of hearing about these Humvees. We all knew this was going to happen. I have lived out here for 36 years we all knew this was going to happen it's time to pay.

- William Gilbert - As American citizens we have many rights, two of the most important right to me are the right to speech and the right to vote. I am here tonight to use my right to speech on my rights to vote that was taken away from me on purpose. Because you knew about this a year ago and did nothing until now. You would think that it would have been the most important thing agenda until it was put to a vote or figured out somehow. Supposedly it is to pass the assessment or lose our police and fire protection. I feel if it was no big deal then then it's no big deal now. I think you should take the money that you saved on the benefits which I commend you all. And use that to fund the police force until we can get it to a vote in May 2016. The fire department is supposed to be funded all ready until October 2016. I do not like that I am going to be cheated out of my vote and I believe that is what is happening. That is why I feel the assessment is unfair to the residents of Thetford Township. I thank you for giving me this time.
- Larry Nelson - I have been a resident for 20 years and in those 20 years I have seen a downward spiral on those that are elected to represent citizens. Choosing instead to protect their own interest. Rather we are talking about local government, state government or national government, there has been a gradual decline on representation and a gradual decline on system of government known as oligarchy the wise, the dictating, and the wise to the common citizens. There was no police department in Thetford Township when I moved here. There was though a substation or mini station for the Sheriff or State police department. I remember when Luther Hatchett was on the board and they decided to ask for an increase on a new mileage and fund a new police department. This was turned down by the citizens who should never had had to vote on this issue. On if the elected official knew what the majority felt on this issue. Later I talked to Clyde Howd as he was to gain election in front of my house I was told that the citizens had not voted to increase the police department only on how to fund the police department if he wants to cut the line that is fine. We should have been told. But most of us went to the polls under Luther Hatchett that that was the funding for a new police department. Even when the large majority was against the mileage increase, the board that was so much more intelligent than the average Thetford resident went ahead and waived their magic wand and created a pseud police department. The funding for this police department was taken out of the general fund the board had established something that would fail. Which I think the board did that on purpose, taken out of general fund until they put the people of Thetford Township at risk. We have been in place on a fourth mileage increase by the Thetford township boards. This is not freedom this is manipulation. In my research of special assessment districts of the township I discovered one of the benefits of a special assessment district one of the hoops you have to jump through is an increase of property value as a result of a special assessment. Quoting of Michiganpropertytax.com a special assessment is a special assessment is not a tax. Rather, a special assessment is a specific levy

designed to recover the costs of improvements that confer local and peculiar benefits upon property within a defined area. *Kadzban v City of Grandville* 1993. Special assessments are sustained upon the theory that the value of property in the special assessment district is enhanced by the improvement for which the assessment is made. *Knott v City of Flint* 1961. This special assessment district adds no value to our property if you argue that it does then you also will argue if it adds value to our property then our taxes are going to increase meaning that we don't only pay for a special assessment district but we will also pay more in property tax because our property will increase in value. Because our special assessment district increases the revenue for Thetford Township call it what you will it amounts to a tax increase even though we cannot call it a tax it shows up on our property taxes. The State of Michigan desires local government to unite and provide public services and has stated in the past that they will penalize local government which don't unite with giving them less public money. Amounting in a short fall in the general fund if the state decides to withhold some of the money. The only thing that I can see is your decision is dividing our township and a house divided against itself cannot stand.

- Gary Domeresee - been a resident over 40 years, I have enjoyed my time living in Thetford Township. What I like the most is the low tax rate, if you talked other residents in other communities envy us in our low tax rate. I understand you cannot have services without paying for them. We have tried several times to have mileages for the fire department and police department and they have failed. I think we have elected you as a board to act in our stead, as I elected you for. I cannot be up here every day, I cannot do things for the roads, I cannot do things other things. I have elected you to operate our township so our roads are maintained, our fire is maintained, and our police is maintained so that we feel safe. I understand it is going to cost me more. I live on a fixed income as many of the residents but I am willing to pay for what I am going to get.
- Sandra Darby - I read this and see this that the proposal is for 2.5 mills? I did the math on my 2014 taxes that is a increase of 8.25%. I just want to be on the record proposing to oppose to the board that is should be put to the vote.
- Luther Hatchett - I was the supervisor of the township several years ago. When we started the police department it was a board decision not one person. Most people are not interested on what goes on here until the rumors start flying on sort things that are being done. I am glad to see that there is a lot of people here tonight that are concern and you should be. We need fire and police. For example if we don't have fire do you know that your insurance is going to go up? My homeowner will go up \$500. First of all I think the fire department is the most important safety issue in this township. Police department does a very good job with the money that he is given for a budget. They are dedicated, a lot of people don't know that our chief works many many hours without pay and some of the officers. They are not milkin the system like some are thinking. Nothing is free. We need something here for protection at the township. Assessment is not going to go up every like some people think, it's a contract like our garbage pickup is. Public safety is very important it is something you cannot do yourself. I don't understand how some people are so negative on paying for something

that the township really needs. We need protection here at this township, we don't have 24 hours police department. We have a part time police department and with what we have we have a good police department. We are always going to have people against it. You people were elected to a job and the number one job is the safety of the people in this township. Make the right decision, my safety, my family and my friends. Nothing is free.

- Beverly Bloss - my daughter is a fire fighter, my husband was a firefighter there has been many times when they have come home that if those police was not there to protect them they would not be able to do their job. They need to work hand and hand with each other. For their protection, I don't want to read in the paper that one of the people we know or we love was shot or something else because there was a crazy person in the township. They need to work hand and hand. As far as I am concern to pay a little money on our protection for our firefighters and the protection of our people here in the township and to keep our fire department is well worth the money.
- Kathy Myers - I am speaking because if you are against this you have to speak. My brother is a police officer up to when he retired I respect police men. I don't think this is about respect of police or if we need them. It's about the people we elected are truly supposed to represent us. If this passes my thought would be at the next election just don't be party loyal, choose on the individual and who truly represent your rights.
- Larry Hatchel - I am totally against this special assessment. In my opinion due to physically irresponsibility of the last three boards we find ourselves in this situation. Previous board asked us to fund the police department, we said no. The last three board have continued to pay for it out of general fund. Knowing that we didn't have the funds to maintain it and they choose to fund it anyways. Now they want to voters to say they are at fault on turning down the fire mileage. They refuse to accept the responsibility for their action. They want to force the tax payer to bail them out by creating a special assessment district and adding police and fire together. Then you tell us that we have to collect signatures to take it to a vote. A vote by the way I am not sure we can trust you to ad ere it. It's not about that we don't want to pay for our services. It's about not having a vote of this issue. Wants wording inserted to tell him that we will put it to the vote in 2016 to settle this matter and we will not have to go collect signatures.
- Katie Hicks- What are the hours of the cops right now? Well I work in a business here in Thetford Township; it's a specialized group home. We call cops on a weekly basis; I work with schizophrenics, bipolar, etc. We need cops. For the last four months, I work 7(am) to 3(pm) Monday through Friday, pretty good business hours. Thetford hasn't even been there, maybe one time in the last 2 weeks. We have had state police and Genesee County come, and they have said that they are sick of the A.F.C calls, they don't get nothing out of it, well, and we do. We need the protection, so, we call them. But, it's unnecessary to them, but it isn't to our business. We need the cops for that reason, but they are not there. I was just curious that was my question. (In regards to what time the police force was on duty.)

- Doug Taylor- I've been in the township 69 years. I've known Eileen Kerr for 34 years. I've known Leanne since she was a little kid, and I've also seen her in action as a fireperson, and she does a good job. I come up here tonight because I really felt against this proposal. It's like taxation without representation. After hearing some of these other comments, I'm kind of changing my viewpoint. It is something that I feel we probably could use to keep the fire department and the police department. I know we have a lot of seniors here in Thetford Township. I, for one, would be hard-pressed with \$100 extra on my property taxes. But again my main concern is I feel we are being taxed without representation and that is one thing I find fault with.
- Nancy Rea- I've been in the township for 68 years. I would like to ask a question; when did the board start receiving benefits? Now, knowing that you're headed for debt, why did it take you so long to take those benefits away? I think you should have done it a long time ago. The problem I have with it (the assessment), is that you can increase it 10% every year. I would be more inclined to say this would be a good thing, if the board would say we are not going to raise it 10% every year. Also, we don't trust our officials anymore. I mean, does anyone think a politician is honest? No we don't. We are facing a world recession. My problem is, a lot of people are on a fixed income. If we had to look at 10% every year I just don't know where the money would come from.
- Charles Coe- I would like to debate the fact, of do we trust our politicians? Well I know some of these politicians personally, and those that I don't know, well, I would not suspect that they are up here for personal reasons. They are here because they care about what is going on. This issue of being deprived of your right to vote is totally wrong. It is legal within the charter of our Township and it is voted upon by the representatives that you voted in! You had your right to vote! You must understand too, that you have benefitted from the fact that this board has paid for these services; fire and police, out of the general fund. The general fund is our well. This is plugging a huge hole in the well and it is going to help your general fund recover. And it is really not a heck of a lot of money. It is cheaper than any other township around of our size. And it is saving you money on your insurance. You need to just buck up and pay it.
- Teresa Hatchell- We have legitimate concerns. My husband and I came up with our concerns, we were shot down. We were given 3 minutes. Our concern was on the police department, the building next door. The building was brought in ridiculously. I know that's not what this is about tonight, but we weren't heard then, and we weren't heard now. We want police protection, we want fire protection, but we want to have a say in it. We don't want to be told, "This is what we're doing, you sit back and paying and be quiet little children". We want a vote on it. Let us decide. And when we do come to the meetings with concerns,

please listen to it. When that building was put up, there was building materials laid all over my grandbabies' grave. That was our concern. When we tried to address it, we were shut down and shut up. Just listen, give us a vote.

- Charles Doherty- When does no mean no. We have said twice "NO". It's time to stop this. We can't afford it. A long time ago when this was going on, there was money in the general fund. Have you ever heard the expression you can't borrow yourself out of debt? It's time to quit borrowing money, the lenders, the people of this township are saying no, we aren't going to give you any more money. Live within your means. If you have stopped this a long time ago we would not be here today asking for money. Regardless of what we pay in taxes per capita of all the surrounding areas, we were doing good before this happened. Our voices are saying no. You guys were voted in here to listen to us, so listen. This board has already decided to do this regardless of what anybody says. Twice it failed; it should've said something then. Quit raping us. Take all the guys who are saying no and you pay their portion of it! It's time to say no, enough is enough.
- David Gann- I'd like to start out by apologizing to the board members, because last time I was here I stated you were incompetent because I didn't understand how this operates. I was under the assumption that you have to offer us police and fire protection, and I was one of those people that voted it don't previously. I was under the assumption that if I give you less you still have to offer me police and fire and you'll live within your means, I didn't realize you could take it away. I think to come and remove your own benefits is one of the perks of the job. At the same time this group is saying, they can't afford to pay it, is the same as saying why should you have to sacrifice the perks of the job so they don't have to be responsible. I don't understand this politics thing, but I sit back and think about a year ago, my step son tried to hang himself. The officers in the back of this room personally came and helped him. Now I want to know a price on that. At what point do we say "We don't need this. I don't need you guys until something drastic happens in my life." I full-heartedly agree with this man saying that you're raping us, but at the same time, all the perks that have been offered to us, we have been using the police and fire department, and nobody came in here a year ago and said we are running out of money, lets recall you guys. We believed in you guys. How can we sit back and criticize you guys, because I voted you in. I don't know how to run this township, and you do. I think we need this, at least as a bridge to something else. I have offered to go out and collect signatures with anybody who wanted to do it, to put it on a ballot. Nobody is saying that this ballot is going to cost the township \$7000 also. What are we going to do if you get rid of them? I'm trusting you guys to make good judgements. And I think a good judgement is to pass it. I don't think anybody voting against it thought that

you could remove it. I hope you make a wise choice here. I believe a wise choice is voting it in. If it went to a vote and the facts were out there, it would be approved.

- Terry Bloodworth- We are all neighbors. The current board members we appreciate it, because you stepped in for us. As much as I want police and fire protection, I think the board has already answered their question in the flier that you gave out when you stated that there were two elections, the voters voted it down. If we spend \$7500, there's likelihood, in your own words, that it will fail. Your job as the board is to assess property, collect taxes, and run elections. So, as much as I want this, I believe in democracy. As much as I want police and fire protection, if the voters say no, then its no. You guys have a tough decision. If you think that the voter is going to turn it down, why would you go against your voters, your neighbors? Listen to the people and remember your responsibilities, assess property, collect taxes, and run elections.
- Bob Choring- I would like to encourage you to support this special assessment. My number one priority is safety and protection. I would also like to thank you for being members of this board, thank you.
- Ed McKervey- I am here to say that I think most of the people are happy with the police and fire department as we have it. You look back, I've been living here for 45 years, and 25 years I was on the fire department. In the budget of 1990 we currently have to spend more on police and fire protection, because we don't have the state and county support that we had back then. I want to be put on record as being opposed to the way this is going about and the people should get a vote on this. I am willing to work with whomever to get the 10% signatures we need. There is another thing in my mind, we can continue what we are doing until May of 2016 and then let's put a proposal on the ballot for a Mil, maybe 2 Mils, to fix the roads in this township, and I bet you it will pass.
- Glenn Brown- The facts speak for themselves. We're broke, a lot of people want to vote on this, I agree that it's nice to have all of these, and it's necessary to have some of them. But there's a lot of opposition to the police department. Split the dang vote in the spring; let the police department have a vote, let the fire department have a vote. Let the people speak. If they don't want the departments, dissolve them. I think you will find that people will vote for the fire department, but people are fed up with how the police department was forced down our throats. That's all I have to say.
- Mary Szecsodi- I've lived in the township for 61 years now. I'll tell you, I've seen things go up and down all the years. But right now I am opposed to what we are doing and the way the board has handled this. I think we ought to take this all to a vote, and let us vote on it. What you are doing, I do not agree with the way you are handling this.

- Daniel Gasparich- Why can't the board just put it out there again? It's already been turned down twice, but who's to say it won't be turned down a third time? You need the money now before you meet that deadline? It's not a good thing to lose a fire department and a police department...we are going to pay more money either way. If you want something you're going to pay for it. I've been out here a long time and I've seen improvements, but not the kind I'm looking for.
- William Potter- I support the police and fire department. It's nice to have them in our backyard in an emergency when we need them. Nobody likes taxes, but you got to pay for what you're going to get. The few times I've needed the police department Chief Kenny has always been there for me, and his deputies, whether it's a lost dog in a snow storm or anything else. It's just to know in the middle of the night, if your house is on fire, you have one right in your backyard as a first responder.
- Susan Adams- If you don't pass this special assessment district and it's not implemented, what would happen immediately? Would we immediately lose our fire and police department? I think the people need to know what would happen. If we no longer have a fire department, who would answer your fire calls? Would we get Vienna or Clio? I think the residents need to understand that you get what you pay for. I absolutely understand people are upset, they feel they didn't have a voice in this matter, but they need to understand the repercussions will be if the assessment isn't approved. Are you willing to have your house burn down? Your neighbor's house, your daughter's house? The other issue that I say, I've lived in this township for 35 years, prior to the time that we had a police department, we had a rash of break-ins in our neighborhood, property stolen, checks stolen. We had no response whatever, from the state until there was a gun stolen. No one is going to come out in response if you do not have a police department in the area if you have a break in. Do we want to be without any type of protection? If this is the only way we will not be without protection, then it is something that you have to do.
- John Schafsnitz- I will say this, there's proper ways of doing things. Quite honestly, we went through the whole fiasco of the fire department, and the resolution was fair to have the joint services with Clio and Vienna, it was a cost-effective way of doing things. But it doesn't seem to be proving to be cost effective with police. Police has not proved to be cost-effective because we start seeing these vehicles, military equipment. I know it's free but it has to be maintained, and people have to be trained in using it. There's a lot of cost involved in a police department. I don't think you've convinced the township that it's the most cost-effective way of having a police protection. You don't do it on your own; you share services with other people. If you can convince them of a need, you will get it passed. But until then it's not going to happen. If you do it

against their will, it's just going to create animosity, that's why I'm up here, because I think you had people's willingness at one point in time, but it wasn't done very well and that's why it failed. But, if you go out and promote the cause and explain to people why you're doing what you're doing, they may be more willing to accept some kind of cost. I don't think this is the way to get it done.

- Jon Erber- Everyone says this is about the police and fire department and it's not. This is a funding issue, period. Point blank. I want a new truck, but I don't want to pay \$600/month so I don't have one. We have an opportunity here to, have a special assessment. These people have voted twice not to fund the police and fire department. Whether we like it or not, that's what they said. I just don't understand why you want to vote for something the people said no to, or attempt to circumnavigate their authority. I thought you were elected to work for us and look out for our interests. We want to have a vote for it and we want a say. Are you saying if this does not pass, the departments will close until we can't afford it? I don't understand how you think it's okay to spend money that we don't have. We can't afford it. How can we afford it if we have this problem, I don't understand it. If you can use a logical argument as to why we should pay for something we can't afford, because you feel it's your duty, because I think it's my duty to help my neighbor, but if I don't have it, I can't do it. You even have the resolution already drawn up, I mean, come on, really? We don't have the money. You have a bias towards this, and you're running this meeting, and you're steering it this way. We all have indicated that we want this, there is just a funding issue, and we can't pay for it. Crime is at the lowest point in 22 years, you cannot disprove that, it comes from the FBI. There were 4 calls that came to my residence where I didn't even get a Thetford police officer; I got a state police officer.
- Dick Holihan- It sounds like we all want something. Either way it is going to go up. I don't know who is going to pay for what, I can't afford it. I think one of the things is going through the people here you want funding, I understand that. Is there a time limit on that? If that is paid, will that funding cease? Will we quit having that and revert back to whatever has to be done in the tax roll?
- Christopher Gyatt- I am against the assessment, at least from a younger person's point of view. I am for the police and fire if it is done right, if we can't afford it, it's understandable if it's necessary, but if it's going to take away from the community, what it is going to protect if we don't have anything. I also think it is wrong to force the assessment at the last minute. If it's done last minute, there's nothing to change and the damage is already done. Just an idea I think that we need a different plan to vote on, a different action to fix it, like, maybe the township's combining with funds and forces for better management and accountability.

- Char Mozader- I've lived in the township for 20 years; I can see the township buildings from my yard. First I wanted to thank everybody who came, whether they are for or against or whatever situation they are here for, it's nice to finally see somebody paying attention and showing up to something that makes a difference in our township. I work with the elections and I commonly see only 15-20% of voters show up, so just to see that this room is full is exciting. You've heard people step up here and they are complaining about the assessment, they are not complaining about our fire and police, most people here want to maintain our fire and police, whether it's the same that we have it or a larger force. You can't have services without paying for them. We don't get Charter without paying for it, we don't get our garbage without paying for it, and we don't get out boats R.V's or cars without paying for it. I personally spoke this morning to Captain Rob Heath of the Genesee county sheriff's department, and I can quote him when he says they certainly don't come out here on calls on a regular basis, they are in Vienna because Vienna residents pay them to be in Vienna. There is a misconception from a lot of people here that if we don't have a police force, Genesee County is going to show up. They are not. There is no generally funded police response from Genesee County sheriff's department. The \$91/person is per capita what Vienna pays for their police protection. I believe this assessment needs to be put in place as a bridge to get us to a vote where hopefully more than 400 people show up to give their opinion. I am more than happy to do a citizens alliance, or something, to get that out that without this vote, we won't have our services. Because even the people who oppose this and oppose this loudly aren't saying that they don't want police and fire. 2734 people benefitted from our police department last year, 2734 they called. Those were the calls that came from our area. The people who are complaining that Thetford didn't show up, it's because they weren't on duty, they only work part time. If you want a full-time force that will show up, then we need to pay for it. I believe the board is here to protect our interest in our township and our residents, and I think people also end to understand if we lose our personnel and our assets by not passing this assessment, it's only going to cost more to get new personnel, train them, have them learn our community and our people, and go from there. Having a 6 month break with no services, it just doesn't make any sense. I believe the police department has done amazing things with what they have to work with. The hummers, is a huge issue. Everybody on the board knows the facts of the hummers. The people don't know the facts. You guys know more about anybody out here. It's your job to take what you know and do what's best for this township.
- Johnnie Bellott- I hear everyone talking about protecting what our Founding Fathers have gave us to protect our right to vote. But I am also in favor to protect

what I've earned. My family, house, cars, the money I've earned, I try to save it by not paying more insurance that's going to go up. That's all I've got to say. I'm in favor.

- Brian Moore- In '08 I got laid off. I spent my retirement and any money that I had to maintain my house and my property. Right now, if I need extra money, I have to work for it. Currently, I am working 14 hours a day. I am supposed to be working right now, but I am here because I can't afford to give you any more money. I was taught to live in my means. If we can't afford it, it is what it is. Sell the damn Hummer, its extra money we could use. It's been turned down twice and the police department has been forced down our throats. Nobody here would say they don't want it, they have helped everybody out, but we have to find another way. We in this community work. This is a farming community. Beecher is not encroaching on us. I understand there were 2000 calls, how many were for lost cats? A girl broke into my home, stole money, I called the police department and nobody ever showed. When you file a report like that with a police department they are supposed to follow up when they are on duty. When my barn caught on fire, I extinguished it before they showed up. Most of us are on a fixed income. Find other ways. Put it to a vote and go from there.
- Martha Halihan- I moved to this area in 1987. I called for police because kids were destroying my fence. They were trying to destroy everything because it was a new person on the block. It took the police 2 ½ hours to respond to my call. We had no police protection out here at the time so the state police showed up 2 and 1/2 hours later.
- John Bellott- I have 5 parcels of property on N. Dort Hwy. My family has lived here their entire lives. I need the police department and I know I need fire protection. A few years ago my shop burned down and we had the entire fire department from 3 or 4 different areas, wonderful job. There's numerous times that the police department drives through my business, now do you know how that makes me feel? Wonderful. They weren't asked to do that. They do that for the protection for the people in our community. There's da few times from my neglect, that I've forgot to take keys out of my cars out there. There was a few times where the officers would bring my keys back to my office in the morning. With all that said, I am in favor of the fire department and the police force.
- Jack Kelly- I have been a resident for 12 years, and a firefighter with the CAFA station #2 for 6 ½ years. I am speaking today to ask you all to vote in favor of the special assessment to keep our police and fire services intact. Asking for more money from the taxpayers is never an easy task for any politician. You asked to be in those seats, you've campaigned to the voters, and they agreed. No one said the job would be easy, but we asked you to serve. I have also served. We saved numerous homes, pulled countless victims from mangled cars, and

performed other vital services to the community too numerous to mention. Chief Kenny has showed the definition on fiscally responsibly and community engagement. The opportunity for this community to show support became apparent when he had his residential structure fire. He men and women of the Clio Fire Authority and the Thetford police department put their lives on the line to protect life and property. We perform a vital function to the community and we do it gladly and proudly. Voting against the special assessment puts at risk the vital services the people depend on. This is not leaving the community in a better place tonight than you did this morning. A public vote is fine, and even wanted by the people, but a special assessment is needed to continue the services uninterrupted, at least until the people can decide by ballot box.

- Doug Taylor- A few years ago my mom as choking, my wide called 911. Within 3 minutes I had a Michigan State Trooper in the house, 1 minutes later I had a Genesee County Sheriff's Deputy who was a paramedic in the house, 3 minutes later I had an ambulance in the driveway. So we had very quick response time, which I was very thankful because it saved my mom's life. Several years ago we had a fire in the house, we called 911. The Chief of Thetford Fire Department was in my house within 3 minutes. He and I determined we had the fire out, then the fire truck got there, Bob Wright, looked up the chimney said there was still a fire. If it wouldn't have been for them being there on time, my home would've burned down.
- Chief Paulson and Kirk Todd- Eileen: "If we withdraw from the CAFA, and let's say that my house is burning, tell me, who comes?" Chief Paulson: "That will be up to this board how you figure that out. Right now you've paid up until April 1st, 2016. I would have to come meet with the board and we will have to figure out exactly how we would pay for each fire we came to or something. If we came to a house fire, we would have to charge the home owner or something. We would have to come from Clio." Eileen: "Do we have anything like mutual aid, like the police do, if it was life threatening the sheriff or state police would come out, does the fire authority work like that in any way? I really don't know." Chief Paulson: "There is a mutual aid agreement with the county, but each municipality has to be a part of that. And right now our Fire Authority is a part of that because we are Vienna, Thetford and Clio all together. If you withdraw from the fire authority, then you would have to either have to have your own fire department, and they would come to help you, whether it would be from the City of Clio or wherever would come to help. Eileen: "And that would be a cost to the home owner?" Chief Paulson: "Right. Or you would have to open up your own station which, you are down to about 20 firefighters in the community to serve you, if you shut it down you may lose them, and I don't know if they would come back or not, that's up to them." Shelly Ayotte: "If we have to withdraw after April 1st, and that Consumers

Power plant back there blows up, and we aren't a member of mutual aid, what do we do? Run?" Chief Paulson: "I guess you would have to, Yup. You would have no protection is my understanding right now I would meet with the board and try to figure out something we could do. We used to respond out here before we opened this station and there was a cost to the home owner whoever has the fire and stuff. I mean, that can be done again, it would be a cost it's not going to be free. Right now, I think you've had a great thing going. We only cost you less than \$150,000 a year. We haven't raised our rates or anything like that. Just one fire truck over there that we have at that station is \$650,000 at least. And you have two of them, one of them is nineteen years old right now and we are only predicting that one to make it 25, so in 5 or 6 years you're going to have to replace a truck that would be more like \$750,000. At least by then." Eileen: "Thank you very much and I appreciate you two standing and answering my questions, thank you."

- Resident comment- I would like to ask, the way the letter read what you're planning on voting on, do you have the opportunity tonight, before you vote on this, to re-word it, to where you're going to have an election and separate the two so we have a vote on each individual department by themselves?

Motion to close public hearing By Treasurer Ayotte. Supported by Trustee Cousineau at 8:45pm. All yeas. Motion carried.

Break from 8:45pm until 9:04pm

Motion to continue at 9:04 pm, and to extend meeting to 11:00pm By Trustee Cousineau, Supported by Trustee Gunnels. All yeas. Motion carried.

- Supervisor Kerr " At this time the public hearing for developing the Special Assessment is over, and if you would look at page 5, What we have to do, or could do, is to create a special assessment district.

THE RESOLUTION TO CREATE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the township board does hereby tentatively declare its intent to create a special assessment district for purposes of specially assessing benefitted property for the costs of fire protection and police protection in the township. Please take further notice that the district within which the cost of fire protection and police protection are proposed to be assessed is described as follows:

Township wide to include thirty six (36) square miles bordered by Willard Road, Frances Road, Vassar Road and Saginaw/Dort Hwy to include all improved Residential, all improved Commercial, all improved Industrial/Utilities and all improved Agricultural properties.

Motion by Clerk Pennington, supported by Supervisor Kerr to approve the resolution (stated above).

Discussion:

Trustee Cousineau- "I would like to break the fire and police up into two separate, identical special assessment zones. Those two departments are completely different. The fire is well-known what we have to pay every year, year in and year out. The police is completely different, it is just us, we are not involved presently with any other townships or municipalities and I think it's imperative that we break these up so that there's more transparency as to what happens with the money for both our board members in the future, but more importantly, the public if we move forward on this."

Supervisor Kerr- "I understand that but we can't do that now."

Trustee Cousineau- "Well, then I'm going to vote No."

Supervisor Kerr- "That's your right. But right now, the way it is Marty, we can't break it up."

Trustee Cousineau- "I understand."

Trustee Congdon- "This doesn't lock us in to amounts or anything, all this is establishing a district."

Trustee Gunnels- "This is just a vote on just the district, not the assessment itself, no money attached."

Trustee Cousineau- "But if we vote on it this way, the money goes into both those entities rather than being it separated and having two different distinct assessment zones."

Supervisor Kerr: "That's what is been said since we've been going over this. That it's a Public Safety Assessment for police and fire."

Trustee Congdon- "How I feel about this is, I agree with Marty, the assessment should be split, and I think they will be split with the new board. I think that time is coming; unfortunately the language isn't allowing that today. But, this assessment here does not lock in any dollar amount. I feel that we need a step gap motion here. I think we should approve the special assessment, I think that we should set the amount down to \$60 let's say, that will buy \$150,000. That will get us through to the new board comes in. the new board splits the assessment, just what you're referring to, decides how to do it, but this will get us through until the next board can take over. At a rate of (not the rate indicated), but a rate at like, \$60. That will buy us time until the new board. I would like to see them split today, but because of the way it was posted it cannot be split, that is what they are telling us. I agree with Marty and that's the only reason I would support

the assessment, because I would never support this assessment at this level. People want to maintain some support, they don't want the increases, they want to have some say on how it's going to change, but if we are forced into a position where we have to borrow money again this year, or we have to give the Fire Authority a year's notice, it's going to put a real bind. This is not increasing anybody's budget, it actually, if you could get to that level and the board shows that level, and it would actually be a reduction. We pay \$150,000 to the Fire Authority.

Supervisor Kerr- "Yeah, but that's next hearing"

Trustee Congdon- "Yeah okay, I'm done."

Suervisor Kerr- "But it's true what you're saying, and we will have that conversation let's vote here."

Trustee Congdon- "I know but I was just explaining to the board why I think we are at this point and the options coming up."

Roll call vote. Vote 4-3. Nays: Trustee Cousineau, Trustee Stevens, Trustee Gunnels. Motion Carried.

Supervisor Kerr: "Now let's look page 3, where it says 2nd public hearing. What we have done is identified the district and we have the district set and now the next part the 2nd public hearing. The supervisor states that the next order of business is the second public hearing during which the board will determine the amount of the special assessment on residential, commercial, industrial/utilities and agricultural properties; following will be citizen comments.

The township clerk reported that notices of the hearing on said assessment roll has been given by publication in the Genesee Herald in September 2, 2015 and by first-class mail to each property owner of record as shown in the assessment rolls of the township within the special assessment district on September 8, 2015. Affidavits of such publication and mailing were presented and ordered filed as a part of the minutes of this meeting.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE THAT THE Public Safety Special Assessment District within which the cost of fire protection and police protection are proposed to be assessed includes the entire township and the estimated cost of providing fire protection and police protection within the special assessment district for the calendar year 2016 is approximately \$375,000. The amount of the special assessment is based upon the special benefit to residential improved, improved agricultural, improved industrial/utilities and improved commercial property eh nature and level of fire and police protection services to be provided by the township.

Fire and police special assessments may be based on either a millage (rate per \$1000 of taxable value) or a flat rate (uniform special assessment for each parcel). Flat rates may vary for different kinds of property.

At this time the board will entertain a discussion to establish flat rates for the following types of properties:

-All improved residential

Platted or unplatted parcels, and condominium apartments; located within or outside a village or city, which are used for or probably will be used for residential purposes are properly classified as residential improved.

-All improved Commercial

Platted or unplatted parcels used for commercial purposes, whether wholesale, retail or service with or without buildings. Parcels used by fraternal societies. Parcels used as a golf course, boat clubs, or ski areas. Apartment buildings or a complex with more than four units.

-All improved Industrial/Utilities

Platted or unplatted parcels used for manufacturing and processing purposes, with buildings. Parcels used for utilities, sites for generating plants, pumping stations, switches, substations, compressing stations, warehouses, rights-of-way, flowage land and storage areas.

-All improved Agricultural

Agricultural real property includes parcels used partially or wholly for agricultural operations, with buildings.

Supervisor Kerr- "What we have to do now board is put a number, if you so choose, next to each class. My gut feeling is that we vote for a number for each class, not putting them altogether. Whatever number you're giving out would be for fire and police for the one year."

Trustee Cousineau- "Do we have a second open hearing to the public?"

Supervisor Kerr- "Yes, it's right there. We establish the rates, and then we do the open hearing. So now we are looking for a rate for improved residential. The committee suggested \$149 a parcel which would fund the fire-1 mil and it would fund a part-time police department.

Motion by Trustee Congdon, supported by Trustee Cousineau to fund all improved residential at \$60 per parcel.

Discussion:

Supervisor Kerr: "I would not myself be for that. That's not a bridge, that's nothing."

Trustee Cousineau- "I view the \$60 as a bridge that would give us just enough money to pay for fire department, make that contract for the next year and that should free-up enough money in General fund so that we can continue the police department as-is. To give a higher amount than that would enhance, not the fire department because that is a contract, but it would enhance the police department. I personally don't have a problem with enhancing the police department but I don't know what the public wants and I think that is what a vote in the future would bring. I just want to do it for one year and then let it go to the public in May and have it two different districts and let them vote how they want to do it. I sincerely believe with the numbers that I have looked at in the township records, \$60 is enough to get us through. We haven't even had a discussion on the board as to what we want to do with the police department. We have to have that discussion first before we start giving it 200-some-thousand dollars or more. This frees up so much money and we don't even have a plan. We need a plan."

Supervisor Kerr- "Okay, what you didn't understand though? You said at first you didn't understand, Marty, what we were doing. What part didn't you understand?"

Trustee Cousineau- "Well I didn't understand if we were having discussion, we're going to let them talk—"

Supervisor Kerr- "Well, yeah, public hearing, but we have to do this business first."

Trustee Cousineau- "Okay, well then I have the right to talk. That's all I want to do is make sure that I am talking at the right point in time. I don't even know if we need \$60 because we don't even have the last year's audit yet. We're making decisions not knowing the true facts, and I really have a problem with that. To be a little cautious, I can go with \$60 and that will save the residents at least their insurance from going up, we don't have to send that letter that we are dropping out of the fire department, and we can maintain the police at what level they are now until we have a public vote."

Treasurer Ayotte- "Okay, I have always, from the very beginning of the talks of this, as the treasurer, in my treasurers' world, having the two split makes my life easier. They are funded differently. One is funded by a millage. The fire department, the way we contribute, goes up and down every year. There's a fact that a special assessment can't go on what we call buildings of leased land, nor can it go on personal property. That part I don't have a problem with. I don't have a problem if the residents want to vote on it in May. I don't have a problem with that. I don't, I'll say it right out, I don't want to lose either one. Whatever we can talk over as a board here, and have you residents understand, so that we don't lose either one will make me happy."

Supervisor Kerr- "And I, too, I want this to be a bridge, whatever it is, I want it to be a bridge, and I would love to see the people step forward in May if they so choose. I would like that."

Roll call vote. Vote. 3-4. Nays, Clerk Pennington, Trustee Gunnels, Trustee Stevens, Supervisor Kerr. Motion Defeated.

Treasurer Ayotte- "I'm really sorry but when Marty asked if the public got to speak, but personally as a board member if you all would be more than willing, I know we can't do it, but that's what I would want."

Trustee Cousineau- "it's up to one of the people that voted no, to give another number"

Motion by Supervisor Kerr to make all improved residential fee \$149. Lack of support. Motion dies.

Motion by Supervisor Kerr, supported by Clerk Pennington to make all improved residential fee \$125. Roll Call vote. 3-4. Nays, Trustee Gunnels, Trustee Stevens, Trustee Congdon, Trustee Cousineau. Motion Defeated.

Trustee Stevens- "How much would it be to support the fire department at what we have now?"

Trustee Cousineau- "\$60"

Motion by Trustee Stevens, supported by Trustee Cousineau to table issue until next meeting, September 28, 2015. Roll call vote. Vote 6-1. Nays, Treasurer Ayotte, Clerk Pennington, Supervisor Kerr, Trustee Gunnels, Trustee Cousineau, Trustee Congdon. Motion Denied.

Motion by Trustee Congdon, supported by Treasurer Ayotte for \$65 for all improved residential.

Discussion.

Trustee Congdon- "it will generate about \$165,000 a years over the Fire Authority budget. It would cost the residents \$65 until next year when the new board takes over. This will get us through until then."

Trustee Gunnels- "This assessment still has a Sunset Clause, correct? That it will sunset within one year's time unless board approves it again, and reapproves it every year. So, no matter what, this assessment, no matter what dollar amount we put on it has a Sunset Clause that ends one year from this date? I just want to make that clear."

Clerk Pennington- "Unless it goes to the ballot in May, and it passes, the millage takes over the assessment. Or it doesn't pass; the assessment is there to cover it."

Supervisor Kerr- "It gets voted on every year."

Trustee Cousineau- "Madam Chair, we haven't even approved the resolution yet that would determine, to answer his question we can change the wording of the resolution to "one time only." We can say this is only one year. Every year you automatically have it."

Clerk Pennington- "Have you figured out if this number will make it to May?"

Trustee Congdon- "It doesn't matter, you're go to get \$158,000 and that's it."

Clerk Pennington- "well it does if we still run out of money."

Trustee Cousineau- "With the numbers I've looked at, I don't think we will run out of money. We still might have a cash flow issue. We're going to have that in December anyway no matter what we do tonight. That's going to require us to borrow from the sewer fund again no matter what we do. We may have a cash follow problem next year, well we shouldn't have. We should be able to have enough to support what we're doing at that figure in my estimate.

Supervisor Kerr- "And we've worked it out, well it depends on the amount of the assessment, that in 3 years we would be solvent, but, anyway.

Clerk Pennington- "If we take the \$150 out for the special assessment for fire, we don't even have that much even for the \$155 for police. We are totally downsizing."

Trustee Cousineau- "By taking and doing a special assessment at the levels we are talking about, that is putting \$150,000 more into the budget than what we have now. That should be enough to maintain paying for what we have and nothing more. We would still be hard-pressed for putting money into roads which we haven't been doing for years but I firmly believe that this should go in front of the public at some point in time."

Clerk Pennington- "And I agree with you, it should go in front of the public, I agree with you there."

Supervisor Kerr- "And we have been using our 50/50 money for the last 3 years, before that we had not been using it. And there is a plan for roads."

Roll Call Vote. Vote. 3-4. Nays, Clerk Pennington, Trustee Gunnels, Trustee Stevens, Supervisor Kerr. Motion Denied.

Clerk Pennington- "Even with \$75 to have what we have, we still have to take \$100,000 out of our general fund if we keep commercial/industrial at what was recommended to the board, so we're still jumping into our general fund. So you still want to go into the general fund?"

Trustee Congdon- "I think we should do the minimum. I don't think we should be raising an assessment putting increases in some of the public services at a time like this. I think we run the minimum, get the people next year and let them decide."

Clerk Pennington: Right, but we need a general fund to keep putting in to that."

Trustee Congdon- "Yes, but by bringing that money in, at \$65 you would've put \$157,000 directly in the general fund, which would have paid, offset, the cost of the police department. We would've been even, like Marty said, we would've been in neutral. That didn't work, so, you'll be better off with no revenue then.

Treasurer Ayotte "Can the people who voted no ask the board what we think is there?"

Trustee Gunnels-"My thoughts are that we really should try our absolute hardest to do what we can to bridge this gap. In order to do that, we need a little bit of money, cash flow, to do that. It's hard for me to put a dollar amount on it, because like most everyone I think it should go before the vote of the people. I do feel if this board is going to place a special assessment on the people we should try to come down on a decision tonight, and I think that it should be made tonight. I'm not happy with the numbers and the figures and I'm not really happy with the way that it's going. It's difficult; it's difficult to put a number on it."

Trustee Congdon- "I think I already gave 2 numbers. \$60 and \$65 would be enough to get us through. It should be right there. I know you're trying to get so that we are not using any from our general fund, that's not the purpose of this. We shouldn't be at this point of increasing any of our services like some have suggested. I don't want to make any extra money here; I just want to get just get us through this, and then next year, you're going to have a new board sitting here and I want to get to the point where they are not strapped and we are just breaking even and they can decide how to handle with the assessments. At \$150,000 we can get through because you an influx \$150,000 into the budget and you can offset the police. We are going to do a budget in the spring, in January. If we don't have enough money we cut somebody's budget. For me to ask them to throw more money in there just so it's available, I think that's b.s. I think you all should have voted for the \$65."

Supervisor Kerr- "Besides the \$65 John, is there anything else that you would go for?"

Clerk Pennington- "To get through for the vote of the people, which I believe it needs to go to the vote of the people and to not lose what we have I would go \$75."

Treasurer Ayotte- "I've already said I believe it should go to vote in May, whatever the gap is I will vote for anything that we don't lose our police and fire."

Supervisor Kerr- "So does that mean you will go for \$75?"

Treasurer Ayotte- "I went for \$60!"

Trustee Cousineau-"Most people they want to save our police and fire, it comes down on how to fund it. Right now we are in a crisis and ho we got here is a long story, but it really isn't that important. What is important is what we do today with the numbers that we have now. I totally agree with John, with what he said, I just look at this as just a stop gap to get us to a point where we can take and let the people decide and you people tell us next May what you're willing to pay us and we'll try to administrate that

money. So I'm only looking at a stop gap. I think at \$149 what has happened here is there has been an attempt to use this crisis to enhance things more than what we need and I only want to fix the crisis, that's it and not go any higher than that. I really think \$60 will get us there. I really hate asking for that because I know the people haven't voted for that, but I'm willing to compromise and that's about the best I can do to be honest with you Eileen, I'm staying at \$60.

Trustee Stevens- "What stops us from cutting that in half and giving half to the fire department and half to the police department? Because there's nothing here that says ones for one and ones for the other. It's lumped as public safety. I've seen things done that really should be but it's a public safety issue and you get \$150,000 and I'm not sure the fire department is going to see it all.

Treasurer Ayotte- "How it would work, it would be put on your winter bill as a public Safety item, just like garbage does; it's a special assessment right by your garbage. Whatever it is, when I collect that amount, the board would have to establish is a line item in the general fund that says "Public Safety". April 1st, whoever has come in and paid their taxes, I have a paid roll. I go in, the fire authority amount that we contribute does not change. We are under an agreement. It has to be the equivalent of 1 Mil of our real, our qualified real, and our personal property. That figure is very easy to report so whatever that paid roll says the equivalent of 1 Mil would be that's what goes to the fire authority, that's per the agreement. The 2nd part of it would be whatever is left over would be in the police fund, which, depending on how much we choose, there might not be that much left over. They would both still be line items in the general fund with a special assessment.

Trustee Cousineau- "To clarify to Gary a little bit I say "That's what the fire costs us" but they both cost about the same. I wanted to split it so it would be more transparent where it's going. Being we only have one district for one, you put the \$60 in like what I suggested and that gives us about \$150,000 a year. That would have to go to nowhere else but fire and police. Either one, we would still have to come up with another \$150,000 out of the general fund to fund those at the current level. So, you're kind of splitting hairs when you say "half goes here, half goes here" you could do that way but that's just writing a check. There's \$150,000 that would be designated for fire and police only. It cannot be used anywhere else, but to fund those at the current level, we will still have to pay \$150,000 out of the general fund, which I think we will have at that point in time.

Motion by Supervisor Kerr, supported by Clerk Pennington for \$75 for residential, \$130 for commercial, \$500 for industrial/utilities and \$75 for agricultural/improved.
Roll call vote. Vote 4-3. Nays, Trustee Cousineau, Trustee Stevens, Trustee Gunnels.
Motion Carried.

Supervisor Kerr- "APPEARANCE AND PROTEST at this public hearing is required in order to appeal the amount of the special assessment to the State Tax Tribunal. An owner or party in interest or his or her agent may appear in person at this hearing to

protest the special assessment, or shall be permitted to file his or her appearance or protest by letter received at or before this public hearing. “

Motion by Trustee Gunnels, supported by Trustee Cousineau to open the public hearing at 9:55pm. Roll Call Vote. Vote. all yeas. Motion Carried.

Citizen comments

- Dick Myers- There have been court cases in Michigan , the judge says you cannot give different price, costs, tax, to different land types because they are all looked at equally by the township. They all get the same services, they all pay the same. It's already been settled in court you just have to look it up.
- Larry Hatchell- If I hear and you're right, if at some later date I want to dispute my taxes through the Tribunal, I have to tell you that you oppose this, I have to tell you right now?
- Mr. Nelson- I just want to say I oppose this. I believe Eileen browbeat you into an agreement that none of you were in favor of and because of the time constraint; I think you voted in the affirmative because you can't go past 11 o'clock. This is a farce as far as I'm concerned
- Citizen- I'm opposed because we've had 2 or 3 trustees saying we could do it for less money. They said we could do it for \$60 or \$65 but half of you didn't want to do that so I'm still opposed.
- Chuck Doherty-I'm a little disappointed here tonight. I'm still not understanding, is this a bridge? So, in May of 2016, is this going to be done with? Is it going to end? It isn't. Whatever you guys have decided here, and I'm not really sure what it is, I think it was a screw into the American public. If this is a bridge to get us from here until May, than that should be it. Let the public vote on it. And then it should be over and done. This is a road that is going to continue, and you are going to have us back here and rape us. We shouldn't be here now, if you would have spent the money wisely several years ago, we wouldn't be here now. You keep trying to borrow yourself out of debt and you keep screwing the people. It's time you guys wake up. If you make it a bridge, this whole thing should stop after the voters. We've had enough here folks.
- Mr. Taylor-I come here tonight really not wanting to see this raise my taxes, but I found out, I want my fire department and when I come up here I knew from what I read it was going to raise my property taxes. So \$75, I can live with that. Thank you all.
- Nicole Moore-What if your classification is residential, but your exempt is agricultural, do you have to pay \$75 twice?" How all of this stuff is paid for I hear it is all coming out of the general fund? Shouldn't there be itemized statements? Why is everything coming out of one fund? When you say we have a part time police department, how many officers are on the payroll that takes funds from the township? What about the extras that comes in a help out? How much does a full time officer cost in one year? If we have people that are going into reserves, is that because they are potentially trying to get a full-time position? You feel it is your duty to provide the residents with police protection. How many do you feel

is necessary? Everybody is up here saying they don't want to pay the extras. They want you to live within the means of the budget that you're given. Everyone has to tweak their budgets. Not one person has offered to take a concession anywhere.

Treasurer Ayotte: You will only be assessed once based on your classification not you're zoning. We have a senior grant fund, cemetery fund, and police fund. The general fund is the main funding of the township. Every department has a separate thing. Even the fire authority is a line item in the general fund. If in May a millage is approved for the fire, a millage versus the special assessment, is goes directly to the CAFA. It depends on how it is, but everything is funded through the general fund in the township.

- Stan Piechnik-what is the salary on the part time police officer? Did you include workman's compensation? How much a year? You're putting in \$155,000 a year into the police fund. That covers all benefits and salaries. That comes up to \$130,000 a year roughly. So there's \$20,000 that he is buying a vehicle, uniforms, lights etc. How much does the police department make in revenues? Is the board involved in selling equipment? There are a lot of unanswered questions here in regards to the police department. I operate equipment I know how much it costs. Do you keep track of miles put on the cars? When the vehicles need repairs etc.? What is the insurance on the reserve officers, do they have coverage? We don't know what it's costing us.

Supervisor Kerr- \$13 an hour, 20-25 hours a week. \$16,900 a year.

Treasurer Ayotte-They do ordinance fines, liquor inspections, impound fees, etc. They also sell equipment, and receive grants.

- Roy Sancrant- How much is the special assessment raising right now total in a year? \$196,000? Thanks.
- Kathy- I would like to know if we are a township 36 square miles, have these costs been compared with another rural township of 36 square miles. Do they fall in line for what others pay for police and fire protection?
- Nany Rea- the police chief, is he retired from something else? I've heard a rumor that he was fired from the City of Clio, is that true? That statement is absolutely not true? So couldn't you have hired someone who was retired/ say, from the Flint police department and not pay them as much money? And I know that Flint police officers don't make near that much money.

Supervisor Kerr – Our first police Chief that we hired was a retired State police officer. I am not saying that we wouldn't take that opportunity again.

- John Schnafnitz- I'm sitting here listening to all this, and quite honestly its sad when a gentlemen is asking questions and he can't get an answer, it's not transparent. I'm not opposed to police protection, but I am opposed of having

something developed that absorbs money and you can't explain where that money goes to. You can't seem to account for it. What is the total cost? You need to be able to sell this to the community. If you can't be transparent and open to the community, you can't explain what all of the costs are. The military equipment, the vehicles, I think there should be a dedicated lease to the fire protection; it solved a lot of issues. Somehow that needs to be funded. If you want to do the police thing, you need to do that too. If you can't do that, you're going to be stuck.

- Mr. Bloodworth- Democracy has worked. Neither side has gotten what they wanted, we compromised tonight, but we kicked the can down the road to the election. Hopefully the new board will listen to the people. I commend you it has been a very trying night I'm sure on each and every one of you, no matter your position. I just want to congratulate you on a very well-run meeting. You guys did the job we elected you to do.
- Char Mozader- I think he made a valid point, we did compromise. Everyone's picking apart this and picking apart that, \$13 an hour for an officer, wow! \$13 bucks an hour. They are not voting here to raise their pay, they are voting to get us where we need to go. This has to be set for a year. When this gets put on a ballot, it's not going to sound like we are going to have a police force if we pass this. It will be do you want a police force, and this is what we have to budget it. Everybody thinks it will get paid for, because we've paid it all along. Everyone that's complaining about not having transparency, or some sort of board or task force, we want to have that information, so that settles their problem or their concern there. There's people hearing rumors and passing out rumors about the hummers and everything. That's what they are mad about and that's what their voting on and that's what their talking about. You know where that came from. It is also a huge thing that the board concealed their benefits. \$46,000 or \$47,000 a year, is low, very very low. I don't think that's where we should be saving money. So when you're picking apart paychecks, you get what you pay for. I believe a compromise will happen tonight, and I hope that we will have enough people come May to keep our police force. I think I am asking the audience for all the minutia to go away so we can go home and know what's happening.
- Dick Myers- On your letter out, you have Thetford Township down as urban, and isn't it really rural? It matters. If you are comparing rural townships, it would be outside of Genesee County, urban are more populated. How many people at the present time are at the police academy at this township? It is a 16-week course, correct? When you say on his own, how do mean that? I hear it's funded by the township? If the guy is using his vacation, is he eligible to work 52 weeks and collect 4 weeks of vacation at a later date? If he is using that vacation time to fund that, on his own, time is money, but he's getting extra money. Is he getting paid while he's gone? I would like the board to clear that up. He's getting paid for 56 weeks, but time is money. If he lets that build up, the time means the dollars out of your budget that's not put there because so much money of his would be for time off. Unless you have a special clause. How many employees do you have? I heard 26. I was a part of the disaster committee when 911 went into existence. I worked with the City of Flint and State Police and determined what

911 was going to be. So, when you say you will need a clerk for the police department, you're saying with the modern communication that we have today, you cannot have someone answer the telephone, pass the message on to the police and have that dispatched? Or put it on a voicemail? That's going to eliminate one person. There are a lot of things I look at, each piece of paper that's generated, you ask, is it needed? Each step along the way. And you decided how to modernize. You have a lot of different things with different circumstances which require different attitudes, different occupations and different tasks. And the way I look at it, the right hand doesn't exactly know what the left hand is doing.

Supervisor Kerr- There was a situation where this person was owed like, weeks and weeks of vacation time and other time. And other people have been paid for that, he had not over a very long period of time. We made an agreement, and he was entitled to this time it was a settlement.

- Chuck Doherty-This special assessment, is this to maintain what we have now, or is this going to call in a clerk for the police department? Politicians always trying to sneak something in on somebody, if you want people and you want something, that's the way you got to be. I am just asking, besides the ones we have is there going to be any more additions to this whatsoever? What about lay-offs? You don't have to dissolve it, but lay somebody off to save some money. You'll make up money.

Trustee Congdon- It's only going to maintain, we are still going to have to kick money in from the general fund. It's not enough. The original \$149 proposal, it is in there, in the increased budget. At \$75 there is not money for that.

Supervisor Kerr- It's got to stay how it is now. There's no money for it.

Treasurer Ayotte- The current budget that we are operating under now goes until March 31, 2016. So, until then, the police fund is operating on that same amount of money, he can only afford what is in his budget now. We do a new budget next year, so that is when you want to come to the board and see what they propose his budget. The special assessment, if it passes, I begin collecting it in December through March. And then April 1st, it goes into the police fund for their operations. The board will know when they are working on their budget, on March 1st, how much they will get at that point in time. After we pay the 1 mil to the fire authority, there will not be that much left over to put in the police department from the special assessment. We will generate money that we were using, out of the general fund to pay for the fire. When we do his budget, that's when the money would go in there plus the special assessment. If the election is successful if there is one in May, that doesn't even start getting collecting until December, 2016. If there is an election for a millage, there will be verbiage on there could say "Do you want to pay (x) number of mils to replace the special assessment?" In that case, if it passed that way, the special assessment would have to go away because that is what the vote

would say. Right now, the budget stands as it is, with his department the way it is, until March 31st 2016. It will enable us to not have to lose either service at this point in time.

- Dave Gann- I don't think anybody's taking into consideration how many hours the chief actually puts in. He works for free. Even the firemen are always active here. I trust the Chief of Police just as I trust you. You trust him to operate in a budget. Stan recognizes the amount of work the police department is doing exceeds the amount of money they are given. So why aren't we commending them for the ability to go above and beyond? You have to be accountable. Who are we going to lay off? Once you watch how much effort the police and fire put in here, you would have a better realization that, they are busting their asses to try to make it better for all of us. To sit in here and beat the chief up is wrong. He's offered to have coffee with the Chief to be transparent to answer any questions, I trust him, so why are we picking part what he's doing. Stan is smart enough to realize they cannot operate within the budget that they have, but they are doing it. I think we need to commend them rather than picking them apart. Why are we at this point? I know he's doing a lot for free. I often think how does his wife get up with it? How can you be so dedicated to a township that treats you like this? I don't think we are looking the big picture here. Everybody is still looking at you as board members to go do all the footwork because they all want something for nothing. Your job is to run the election; our job is to bring it to you. The residents need to know they need to go out with a petition that has honest motions on it and present it honestly. There's somebody who put a petition out there that says a grand pays for the fire department. If I didn't want your police department I should have had you recalled the day that I elected you.

Motion by Trustee Gunnels supported by Trustee Congdon to extend meeting to 11:15 pm. Roll call vote. Vote all yeas. Motion passed.

- Theo Gantos- the property that I live on sits in the mobile home park. It is embarrassing to sit here. My insurance is so much higher here, it is the way the services are here. The amount of money that you guys are asking for is less than the difference I was paying in insurance. I don't get it, it's like bottom like folks. I am in a position to say thank you for stepping up and doing something. I still don't know where you're going to get \$155,000 to pay for the police department, the least I can do is lay \$150 towards the public safety fund. (Hands Supervisor Kerr \$150 check)

Motion by Trustee Gunnels supported by Treasurer Ayotte to close public hearing at 10:56pm. Roll Call Vote. Vote. All yeas. Motion Passed.

Discussion.

PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTION FOR SPECIAL ASSESSMENT ROLL FOR SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT IN THETFORD TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN.

PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the township board of the Township of Thetford, Genesee County, Michigan, after due and legal notice, has conducted a public hearing upon a proposed assessment roll prepared by the supervisor, chief assessing officer of the district and treasurer of the township for the purpose of defraying the cost of providing police protection and fire protection.

AND WHEREAS, such public hearing was preceded by proper notice in the Genesee Herald, a newspaper of general circulation in the township, and by first-class mail notice to each property owner of record within said district and upon said assessment roll;

AND WHEREAS, comments were received from those present at such public hearing concerning said assessment roll and opportunity to present to be heard in this matter;

AND WHEREAS, written objections were received to said roll and levy;
AND WHEREAS, the oral comments received indicated the reasonableness of the following amendments to said assessment roll;

AND WHEREAS, a record of those present to protest and of written protests submitted at or before the public hearing was made a part of the minutes of the hearing;

AND WHEREAS, it is the opinion of the township board that no further time should be granted for the consideration of the assessment district and levy;

AND WHEREAS, the township board has duly inspected the proposed assessment roll and considered all comments and proposed amendments thereto and has found the proposed assessment roll, as amended, to be correct, just and reasonable;

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. The assessment roll submitted by the supervisor, chief assessing officer of the district and treasurer of the township shall hereafter be designated as Public Safety Special Assessment and shall hereby be confirmed as the assessment roll for Thetford Township Public Safety Special Assessment District.
2. The assessments in said Thetford Township Public Safety Special Assessment District are billed and collected in the same manner as township property taxes and will be billed with the December taxes.
3. The assessments made in said special assessment roll are hereby ordered and directed to be collected by the township treasurer, and the township clerk shall deliver said special assessment roll to say treasurer with her warrant attached, commanding the treasurer to collect such assessment in accordance with the direction of the township board and said PA 188.
4. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with the provisions of this resolution be and the same are hereby rescinded.

Motion by Clerk Pennington, supported by Supervisor Kerr to adopt resolution. Roll Call Vote. Vote 4-3. Nays, Trustee Gunnels, Trustee Stevens, Trustee Cousineau. Motion Passed.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:01pm.

Leanne Pennington, Clerk
Thetford Township