

Whitewater Township Board
Minutes of Special Meeting held April 19, 2011

Call to Order

Supervisor Lake called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Whitewater Township Hall, 5777 Vinton Road, Williamsburg, Michigan.

Roll Call

Township Board members present: Benak, Boyd, Hockin, Hubbell and Lake.

Township Board members absent: None

Others attending: Fire Chief/Ambulance Coordinator Stites and 32 others

The Agenda as Written in Special Meeting Notice:

1. Emergency Services Work Session (Items not necessarily in order)
 - Rural Fire Department Membership/Dispute Resolution
 - Emergency Services Personnel
 - Emergency Services Equipment
 - Emergency Services Facilities

Moved by Benak, seconded by Lake to approve the agenda as written. **Motion approved.**

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None.

Public Comment

None.

Emergency Services Work Session

It was suggested that each board member state the area that they consider to be a priority in the emergency services issues that are facing the board.

- **Benak** began with the letter submitted by resident Vaughn Harshfield stating she feels Mr. Harshfield had identified the areas that need to be discussed.
- **Hubbell** agrees with Benak.
- **Lake** personnel, equipment, facility
- **Hockin** ambulance, rural fire, then others
- **Boyd**, Ambulance
 - EMS committee, ambulance priority #1
 - Move equipment from current ambulance to new ambulance
 - Back up ambulance does not need to be equipped the same, alternative equipment can be used.

- Stites reported the new ambulance should be ready by the end of the month.
- Discussion of equipment/Do we equipment 2 ambulances
- **Boyd**, Benak has found a LifePak 12.
- **Boyd**, Is a Stryker cot necessary?

It was the consensus that Whitewater Township needs two ambulances. The question remaining is how will it be equipped?

- Stites would like to look at LifePak12 before making any recommendation to the board. He was instructed to complete his analysis for the meeting scheduled on 4/26/11.
- Is the Stryker cot the best price? Stites instructed to get new quotes and include other vendors.

Rural Fire Dispute Resolution

- **Benak** suggests having the Lake City group come to give a presentation to the board similar to the one presented to the Emergency Services Committee.
- **Chief Sedlacek** reported that Rural Fire is currently doing a study.

Boyd priorities should be ambulance, building, Rural Fire.

There was a discussion of the response received to the Notice of Dispute Resolution sent to Rural Fire. It was suggested that a work session be held on the response received.

- **Sedlacek** stated the points in the Notice of Dispute Resolution were addressed in the “reorganization” being considered by Rural Fire.
- **Sedlacek** stated that Lake/Missaukee is a much smaller group.
- **Sedlacek** offered staff assistance with research.

Personnel (Fire Chief)

- **Lake**-important to keep personnel.
- **Hockin**-has seen improvement in the last year.
- **Boyd**-lacking in business leadership.
- **Benak**-Chief salary could go toward building cost.
- **Benak**-Did we make a mistake when we hired a full time fire chief.

The fire chief position was discussed including inspection services.

A suggestion was made of forming a committee to discuss options.

- **Boyd**-get rid of fire chief.
- **Benak**-concern regarding financial impact.
- **Hubbell**-have a fire chief, no building-building is important.
- **Hockin**-reallocate some of the cost to ambulance.
- **Lake**-number of personnel has increased in the last year.

There was discussion of on-call versus over staffing.

- **Sedlacek**-the items being discussed are in the “reorganization” plan for Rural Fire.

Facilities

- **Lake** stated many ideas have been offered.
- Possibility of Tribe looking at a building.
- Possibility of Acme-Whitewater-Tribe combination.
- Strong support for a township owned building.

Paul Tyrer, Expert Handyman Services has looked at the Northport building and Lake invited him to share his findings. Tyrer also shared information regarding two possible building scenarios for Whitewater Township.

- **Boyd**-supports a 100 x 100 building that Whitewater owns, not a Tribal building. Space is needed.

Priorities

Priorities were set as follows:

1. Ambulance and equipment (on 4/26/11 agenda)
2. Facilities
3. Personnel
4. Dispute Resolution

Public Comment

Rural Chief Sedlacek

- Explained the ISO rating recently received.
 - Within 5 driving miles now 7 previously 9
 - Outside 10 miles is 10
 - Water source other than seasonal is 5

Lois MacLean, 5919 Linderleaf Ln.

- Don't duplicate research, ask Emergency Services Committee members.
- Likes what was heard tonight, glad to hear there is compromise.

Glenn Savage, 9833 Pineneedle Ln.

- Asked if surrounding townships have been asked re: millage being collected
- Heard that township cannot afford the fire chief; if more training is needed, the township should offer the training.

Pat Miller, 10199 Elk Lake Trail

- Member of the Emergency Services Committee and would be willing to reactivate the committee.

Jim Snider, 8316 Old M72

- Need facts & figures; that should have happened in 6 months.
- Water agreement, tribe owns, township does not.
- Spend grant money from tribe on what is really needed like police patrol on the highways to prevent deaths.
- Need well options other than tribal water.

Tim Shaffer, 5309 Moore Rd

- Issues have been discussed for 3 years; no decisions have been made.

Kim Halstead, 7923 Cook Rd.

- If township stays in Rural Fire, does the chief pay come from Rural?
- Fire station property was purchased with Fire Special Assessment money; would township hall be appropriate in fire building?

Steve Mangus, 1214 Cerro Dr., Traverse City

- Spoke on the millage voted on in 1974.
- Wants current millage abandoned and a new millage voted in.

Cheryl Walton, 8423 Crisp Rd

- Attended meeting in Paradise; a lot of good facts brought up at that meeting
- Whitewater Township is the only township in Rural Fire with a Fire Special Assessment District.
- Commercial is needed in Township. “You guys do not have crap for commercial-you are the township leaders and I lay this at your feet.”
- Growth according to 2010 Census does not warrant a big new building.
- Fire Department does not go on 1 run per month.
- “You are a wide space in the road between the growing community of Kalkaska and the growing community of Traverse City.” “You are Podunk out here”

Judy York, 5721 N. Broomhead Rd.

- What criteria were used to determine need for a full time fire chief?
- Did Rural say no to full time chief?
- How many other townships have a full time chief?
- Is there a need and can we afford a full time chief?

Jim Snider, 8316 Old M72

- Commented on Paradise Township millages.

John Goss, no address given

- Supports have the Emergency Services Committee having additional meetings.

Arnell Boyd, Township Board Member

- Did letter from membership of EMS constitute insubordination?

Ardella Benak, Township Board Member

- Wants someone written up for the letter.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Hockin, Clerk