

**HOWARD TOWNSHIP
SPECIAL MEETING
September 19, 2017 6:30 p.m.**

Call to Order/Pledge/Roll Call

Craig Bradfield called the special meeting of the Howard Township Board of Trustees to order at 6:32 p.m. The meeting was held at Hope Community Church, 2390 Lake Street, Niles. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Board members Craig Bradfield, Sheri Wozniak, Bill Kasprzak, Mike Daly, Mike Gordon and Hank Johnson answered roll call. Linda Rudlaff was absent. Also, 47 people signed in for the public hearing.

Public Hearing

Supervisor Bradfield opened the Public Hearing at 6:34 pm. After reading the hearing rules, Mr. Bradfield explained this hearing was for a renewal of the \$20.00 special assessment for ambulance service. This proposed special assessment of \$20.00 per year for five years would include every real parcel for funding Howard Township's share of the cost of maintaining and operating the Southwestern Michigan Community Ambulance Service. Mr. Bradfield introduced Brian Scribner, the SMCAS Director. Mr. Scribner explained the need for the assessment. This assessment accounts for about 17% of the overall ambulance budget. The assessment is necessary to continue to operate and give a high standard of care to the community. During the preliminary discussions of the renewal, the SMCAS Board considered raising the assessment. After the discovery of having to charge every real parcel, the Board kept the assessment at \$20.00. Supervisor Bradfield called for any conflicts of interest. Hearing none, Bradfield read received correspondence into the record. Sherrill Friedman of 2252 Invicta supports the assessment, stating the importance of the service. Cliff and Mary Poehlman of 28600 M-60 are against the assessment, owning over 30 parcels, the assessment raises their taxes too much. Supervisor Bradfield opened the floor to residents in support of the assessment. Mr. John Horner of 1010 Almaugus stated it was a reasonable rate to maintain ambulance service in the community. Mr. Tom Hable of 2566 Mary St. confirmed it is just a renewal of the \$20.00 assessment. The Board confirmed the renewal with the exception of vacant land being assessed as well. Mr. Stanley Morse affirmed \$20.00 for five years or \$20.00 a year for five years. The Board clarified the \$20.00 assessment would appear once a year for five years. Mr. Bradfield then opened the floor in opposition of the assessment. Ms. Donna Herrmann of 2733 Horton Ct. feels she already pays for the service through her annual membership fee she pays directly to SMCAS and she lives on a fixed income. Ms. Marjorie Pinard of 2316 Yankee asked what law specifically allows for this particular assessment. Cathy Smith of 1146 Shady Shores against additional assessments. Ms. Barb Green of 2474 Hand concerned for people with multiple parcels. She believes it to be unfair to charge vacant land. Supervisor Bradfield closed the public hearing at 6:56 p.m.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Johnson, supported by Kasprzak to adjourn at 6:56 pm

Sheri D. Wozniak
Howard Township Clerk