

- **In The Matter Of:**
*Before the Calumet Township
Board of Trustees*

*September 12, 2022
Regular Meeting*

BOSS REPORTERS
*Gary & Merrillville, Indiana
3893 East Lincoln Highway (Rt. 30)
Merrillville, Indiana 46410
(219) 769-9090*

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1 STATE OF INDIANA)
)SS:
2 COUNTY OF LAKE)

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5 BEFORE THE CALUMET TOWNSHIP
6 BOARD OF TRUSTEES
7 GARY, INDIANA

8 REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had at the meeting
9 before the Calumet Township Board of Trustees,
10 reported by Beth A. Barnette, CSR and Notary Public,
11 Illinois License No. 084-004727, held at 610
12 Connecticut Street, Gary, Indiana, on the 12th day
13 of September, 2022, at 4:00 o'clock in the
14 afternoon.

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1 APPEARANCES:

2 Jacqueline Holmes, Board Chairwoman

3 James Piggee, Board Member

4 Deidre Monroe, Board Attorney

5 Kimberly Robinson, Township Trustee

6 Sherita Smith, Chief Deputy

7 Rinzer Williams, III, Township Attorney

8 Toyka Cunningham, Executive Secretary

9 Gladys Miller, Finance Manager

10 Steve Dalton, Financial Advisor

11 and

12 Members of the Public

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1 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: At this time
2 we're going to call the meeting to order. May
3 we all stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

4 (Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

5 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Now we're going
6 to have roll call for attendance.

7 MS. CUNNINGHAM: Mr. Piggee?

8 MR. PIGGEE: Present.

9 MS. CUNNINGHAM: Ms. Holmes?

10 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Present. All
11 right. We have two Board members present. So
12 we have a quorum.

13 Okay. Let's move along with the
14 approval of the minutes from the February 2022
15 meeting. Are there additions that we need to
16 add to the minutes?

17 (No immediate response.)

18 MS. CUNNINGHAM: You need a motion.

19 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: So we're going
20 to move for a motion for approval of the
21 minutes.

22 MR. PIGGEE: So moved. I'm sorry.
23 Second.

24 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Roll call,
25 Ms. Cunningham.

1 MS. CUNNINGHAM: Mr. Piggee?

2 MR. PIGGEE: Yes.

3 MS. CUNNINGHAM: Ms. Holmes?

4 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Yes.

5 ATTORNEY MONROE: For the record, we
6 need her to say it's approved.

7 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Chair made a
8 motion for the approval of the minutes for the
9 last meeting. So approved.

10 So we're going to go to our
11 resolutions. The first one is 2022-06, and
12 that would be --

13 MS. CUNNINGHAM: The temporary loan
14 extension.

15 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: And I will defer
16 to Mr. Dalton for the explanation.

17 MR. DALTON: Well, thank you.
18 Resolution 2022-06 is our annual extension of
19 the loan that is existing between the Rainy
20 Day Fund and the General Fund. We've done
21 this every year for the last eight years.
22 What this does is, it says we don't know if
23 we'll pay it back on December 31st, but we
24 know we'll pay it back in January, as to when
25 we get our tax draw from the County. We have

1 plenty of money.

2 To remind everyone, the only reason
3 we take a loan from the Rainy Day Fund is for
4 cash management, so that we don't have to
5 borrow from the bank. We don't pay any
6 interest. We're borrowing from our own
7 savings account, but this is a required
8 document. When we borrow from ourselves, we
9 must either pay it back by the end of the year
10 or pass this resolution until we can pay it
11 back in January. I would ask for your
12 approval.

13 MR. PIGGEE: I have a question on
14 that.

15 MR. DALTON: Yes, sir.

16 MR. PIGGEE: What is our balance by
17 the first of the year if we don't pay it back
18 in December?

19 MR. DALTON: There's a \$500,000 loan
20 outstanding right now, Mr. Piggee, that will
21 be paid back in January from the Rainy Day
22 Fund, since that's the balance of the
23 outstanding loan.

24 MR. PIGGEE: Okay. So that's what I
25 need to know. I like to keep up with that

1 type of information.

2 MR. DALTON: Understood.

3 MR. PIGGEE: We do need a motion on
4 that? I move that we accept the report.

5 (Discussion held off the record.)

6 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Okay. The Chair
7 makes a motion for the approval.

8 MR. PIGGEE: So moved. I second it.
9 I forgot there's only two of us.

10 MS. CUNNINGHAM: Mr. Piggee?

11 MR. PIGGEE: Yes.

12 MS. CUNNINGHAM: And Ms. Holmes?

13 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Yes.

14 Next is Resolution 2022-07, Budget
15 Resolution, State Budget Form 4. Mr. Dalton?

16 MR. DALTON: Shall I?

17 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: Yes, please.

18 MR. DALTON: Thank you, Trustee.

19 One of the most important actions of any
20 township board is the approval of the annual
21 budget. The annual budget is prepared by the
22 Trustee and presented to you as a board and to
23 you as a public in the fall. We are looking
24 at the 2023 budget now. So we're planning
25 ahead. Tonight is only the public hearing.

1 So there's no reason to host a vote, Madam
2 Chair, as much as open up for questions from
3 the public and comments from the public. I'd
4 like to give you a summary, if that's okay,
5 just because it seems awkward for anybody to
6 comment on something that they haven't
7 actually heard what's in it. So if that's
8 okay with everyone, and I'll make it brief.

9 Tonight is the public hearing. The
10 adoption hearing would be on October 17th at
11 this same time. The Rainy Day Fund is
12 budgeted or proposed to be budgeted at
13 \$1.5 million. We typically budget quite a bit
14 in this fund and we typically spend a lot less
15 than we budget. We use this fund for our
16 temporary loans and we use this fund for
17 emergency capital expenses. For example, this
18 building has had its share of issues with the
19 elevators and heating and cooling systems.
20 This is a fund that can be used for those
21 types of capital expenditures.

22 The General Fund, which is for all
23 Township activities, the budget that is
24 proposed is \$1.8 million for 2023. That
25 happens to be \$200,000 less than the 2022

1 budget. An improvement, if you will, because
2 we'll be anticipating spending less than our
3 2022 budget. For Township Assistance
4 Administration, again, a very small decline.
5 The 2022 budget that we're living in right now
6 is \$1.75 million. We're asking for a
7 budget -- the Trustee is asking for a budget
8 of \$1.7 million, \$50,000 less for 2023. And
9 then for Township Assistance Benefits, a
10 fourth of the budget that you'd be looking at,
11 is the exact same between 2023 and 2022, at
12 \$1.8 million.

13 I want to compliment the Township
14 staff, the Trustee and her team involved in
15 Township assistance. We have endured a couple
16 years of rocky days; COVID, of course, being a
17 global pandemic that none us were
18 anticipating. This team found grant money and
19 they found donations and they found assistance
20 from the City and we used our Township
21 assistance wisely. And this team came out of
22 2020 and 2021 with, one, a better financial
23 position than they entered the global
24 pandemic, and I believe -- and maybe I'm
25 subjective when I say this, having done a very

1 terrific job in taking care of those less
2 advantaged and those needing assistance in
3 this community.

4 I just wanted to compliment them,
5 and I'll step down. You do not need to take
6 action this evening. But if you could, Madam
7 Chair, open it for public comments or public
8 questions, this would be the moment for that.

9 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Okay. Thank you
10 very much. Are there any questions from the
11 audience, or comments?

12 (No immediate response.)

13 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Mr. Piggee?

14 MR. PIGGEE: Not at this time.

15 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Thank you.

16 ATTORNEY MONROE: So we're going to
17 save this for --

18 ATTORNEY WILLIAMS: Yes, we're not
19 taking any action.

20 ATTORNEY MONROE: Okay.

21 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: The next
22 resolution is 2022-08, Salary Resolution for
23 2023.

24 MR. DALTON: Trustee?

25 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: Yes.

1 MR. DALTON: I feel like I'm
2 monopolizing here. So cut me off whenever you
3 want me to shut up.

4 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: No, no.

5 MR. DALTON: Annually, we bring to
6 you the salaries as proposed for the following
7 year, the ones that go along with the budget,
8 and those are incapsulated here in this
9 Resolution 2022-08. There are a couple minor
10 modifications. I'm sure Sherita could explain
11 those to you if you have questions. But, for
12 the most part, we have continued for the last
13 few years to manage this Township with a few
14 less people than we started with and paying
15 those lesser people a little bit more than
16 they were at a few years back, trying to pay
17 to keep grade people here on the staff so we
18 don't lose them in this very tight labor
19 market. 2022-08, we would ask for your
20 approval this evening and you could vote on
21 this for 2023's salaries.

22 MR. PIGGEE: Tell me this, how many
23 people have we lost this year?

24 MR. DALTON: Sherita, can you answer
25 that?

1 CHIEF DEP. SMITH: Anyone that we've
2 lost, that's been as a result of them moving
3 on to other opportunities. So we have not had
4 to terminate anyone. Individuals have retired
5 or individuals have moved on to other things.
6 So there have been no terminations, and that
7 number --

8 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: I don't think
9 anybody this year.

10 CHIEF DEP. SMITH: No.

11 MR. PIGGEE: But can you tell me
12 what our staff is looking at in terms of
13 numbers?

14 CHIEF DEP. SMITH: What our staff is
15 looking at? 46 is the number.

16 MR. PIGGEE: For staff.

17 CHIEF DEP. SMITH: Correct.

18 MR. PIGGEE: And how many was there
19 before the 46?

20 CHIEF DEP. SMITH: I believe that
21 number was around 50.

22 MR. PIGGEE: Okay.

23 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: It was 79 when we
24 first got here. In '15, it was 79.

25 CHIEF DEP. SMITH: And each year, up

1 until the recent two to three years, we have
2 had to make hard decisions and lose certain
3 departments, merge others together, but that
4 has not been the case here. We have a very
5 solid staff and team. The work is able to
6 continue to be done. Even when we had 70 some
7 people, the 46 individuals that are here now
8 are handling that, and then some.

9 MR. PIGGEE: Okay.

10 CHIEF DEP. SMITH: It's a phenomenal
11 staff.

12 MR. PIGGEE: It sounds good. Sounds
13 good.

14 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Is there anybody
15 from the public that would like to comment?

16 (No immediate response.)

17 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: The next one is
18 Resolution 2022-09.

19 MS. CUNNINGHAM: A motion.

20 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: Are you going to
21 vote on the salary tonight?

22 MR. DALTON: It is our request.

23 ATTORNEY MONROE: So we need to move
24 for acceptance of that one.

25 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: So then the next

1 meeting all we have is just the budget to vote
2 on.

3 MR. DALTON: Yes.

4 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: Okay.

5 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: So the Chair
6 would like to motion for Resolution 2022-08,
7 Salary Resolution for 2023.

8 MR. PIGGEE: I second it.

9 MS. CUNNINGHAM: Okay. Seconded by
10 Mr. Piggee. And roll call. Mr. Piggee?

11 MR. PIGGEE: Yes.

12 MS. CUNNINGHAM: Ms. Holmes?

13 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Yes.

14 MR. DALTON: Thank you.

15 MS. CUNNINGHAM: Moving on to
16 Resolution 2022-09.

17 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: That will be
18 Mr. Dalton?

19 MR. DALTON: It will. And it may
20 seem odd, if you put these two resolutions
21 next to each other, it seems like we're
22 committing a redundancy and so I'll explain
23 why. The Trustee feels that the staff has
24 done a pretty terrific job and she would like
25 to move to make the raises and the adjustments

1 to salaries that would take place normally on
2 January 1st of 2023, she would like to do so
3 now. So this resolution is an amendment to
4 the resolution that we're currently living in
5 for 2022, to give those raises now to our
6 current employees instead of having them wait
7 until January 1st of 2023.

8 MR. PIGGEE: You're talking as of
9 now.

10 MR. DALTON: As of today.

11 MR. PIGGEE: Okay. Trustee, does
12 she have an idea of what types of raises she
13 wants to give the people?

14 MR. DALTON: Sherita, could you
15 comment on the raises that are involved in
16 this specific request?

17 CHIEF DEP. SMITH: The Trustee has
18 gone through all the positions of the Township
19 and she has indicated for each position, based
20 on the ranges that have been established for
21 those positions, that individuals will receive
22 an increase. And so what you're voting on is
23 just that it can take place, as Mr. Dalton
24 said, right away, as opposed to having to wait
25 until -- you've already approved the budget

1 for 2023, but she would like to move for it
2 this year so they can enjoy some of that this
3 year because of, again, the work that has been
4 done.

5 Because these are individuals that
6 have gone above and beyond with all of the
7 things that Mr. Dalton mentioned, the pandemic
8 and everything that's gone along with it. No
9 one has ever been denied service, if they met
10 the eligibility requirements that have been
11 set. So we have helped and continue to help
12 under the leadership of our Trustee, and she
13 would just like to share that with her
14 remarkable staff.

15 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: The ranges -- I
16 think what you're asking, Mr. Piggee, the
17 ranges have been between 1,000 to 4,000, if
18 that's what you're asking, as much as people
19 have gone up.

20 MR. PIGGEE: Exactly.

21 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: Staff is all
22 here. I'm not sure why they won't say
23 anything, like thank you, but they're here to
24 make sure it's done tonight. So back to
25 public comment. Maybe one of them can tell

1 you exactly how grateful they are of these
2 changes or this amendment to the budget to
3 bring it forth today rather than wait. This
4 is September. So rather than wait until
5 January, we just begin it now.

6 MR. PIGGEE: And I'm sure the public
7 would like to know some of these ranges and
8 that type of thing. Okay?

9 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: If they ask me.

10 MR. PIGGEE: Yeah, that's the reason
11 I made that statement, because you got a lot
12 of public people here today.

13 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: That's fine.

14 MR. PIGGEE: Okay.

15 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Any comments
16 from the public?

17 MR. BUGGS: Yes. Thank you,
18 Chairwoman Holmes and Board and Madam Trustee.
19 I think that it's an excellent idea, because
20 maybe a lot of people don't know. When we had
21 COVID and everything shut down, except the
22 Trustee's office, those people that were
23 receiving services still received services.
24 And with the hike in the gas prices and
25 NIPSCO, and everything that's going up, this

1 is an excellent idea, instead of waiting until
2 next year to do it now. So, thank you again.

3 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: Thank you,
4 Mr. Buggs.

5 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: There's a hand
6 in the back.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm a current
8 employee. I was not aware of the raise, and I
9 would be so gracious if the Board would
10 approve. Very kindly, thank you.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I second
12 that.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I second it
14 too.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I second it
16 too.

17 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Sounds like
18 you're making a motion to accept. Thank you.
19 Mr. Piggee?

20 MR. PIGGEE: Second.

21 MS. CUNNINGHAM: And roll call.
22 Mr. Piggee?

23 MR. PIGGEE: Yes.

24 MS. CUNNINGHAM: And Ms. Holmes?

25 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Yes.

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(Applauding.)

CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Are there any public comments? We're at the end.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'd like to make a comment.

CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Go ahead.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I work at MPC, the other building, not exactly this one, but where we have all the events. I just wanted to say, I want to thank Trustee for keeping us, you know, fully staffed over there to provide for the people who need services, like the warming center, the cooling center, and I'm just glad to be a part of it, and I do appreciate the raise, if it does get approved.

CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Thank you very much. We appreciate that.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I would just like to piggyback on what (Inaudible.) just said. We have been able to continue to work through the leadership of the Trustee, putting PPE and all the things to protect people coming in, as well as the people going out. She went so far as to also include provisions to make sure that we can check on ourselves to

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1 make sure that we're safe.

2 So I don't know why she hasn't
3 talked more about it, but she's done more than
4 any person that I've heard of leading any type
5 of a workforce, and she's also set an example
6 for other people trying to do the same by
7 bringing on people to test and make sure that
8 the staff is safe. So to that I'd just like
9 to say thank you, Trustee.

10 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: Thank you.

11 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Very good.

12 Anybody else want to say anything?

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hi. My name
14 is Ronny. I've worked in both buildings.
15 Currently, I'm at the MPC. I just want to say
16 that I really appreciate working here, and
17 especially the Trustee. I've known her a long
18 time, but I had never worked with her before,
19 but it's been a great experience working for
20 you and with you and with this community, and
21 she makes it a point to let me know that it's
22 okay for me to be here until -- to follow my
23 dreams and finish school. I am a student.
24 And the environment here is really positive.
25 So that's what I appreciate most of all.

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1 Coming from other jobs where there might be a
2 little more tension and the team doesn't work
3 as well together, this team is really cohesive
4 and we get a lot of things done, and I really
5 appreciate that.

6 (Applauding.)

7 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Trustee?

8 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: The raises got
9 paid. You all can go back to normal now. No,
10 I just want to say it has truly been, as I
11 always say, a labor of love. This is what I
12 love doing. This is what I want to do
13 forever, or as long as I can, with grace and
14 dignity. The staff is excellent. I did not
15 do this alone. They were right there with me
16 when I said that we would not close. We would
17 do everything to protect ourselves. We were
18 sure that everyone is well to go home to their
19 families and come back to work. So it's just
20 been great, and not without the help of the
21 Board, the entire Board. I appreciate you
22 guys understanding and working with me.

23 And I am happy to see our near
24 future Board member, Mr. Michael Protho, in
25 the audience tonight. He is the nominee, and

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1 I think as of Wednesday he will be able to sit
2 here with you guys, and especially on your
3 next meeting, October 17th, he'll be up there
4 ready to take a vote. So I'm glad that he was
5 able tonight to see what he's walking into. A
6 pretty nice group of people in helping the
7 community. We work on the council together.
8 So we understand each other. We know what it
9 is to be of service, not just an elected
10 official, but actually a public servant. So I
11 am happy that he did come or he is able to
12 come on early and join us.

13 (Applauding.)

14 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Mr. Piggee?

15 MR. PIGGEE: Let me say this. I
16 really admire the staff here at the Township,
17 especially the boss lady, and the other boss
18 lady, Ms. Smith.

19 CHIEF DEP. SMITH: Baby Boss.

20 MR. PIGGEE: The thing about it is,
21 when we make a suggestion, they take it
22 serious. They take it serious. I came in one
23 time and I didn't see that many male staff
24 members, and I brought that out and they did
25 hire male staff members. And I just think

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1 it's a fantastic organization that's here, and
2 the Trustee and Ms. Smith, they work very
3 hard, and the staff -- counting the money; and
4 the attorney, Mr. Williams, Attorney Williams.
5 I think this is a fabulous, fabulous group of
6 people and I think you deserve that raise.
7 Okay? And I think the Board deserves theirs
8 too.

9 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: I just want to
10 correct Coach Piggee. I'm not with that
11 gender bias conversation that you always have
12 about men versus women. That was your
13 suggestion. I didn't have anything to do with
14 that, if it ever comes back up.

15 MR. PIGGEE: Okay.

16 CHIEF DEP. SMITH: We hire the most
17 qualified people to be whatever. It's the
18 most qualified.

19 MR. PIGGEE: But I enjoy working
20 with this staff and the two head ladies and
21 the attorney. I enjoy it. I really do. So,
22 thank you.

23 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Thank you so
24 much.

25 MR. PIGGEE: Madam Chair?

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1 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Okay. So we're
2 going to move for adjournment.

3 ATTORNEY WILLIAMS: One second.

4 TRUSTEE ROBINSON: Congratulations,
5 Madam Chair, I'd like to say that to you.

6 (Discussion held off the record.)

7 ATTORNEY WILLIAMS: And if we can
8 make that retroactive to the beginning of this
9 meeting.

10 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: All right. A
11 little break there. I'd like to entertain a
12 motion regarding to being a chairman to this
13 for the rest of this year and retroactive to
14 the start of this meeting.

15 MR. PIGGEE: So moved.

16 MS. CUNNINGHAM: No, second. Use
17 your name, Ms. Holmes. Put your name in there
18 naming you the chairman.

19 CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Okay. Let me
20 start over again. I would like to entertain a
21 motion regarding to being myself, Jacqueline
22 Holmes, the chairman through the rest of this
23 year and retroactive to the start of this
24 meeting.

25 MR. PIGGEE: Second.

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MS. CUNNINGHAM: Roll call.

Ms. Holmes?

CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Yes.

MS. CUNNINGHAM: And Mr. Piggee?

MR. PIGGEE: Yes.

TRUSTEE ROBINSON: Congratulations.

(Applauding.)

TRUSTEE ROBINSON: Now if you don't have anything to say, you can call for adjournment.

CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: The time is 4:30 p.m. and I make a motion to adjourn this meeting.

MR. PIGGEE: I second.

CHAIRWOMAN HOLMES: Thank you, everyone.

MS. CUNNINGHAM: Meeting adjourned.

(Proceedings concluded at 4:30 p.m.)

* * *

1 STATE OF INDIANA)
2)SS:
3 COUNTY OF LAKE)

4 BEFORE THE CALUMET TOWNSHIP
5 BOARD OF TRUSTEES
6 GARY, INDIANA

7 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

8 I, Beth A. Barnette, CSR and Notary
9 Public, do hereby certify that I reported in machine
10 shorthand the foregoing proceedings had in the
11 above-entitled matter, at the time and place herein
12 before set forth; and I do further certify that the
13 foregoing transcript, consisting of twenty-four
14 (24) typewritten pages, is a true and correct
15 transcript of my said stenographic notes, to the
16 best of my ability.

17 Signed this 16th day of September,
18 2022.

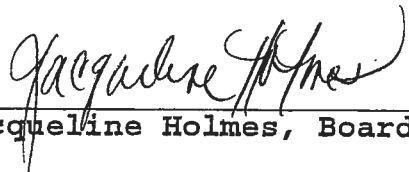
19
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23 *Beth Barnette*

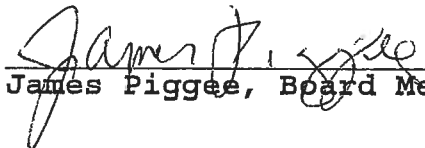
24 BETH A. BARNETTE, CSR
25 Notary Public
My Commission Expires: 6/13/30

1 STATE OF INDIANA)
2) SS:
3 COUNTY OF LAKE)

4 THE CALUMET TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING
5 GARY, INDIANA

6
7 These minutes of the Calumet Township
8 Board meeting, held on September 12, 2022, were
9 approved by the Board of Trustees on the 12th day
10 of September, 2022.

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14 _____
15 Jacqueline Holmes, Board Chairwoman

16
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19 James Piggee, Board Member

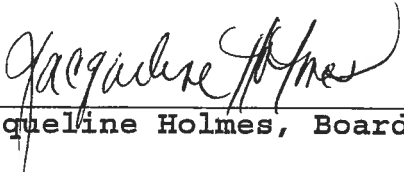


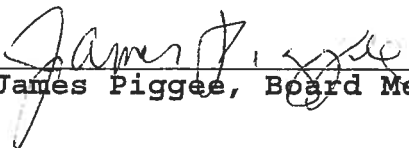
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THE CALUMET TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING
 GARY, INDIANA

These minutes of the Calumet Township Board meeting, held on September 12, 2022, were approved by the Board of Trustees on the 12th day of September, 2022.


 Jacqueline Holmes, Board Chairwoman


 James Piggee, Board Member

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