

**Mason County Republican Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
August 1, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Invocation – Pastor Brian Ford

Pledge – Charlie Robinson

Roll Call by Tina Shirshun – Present: State Representative Curt VanderWall, Sheriff Kim Cole, County Surveyor Jim Nordlund, Commissioner Jody Hartley, Committee Members, Kirk Chavalia, Verna Chavalia, Bill Chye, Pastor Brian Ford, Sheila Genter, Duane Hobart, Cynthia Johnson, Ben Norton, Nicole Norton, Charles Robinson, Rebecca Robinson, and Tina Shirshun.

Excused Absences: State Representative Joe Fox, Commissioner Bacon, Commissioner Squires, County Clerk Cheryl Kelly, Margaret Greiner, Eric Juers, Jason Kirkpatrick, and Cindy Muzzo.

Guests: Daniel Jensen, Carol Broderick, Lyla McClelland, Ed Hahn, Loretta Anderson, Shaun Shoemate, Randy Williams, Aldon Maleckas, Carole Johnson, and Cathy Ingraham.

Approval of July 11 Meeting Minutes –

***Motion** made by Bill Chye to approve the meeting minutes of July 11, 2023. Seconded by Pastor Brian Ford. No Discussion. Motion carried.

Treasury Report –

Sheila reported on financials while Margaret Greiner is still away on medical. The State account end of the month of June balance was \$6,034.54. We had 3 debits which were township hall meeting rental for 4 months, Storage, and QuickBooks fees. We sold some t-shirts and had another member join (silver member) leaving a July balance of 6,060.04 in the State account. The Admin account balance for the end of June was \$1,303.33. The last scholarship check was cashed leaving a July end-of-the-month balance of \$553.33. Both numbers match the bank statements for the end of July.

***Motion** made by Cynthia Johnson to approve the Treasury report. Seconded by Bill Chye. No discussion. Motion carried.

Reports from State Elected Officials –

-Representative Curt VanderWall reported they are on summer recess but it's not been much of a recess. There has been very concerning legislation that has been dropped during recess, one being the Renter's Bill of Rights. Curt feels that it won't get traction and move anywhere but we have to be aware of it. It basically takes away the power of a landlord to evict a renter among other things. The person who sponsored the bill thinks it will increase affordable housing and it will actually do the opposite. Also, the Budget passed and will probably be signed this week. Curt also shared he's been knocking on doors in Detroit, Macomb, and Oakland for our folks who are in close seats. We've been working really hard and if you look at the financials, we have raised over a million dollars for the first time in the second quarter ever. Curt then entertained questions on hate speech, farmland concerns, Gotion, and issues that are tearing down families, etc.

-John Moolenaar's representative Damon Jordan emailed a report which was read by Sheila. See attached.

-Representative Joe Fox emailed an updated report which was read by Sheila. See attached.

-Senator Bumstead emailed a newsletter, which was shared, see attached.

Reports from County Elected Officials –

-Jody Hartley reported at the July 11th Board of Commissioners Meeting they approved the purchase of a new drone for the sheriff's office and the hiring of a third school resource officer. Jody also shared the approval of the new boat for the Sheriff's department, costing approximately \$200,000, and it will be a 21-footer with radar capability primarily for Hamlin Lake and a backup for Lake Michigan if needed. The BOC also renewed the agreement for courthouse security with a 3-year contract. The BOC just had a budget workshop session (which we are now up to 5 workshops per year) that is open to the public. In this recent one, we had 11 monetary requests and Jody went over some of the requests that got a yes and some that got a no explaining their responses. He also added that this Friday, August 4th at 1:30 pm and open to the public, we are interviewing 2 consulting firms and will pick one to do the heavy lifting on finding us half a dozen candidates to interview for the County Administrator position. Jody then answered questions from the committee and guests.

-Sheriff Kim Cole reported the new patrol boat should probably be around \$180,000 and shared how over time, they have fought for funds. Also shared it's approximately \$77,000 just for a car including the equipment needed. Also shared they have a new Deputy, Luke Postma from Ludington PD, and he will be our MCC school deputy once he clears his field training phase. Mike Fort also from Ludington PD will be starting with us in mid-September. The Sheriff explained the MCOLES training standards for resource officers such as marksmanship shooting, mental health intervention, and how the emergency plan is put together and then indicated we put their standards on steroids and resubmitted it to Lansing to see if they would approve it and MCOLES overwhelmingly supported it. He confirmed rumble strips are coming to Custer and Sugar Grove Road in a couple of weeks and they will probably make that a 4-way stop, and they are working with MDOT to get speed reduction signs up on US-10 in front of MCE school. Lastly, he shared that the Right to Life event was really good with lots of people and good speakers. Sheriff Cole then entertained questions.

-Rebecca Robinson (District 2) reported there are 20 counties involved in District 2 and members go to as many different fundraising activities for different candidates and organizations as they can. At the June D2-Day event, we basically broke even but there were a lot of great speakers that opened our eyes. More Fundraisers are coming up to help get education out there and there's going to be some training that needs to be paid for. There was a 4-hour meeting in July regarding the lack of transparency on getting questions answered on finances and so the next meeting is August 11th with hopes to get more answers. The Dist-2 is hosting the August meeting at the Living Word Church in Crystal for \$200 and hoping to cover the cost by selling water, popcorn, t-shirts, and other donations. There is a big event coming up on Mackinac Island, the Bi-Annual Leadership Conference with special speakers like Dinesh D'Souza and Kari Lake, which costs a lot of money to attend. On August 8th there is a State Board of Education meeting which is another function of the Dist-2 to make it to these meetings. I was also just informed today there will be a meeting on August 6th at the Living Word Church to share with County Chairs to work things out. Rebecca shared other fundraiser ideas like t-shirts, a Halloween family event with games and costumes in October, and a Christmas fundraiser which will also be a meeting and be catered in Remus. Rebecca entertained questions.

Reports from Committee Members –

Unfinished Business:

1) Sheila reported so far just one name on the WM Fair Booth Volunteer Sign-up Sheet. The sign-up sheet was passed around to members. We have Eric, Pastor Ford, and Kirk putting up the canopy on Sunday, and on Monday we have Rebecca, Verna, and Sheila decorating the booth. We also need business cards/handouts from our county elected officials along with membership forms, volunteer cards, email sign-up sheets, and putting together a fact sheet on Biden's wonderful accomplishments. We would like to sell T-shirts for a special price but a motion is needed.

***Motion** made by Nicole Norton to have a special price for our Mason County Republican T-shirts for the WM County Fair with a special rate of \$18 for one and \$32 for two. Seconded by Verna Chavalía. No discussion. Motion carried.

2) Sheila reported on the Annual Fall Picnic planned for September 17th. Sites reviewed were the Memorial Tree Park (1,000 sq ft with \$50 fee), Sutton's Landing (1800 sq ft with \$50 fee), VFW of Custer pavilion in back (\$175 for 6hrs non-member fee), Riverside Park pavilion (small), and Old Engine Club pavilion (no fee but welcomes donation and huge space). Some discussion on sites before motion presented.

***Motion** made by Verna Chavalía to approve the Old Engine Club as the 1st choice and if that falls through then the 2nd choice would be Suttons Landing for the Annual Fall Picnic. Seconded by Nicole Norton. No further discussion. Motion carried.

Sheila reported on catering bids, one from Gloria Ann's at \$13 per plate (pulled pork with bun, 3-baked bean with bacon and onion, fresh veggies and ranch, fresh melon platter, or cheese au gratin potato) with delivery and set-up cost a little higher than last year and one bid from the Cluck Bucket at \$18 per plate (pulled pork or pulled chicken with bun, potatoes or mac-cheese, salad, cornbread, or buns).

***Motion** made by Charlie Robinson to move forward and approve Gloria Ann's for the caterer. Seconded by Bill Chye. Some further discussion. Chair put motion to the floor. Motion carried.

Sheila opened the discussion on whether to keep the Annual Fall Picnic free and if it's held at the Old Engine Club, what amount of donation would be given to that site.

***Motion** made by Charlie Robinson to continue for free but to have a voluntary donation box for the Annual Fall Picnic. Seconded by Jody Hartley. Some further discussion with suggestions. Chair put motion to the floor. Motion Carried.

Jim Nordlund suggested that if we get the Old Engine Club we should make a donation and we would need a motion to spend money for that donation. Kirk Chavalía suggested a \$50 donation.

***Motion** made by Pastor Ford that if we are able to use the Old Engine Club that we give them a donation of \$50.00. Seconded by Bill Chye. No further discussion. Motion carried.

Sheila also had Pastor Ford announce the guest speaker for the Annual picnic. Pastor Ford shared that Appellate Court Judge Mark Boonstra is very happy to come and speak. Besides being a Court of Appeals Judge, he is the author of 3 volumes of the "Founding Fathers In Their Own Words."

3) Sheila gave a final report on the MDOT clean-up on July 18th indicating there were 11 of us that participated. A thank you to Paul McCrath who was the Captain of organizing it and everyone who participated. We collected 14 bags of garbage in about 1½ hours and the report has been submitted to MDOT. We have one more cleanup in October and then we will have met our fulfillment to MDOT.

New Business:

1) Sheila reported that Randy Williams (part of the research team) spent some time with Mary Samuels at the Mason County Road Commission and will give us an update. (See attached). Randy ended with talking about a printout provided by Mary for 2023 on what's proposed for each individual township and currently most have been completed. Sheila has the printout for anyone who wants to view it after our meeting is adjourned.

2) Sheila reported that Check My Vote and the MIGOP have entered into a partnership for Election Integrity. Chairs in every county had been asked to find a lead person who would work with "Check My Vote (CMV)" and would volunteer a couple of hours a week verifying information in QVF's for Mason County. Check My Vote will provide online training on what information should be checked and how to verify. If you are interested, please see Sheila after this meeting is adjourned.

3) Sheila printed a packet for everyone on the "Michigan Renter's Bill of Rights" and went over some issues that have come up with short-term rentals where some townships have added restrictions and that the landlords were not notified. Sheila also went over other items in the draft that will be very troubling for landlords if the bill passes in the legislature.

4) Sheila had printed information on The Unbound Program which is a program between the Mason County Library and Public Schools and funded by the Community Foundation. This program allows students to check out or e-load books which is a great opportunity for students to increase their reading levels and intellect, however, while researching, she found some sexually explicit and illustrated pages of books that should be flagged from allowing students to check out. If parents want their children to read these books then the parent can accompany their child to the library to read. The schools should not be the gateway for allowing these extremely graphic books to be delivered to students during school. These books are of no value in increasing a student's reading level or intellect. Discussion led to making people aware of these books as well as encouraging their attendance at school board meetings. Handouts will also be available at our booth at the County Fair.

5) Sheila read a Letter to Election Workers she received from the Ludington City Clerk Deborah Luskin, stating the Ludington Area Schools has requested a special election in November, but the letter doesn't indicate what it's for. It mentions as a result of Proposal 2 passing, there are 9 days of early voting prior to each election. The law states that 9 days is only required for Federal and State elections but County and City Municipalities can also impose the 9 days of early voting for local elections. The letter states that the City Clerk has asked the Bureau of Elections to consider using Ludington as a test site for the 9 days of early voting for the special election in November. The City Clerk plans to have only one early election location for the 9 days open at City Hall. It would be a 9-hour day for poll workers and each day would require 4 full-time workers.

Announcements –

Sheila announced the location of our regular GOP meetings for September 5th and October 3rd will be held at the Hamlin Township Hall, 3775 N Jebavy Drive, Ludington, at 6:30 pm.

Public Comments –

Aldon Maleckas talked about contact with the Election Integrity Force, and issues of concern, and had printed information available; Randy Williams shared he will save his comments for the next meeting; Shaun Shoemate shared she didn't go to the training conference but will keep studying on Roberts Rules; Carole Johnson shared a comment on what's happening in the county; Daniel Jensen shared

information about Kosha, the kid's Online Safety Act S-1409 which would mandate online platforms to check the age of users, child or adult, before logging into the internet, Michigan Hate Crimes Act - misgendering pronouns, and the new bill SB-459 (Smart Phone Digital ID); Loretta Anderson shared a comment on information read at the meeting and what kids are exposed to at school; Cathy Ingraham shared information from the movie "Roe vs. Wade."

Adjournment –

***Motion** made by Nicole Norton to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Verna Chavalía. No discussion. Motion carried.

Next meeting, September 5th, 6:30 pm, at Hamlin Township Hall, 3775 N Jebavy Drive, Ludington.