

**Whitewater Township Board
Minutes of Regular Meeting held January 22, 2013**

Call to Order

Supervisor Popp called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. at the Whitewater Township Hall, 5777 Vinton Road, Williamsburg, Michigan. Popp requested that all electronic devices be silenced so as not to interfere with recording devices.

Roll Call of Board Members

Board Members present: Hubbell, Lawson, Popp, Walton

Board Members absent: Benak

Others present: Fire Captain Tim Arbenowske and 6 others

Set/Adjust Meeting Agenda

None

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

1. Letter of 01/08/2013 from Charter re: Rate Changes
2. TC-TALUS Board Report for November/December 2012
3. Corrected TC-TALUS Board Report for September/October 2012

Popp noted each item of Correspondence. There was no board discussion or audience comment.

Public Hearing

None

Reports/Presentations**Planning Commission Report – Lloyd Lawson**

At the 01/16/2013 meeting, the PC was looking at the chapter of land use and land use maps and future map. They have not yet determined how to handle the map, whether to list land as it is currently used or to project out. The PC discussed all members taking the same oath as elected officials. Chairperson Dean sent out updated maps to use electronically and modify. The PC will work on land use and by-laws at the next meeting and hopes to finish the transportation section.

At the 01/02/2013 meeting, the PC reviewed sections 6 and 7 of the Master Plan, which needs to be submitted in final draft form to the board. New officers were also elected, Mickey Dean as chairperson, Kim Mangus as vice chairperson, and Matt Lyons as secretary. They added January 16, February 20, and March 20, 2013, as special meeting dates, with the intent to finish up the

Master Plan. They would like to have an informal “11th hour” town hall style public meeting to find out what people think about the Master Plan before it goes to public hearing. They would like to have the formal public hearing in August, with the Master Plan being completed by September. The PC discussed ways of getting the public’s participation, including a billboard, having PC members present on clean-up day handing out information and talking about it, and mailings. They would like the support of the board in accomplishing this.

Board discussion followed concerning the meaning of future land use, minimum lot sizes, taking of oath for planning commission members. Popp inquired as to how the board could help the PC. Discussion followed concerning using the school as a town hall meeting location, possibly renting a billboard, and using the township newsletter to inform residents of a town hall meeting.

Lawson added that at the December 2012 meeting the PC discussed plans to invite a specialist in access management but felt that invitation should come from the board.

Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee Report – Bill Mouser

Mouser reported to the board that Popp had given the committee information about a DNR grant application workshop. The township must have a current Recreation Plan in order to be eligible to apply for these grants. There is a February 7th workshop in Grayling. There is no cost and no reservations are needed. He will try to go and invited anyone else who might want to attend.

The Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee has scheduled a special meeting on January 28 for the purpose of trying to finalize the Recreation Plan and Capital Improvements list, which they plan to finalize prior to a March 1st deadline.

The 2% tribal applications were submitted in December. Mouser and Popp selected 4 items for possible funding and submitted 4 separate applications, one for new stairs at Whitewater Township Park, one for playground equipment at Hi Pray Park, another for improvements to the ballfield itself at Hi Pray Park, and one for access road and parking improvements at Hi Pray Park.

There are also 3 recommendations from the 1/14/2013 committee meeting: Lossie Road survey and marking, fence and gates at Petobego, and a plaque for Lossie Road in honor of Mickey Galligan. Mouser advised the board that the surveyor (Eagle Land Surveying) reports he already has \$2,100 into the project and has committed to a total cost of \$5,500 to complete the job (do the centerline and give 33 foot offsets for the first 650 feet). This could be done in early spring.

For the 1/28/2013 meeting, the committee plans to put together a job description for park manager. Mouser has talked to Grand Traverse County Parks and gotten a job description. Committee members will also bring job descriptions. Mouser commented the position will likely be one of “caretaker” this year.

Grand Traverse County Road Commission Report - Bill Mouser

Mouser advised he was appointed to a 6-year term beginning 1/1/2013. There has been quite a turnover in personnel. Jim Cook, the new manager at GTCRC, is conducting a top-to-bottom review of the operation. The Road Commission is implementing the “Mix of Fixes” program.

Mouser, as well as Trustee Lawson, attended the recent MTA meeting where this program was discussed, as well as the PASER road rating system. The county has maps of all county roads showing their rating. There will be a PowerPoint presentation on March 6th at 7 p.m. Mouser listed upcoming local road projects for 2013. The PASER system is also for gravel roads. Baggs Road is not on the GTCRC maintenance list. Mouser says the GTCRC is working on asset management; tough choices have to be made.

Popp inquired if there were any audience questions for Lawson or Mouser. No questions.

Unfinished Business

Discuss/Revise WWT Personnel Policies #4 and #11 to Eliminate Inconsistency. Possible Resolution Required?

A discrepancy has been found between Policies 4 and 11 concerning the payment of unused vacation time when employees leave. Lawson commented that Policy 4 has a history of amendment and feels 4 should be accepted as the formal policy. Hubbell inquired of family members in the professional world and found they did get paid for unused vacation time upon leaving employment, but it all depends on what the employer wants to do. Walton suggested a compromise between the two policies. Popp suggested payment be conditioned upon the return of all township property. When keys are not turned in, it costs the township to have locks changed. A digital camera is also missing. Popp wants to know which direction the board wants to go; he will bring back appropriate language. **Motion by Lawson, seconded by Walton, to make Whitewater Township Personnel Policy #4 the township's current policy as to unused vacation time and to amend Personnel Policy #11 to be consistent with Policy #4. On voice vote, the motion carried.**

New Business

Appointments to Board of Review

Three township residents have applied for membership on the Board of Review. Popp introduced the name of Paul Tyrer as the first candidate. **Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Lawson, to confirm the recommendation of the supervisor appointing Paul Tyrer to a 2-year term on the Whitewater Township Board of Review, term ending on 12/31/2014. On voice vote, the motion carried.**

Popp then introduced the name of Connie Rountree as a second Board of Review candidate. **Motion by Lawson, seconded by Hubbell, to confirm the recommendation of the supervisor appointing Connie Rountree to a 2-year term on the Whitewater Township Board of Review, term ending on 12/31/2014. On voice vote, the motion carried.**

Lastly, Popp introduced the name of Kim Halstead as the third candidate for Board of Review. Mr. Halstead is present at the meeting. **Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Walton, to confirm the recommendation of the supervisor appointing Kim Halstead to a 2-year term on the Whitewater Township Board of Review, term ending on 12/31/2014. On voice vote, the motion carried.**

Appointments to Zoning Board of Appeals

Popp stated that with the resignation of Todd Millar, there is an opening on the Zoning Board of Appeals. Kim Halstead is currently the ZBA alternate but has expressed interest in becoming a full-time ZBA member. **Motion by Lawson, seconded by Walton, to confirm the recommendation of the supervisor appointing Kim Halstead to a position on the Whitewater Township Zoning Board of Appeals, term ending on 12/31/2015. On voice vote, the motion carried.**

Resolution #13-01 – Alternative Starting Date for Board of Review

Popp advised the board that there are special rules within the State Tax Commission for when the Board of Review can meet. Since assessors cannot be in more than 1 spot at any time, Resolution #13-01 provides for an alternative starting date of 03/13/2013. **Motion by Walton, seconded by Hubbell, to adopt Resolution #13-01, Alternative Starting Date for Board of Review.** Roll call vote: Benak, absent; Popp, yes; Lawson, yes; Hubbell, yes; Walton, yes. **Resolution adopted.**

Discuss Grand Traverse Rural Fire Department/ Examine Grand Traverse Band Fire Department and Sewer Proposals

Supervisor Popp communicated to the board that Rural Fire is destructing day by day. They have been a clearinghouse for the 9 member townships. Each member pays a share of money to buy equipment, maintain records, make sure physicals and training are covered and that all requirements are met. Lately, the 9 members are not happy with one another. He feels we will be revisiting the decision of having our own fire department soon. Popp commented that Rural Fire has a \$1 million budget this year, of which one-third is spent on administrative costs for 3 people. Captain Arbenowske believes that also includes the rent on the Vance Road building. Whitewater Township is the third largest member township. Popp asked previous board members to relate the history of efforts toward Whitewater Township operating its own department. Hubbell stated plans were drawn up at one time, but it was too expensive. Then the tribe came to Whitewater Township offering a facility; Whitewater Township would man it. Hubbell feels talks need to continue with the tribe. Popp advised that he has met with the tribe. They are interested in seeking federal grant money. Lengthy discussion followed. Popp also advised that Union Township is begging us to come help them; they are done with Rural Fire, as is Long Lake Township. Paradise Township has hired a consultant to get out (of Rural Fire). Popp stated we need to do the numbers and make sure the public is on board. Popp feels that we have a wonderful opportunity with the tribe to do something that can help everybody. He prefers it be between us, leaving the federal government out of it. Captain Arbenowske stated the public wants someone to be there within a reasonable period of time when they call. Popp advised that the tribe would like to begin monthly meetings with the board.

Tim Shaffer stated that, over the years, the casino has provided money, donations, equipment. At least 3 times, donations have been rejected. He stated the tribe is always helping us. Popp commented that any agreement with the tribe has to be financially fit and sound for our people.

Popp advised that the tribe has also put forth sewer proposals and we would need to follow the same guidelines as far as investigation, etc. Kim Halstead stated that a sewer board may be mandated. Brief discussion followed before moving to the next agenda item.

Whitewater Township Park – Date for Seasonal Reservations/Credit Cards

Walton reviewed her 1/18/2013 memo to the board regarding 2 township park issues: a proposed date to begin taking seasonal site reservations and the institution of a credit card system for park transactions. Lengthy discussion followed. **Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Popp, to begin taking Whitewater Township Park seasonal site reservations on February 15, 2013, and to have Edith Deveneau be the person who handles getting those reservations completed. On voice vote, the motion carried.** Brief discussion followed on the subject of what percentage of the campground should be seasonal sites. **Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Popp, to have the Clerk and/or Supervisor proceed with all steps necessary to institute a credit card system for Whitewater Township Park transactions.** Audience member Dan Belanger stated that the board may want to get some detail from park employees on how they have to take reservations even with a credit card. Also, he has contacted the State of Michigan and received lots of information about their new reservation system and will bring more information back to the board. He would also like to have the board consider the number of employees needed this year and set work schedules. **Roll call vote: Hubbell, yes; Popp, yes; Lawson, yes; Walton, yes; Benak, absent. Motion approved.**

Tabled Items

None

Board Comments/Discussion

None

Announcements

Next regular meeting date is 2/12/2013. There is a special meeting of the township board on 1/31/2013.

Public Comment

Tim Shaffer stated, in dealing with the tribe on water and septic, look at what has been done with hydrants to the school and along M-72.

Dan Belanger stated zoning should be as originally set. The 5 acres is an economic hardship and is ridiculous.

Edith Deveneau stated there is a waiting list for seasonal sites and that the township is really not losing revenue.

Margaret Quast stated the seasonal sites are taking the prime sites and that it is going to turn the park into a trailer park with their decks and underground plumbing.

Popp commented that we are in transition mode this year as far as park operation and that there has been bad press about what would happen. Next year, some things are likely to be up for debate.

Mouser commented that the seasonal rate should be between 2 specified dates.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Walton
Whitewater Township Clerk