

**Whitewater Township Board
Minutes of Regular Meeting held March 12, 2013**

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Popp called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. at the Whitewater Township Hall, 5777 Vinton Road, Williamsburg, Michigan, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call of Board Members

Board members present: Benak, Hubbell, Lawson, Popp, Walton

Board members absent: None

Others present: Inman, Arbenowske, Mouser, 2 others

Set/Adjust Meeting Agenda

Benak requested that discussion of the newsletter deadline be added under Announcements.

Benak also requested that setting a date for Clean-Up Day be added under New Business. Items added.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

Public Comment

Kim Halstead, 7923 Cook Road, addressed Item 3 under Correspondence (Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy – Land in Trust) and stated that the taxes will be foregone for the school district if the property goes into trust. He understands the conservancy is planning on clear-cutting the property and suggested that select-cutting be looked into instead.

William Mouser, representing the Grand Traverse County Road Commission, stated there was a comment at a previous meeting with respect to expansion of right-of-ways. He has looked into this. The Road Commission does not seek additional ROW unless it is specific to a project. He is curious to know where the rumor is coming from.

Concerning Baggs Road, he has a meeting set up between Jim Cook, himself, and representatives of the Kalkaska County Road Commission on Friday to discuss Baggs Road and possible improvements.

Walton asked whether the ROW expansion rumor could have come from MDOT. Mouser said it possibly could have since M-72 is a state highway, but he reiterated that the County does not do that.

Popp responded that the document was provided by the previous Zoning Administrator and was a proposed ROW easement document increasing the road ROWs along certain roadways. A map was provided, which he believes came from the County Road Commission. Lawson suggested some of it may have come from the Grand Vision. Mouser replied that right-of-ways are not uniform along each road, but in any event, the Road Commission is not in the process of

expanding right-of-ways on any county roads unless a specific project comes up that requires an additional easement, and then only after public hearing.

Brief discussion occurred concerning the proposed roundabout on M-72.

Popp thanked Mouser for his efforts with respect to Baggs Road.

Public Hearing

None

Reports/Presentations/Announcements/Comments

County Board of Commissioners Report

Larry Inman gave the following report:

- The County Board approved Smart 911. They are the first county in the state to take on that software. GT County was given a 50% discount forever to be a demonstration county for the software.
- The County BOC gave preliminary approval to allowing townships to extend community policing through 2013. The County shares the expense with the townships. Paradise and Mayfield Townships would like to start a new community policing officer.
- The County is starting the Strategic Plan process for this year and next year. Last plan ended in December 2012. They will try to put together a 2 or 3 year plan. Meeting dates have been scheduled.
- Inman will encourage Gregg Bird (the new GT County Emergency Management Supervisor) to visit all the townships and introduce himself.
- Regarding the Veterans Affairs Department, GT County contracts with Leelanau County to do their veterans' services and has been approached by Benzie County to contract with them as well.

Walton asked whether Leelanau and Benzie contribute to the funding of the GT County office. Inman stated they do.

Clerk Walton is pleased to introduce Terese Hooper as the new Deputy Clerk. She is a long-time resident of Whitewater Township, has 38 years of payroll and accounts payable experience at Sara Lee, currently works part-time at her brother's business and also volunteers at Father Fred.

Grand Traverse County Sheriff Report – No officer present; a written report was received.

Battalion #3 Fire Captain Report

Tim Arbenowske gave the following report:

- There were 2 fire and 2 rescue calls last month. The fire calls went into Acme Township.
- They were on standby for the VASA ski race. Only 1 person needed assistance.
- Had 1 personal injury accident.
- Fife Lake came over to help with Snocross.
- Number of calls is about the same as last year.

- They are getting prepped for wildfire season.
- He worked on the budget. He and Dawn (Martin) would like to sit down with the Board to see if something can be done with the On-Call Proposal.
- They prepped for Snocross and VASA and did their annual SCBA training.

Benak asked if Arbenowske would like to submit information for the newsletter. He will supply an article.

Popp states he is getting calls about burn permits and was told snow had to be on the ground for a burn permit to be issued. Arbenowske stated if there is snow on the ground you do not need a permit. They do like to have notification if it is a big burn, as does Central Dispatch. Arbenowske confirmed the DNR website handles burn permits.

Ambulance Coordinator Report

Dawn Martin was not present due to illness.

Treasurer Benak's Report re: Regional Transportation Planning Meeting (memo dated 02/22/2013)

Benak attended the MDOT/NWCMCOG meeting held in Elk Rapids on 02/21/2013 and has provided the board and public with an 18-page packet of information. The meeting covered 5-year projections. The only improvement scheduled in our area is replacement of the culvert where Tobeco Creek goes under U.S. 31. It will be done between May and July 1st. No detour is planned. In 2018, replacement of M-72 between Kalkaska Road and Baggs Road is scheduled, as well as replacement of U.S. 31 between Three Mile Road and Holiday Hills Road.

Trustee Hubbell inquired about roundabouts. Benak replied the roundabout on M-72 related to the Meijer development is being paid for by the developer.

Benak inquired if anyone attended the Mix of Fixes presentation. Discussion followed.

Popp inquired how distribution of the TAP funds is handled. Discussion followed. Popp believes the responsibility for roads will fall to this Board and it is good that the 2013/2014 budget has begun to address that.

Consent Calendar

Popp had a question regarding the Cash Balance Report showing a negative balance in the Recreation Fund. Walton replied that the Cash Balance Report end date is prior to a budgeted transfer motion.

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Benak, to approve Consent Calendar items as follows:

Receive and File

1. Supervisor's Report - None
2. Clerk's report for February 2013
3. Zoning Administrator's Report - None
4. Battalion #3 Fire Captain's February Activity Report
5. Treasurer's Cash Balance and Investment Reports for January 2013

6. Approved minutes of 02/06/2013 Planning Commission regular meeting
7. Draft minutes of 02/11/2013 Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee meeting
8. Draft minutes of 02/19/2013 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting
9. Approved minutes of 02/20/2013 Planning Commission special meeting

Correspondence

1. Grand Traverse Sheriff Department Service Statistics for February 2013
2. GT Rural Fire Department Minutes of 02/20/2013
3. Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy – Land in Trust
4. NWMCOG eNews 02/20/2013
5. Grand Vision Update: February 2013
6. Trip Advisor Annual Report

Minutes

1. Recommend approval of 02/12/2013 and 02/26/2013 regular meeting minutes and 02/13/2013, 02/25/2013, 02/27/2013, and 03/04/2013 special meeting minutes

Bills for Approval

1. Approval of Alden State Bank vouchers #36689 – 36773
2. Approval of Alden State Bank Miami Beach voucher # 1131

Budget Amendments (none)

Revenue & Expenditure Report (none)

Roll call vote: Hubbell, yes; Popp, yes; Benak, yes; Walton, yes; Lawson, yes.

Correspondence No. 3 – Letter from Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy

Benak stated they have asked for a letter and inquired what the Board is thinking of doing. Popp has drafted a letter to Steve Prissel, Elk Rapids Schools, and the other taxing units advising them this is on our agenda, but the letter has not gone out yet. Popp feels the school and the other taxing units deserve more than 2-3 days to evaluate how this affects their budgets. The Land Conservancy and Popp began the discussion in January. A parcel ID was never provided. Popp and Benak researched that information. Benak's opinion is that it will go through whether the board sends a letter of support or non-support. Benak feels we can send a letter saying we are not in favor of it, but if it ends up happening, she agrees with Kim Halstead that we would like to see it select-cut, not clear-cut. The state is purchasing the property for the timber. Benak further states putting the land in the conservancy is probably a good thing for the property owners but feels we should send a letter requesting no clear-cutting. Discussion followed. Popp will send the previously drafted letter.

Unfinished Business

ZA Job Description by Benak / ZA Job Description by Popp

Popp revised the existing Zoning Administrator job description, feeling that description had some good points in it, and suggested that Benak's job description be used as a comparison. Benak reported that she checked on #6 ("the agreement") in the job description and e-mailed

Whitewater Township Board – Minutes of 03/12/2013

Popp a memo from Deb Hunt (GT County Road Commission) citing a 1995 agreement wherein Whitewater Township requested that the Road Commission let us take signs out of the road right-of-way for them. As Popp read the e-mail, the township board approached the Road Commission regarding illegal signs and wanted the ability to remove signs that they may not get to. Popp stated the board has a right to remove signs but does not think that is a basic function of the zoning administrator. Benak feels that picking up signs in the road right-of-way is something the ZA does. Walton feels if we leave “the agreement” language in the document, it needs to be more specific as to who the agreement is with and when it is dated.

Popp stated he used the existing ZA job description and attempted to focus on that position being able to subrogate some of the “nonqualified work” that the previous ZA did. He reports there is a lot of copying, getting addresses, etc., that we do not need to pay someone \$320 a day to do; that work could go to a general assistant. Popp indicated there would be a flexible schedule, up to 24 hours a week, which is close to the number of hours required previously. Popp reports no building permits are issued in Whitewater Township without the signature of the ZA, and that only one other township in Grand Traverse County has the same requirement (East Bay). Popp feels that is a lot of responsibility and work but sees the genius of it as well (review of site plans), so he has left all review processes in place. Popp has left it up to the PC and ZBA Chairs to ask for help from the ZA when they feel it necessary. ZA will still perform the pre-Certificate of Occupancy inspection. It was noted that questions will come in when the ZA is not here. Forms with instructions are on the website. Popp feels each board member who has an office here can help the public find forms, etc., thereby saving money.

Popp is concerned with Typical Duties #6, “identify, monitor, and control nonconforming uses.” Benak proposed that the word “identify” could be changed to “recognize.” Discussion followed.

Popp also made a slight change to #4, to “investigate all completed code enforcement complaint forms.” A form has been generated. The existing verbiage says we will “investigate all complaints.” If a complaint is truly a health, safety or welfare issue, Popp believes the township should move toward having the person with the complaint submit basic information: Name, telephone, and contact information.

Popp used Benak’s #23 regarding making sure proper paperwork is turned in for expenses.

Popp deleted #20, attending professional meetings, because ZAs should already be doing this. Popp envisions that communities are moving toward subcontracting out zoning administration, at least to a certain level.

Hubbell feels both Popp’s and Benak’s descriptions are close. Walton inquired whether we want to retain the “Planning/Zoning Administrator” title or revise it to “Zoning Administrator.” Discussion followed.

Motion by Benak, seconded by Hubbell, to adopt Supervisor Popp’s version of the Zoning Administrator Job Description, with changes as discussed. On voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Review and Adopt PC By-Laws

Popp reviewed changes the Planning Commission has made to their bylaws. They have added a “Comment” section to their agenda to give them the ability to discuss the public comment that comes in. They have removed the TC-TALUS Report from the agenda. They added Pledge of Allegiance. They have also added taking the Oath of Office to their bylaws. Popp feels the PC is taking on a lot of responsibility and doing quite well. **Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Lawson, to approve the Whitewater Township Planning Commission Bylaws as proposed. On voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Review County Line Road Maintenance Agreement; Submit Ideas for Road Repair

Bill Mouser obtained a copy of this agreement from the GT County Road Commission. Benak is concerned with Paragraph 5 on Page 4, “New construction or reconstruction on the above sections of the HIGHWAY shall be performed in accordance with separate written construction agreements by the parties hereto.” One of the “above sections” is Baggs Road. Mouser has done a wonderful job getting the 2 counties together to discuss it. Benak feels Baggs Road has become dangerous. Popp felt it was important to bring this to the board because Kalkaska does have 1 mill for road maintenance and maybe some kind of special taxing district needs to be created just for Baggs Road so they can contribute. Discussion followed. Popp asked board members to be thinking about this topic.

Approval of Wages for Deputy Clerk

Walton requests board approval to compensate Terese Hooper for time spent performing the duties of Deputy Clerk. The wage scale amended 03/27/2012 indicates a deputy clerk in their first year is entitled to wages of \$12.00 per hour. **Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Lawson, to approve \$12.00 per hour as the starting wage for newly appointed Deputy Clerk Terese Hooper. Roll call vote: Lawson, yes; Popp, yes; Hubbell, yes; Benak, yes; Walton, yes.**

Set Clean-Up Day

Benak contacted American Waste. They have had us penciled in for May 4 since last year. Other dates available are June 8 and June 15. Other dates in May are already booked. A lot of snowbirds are not home on May 4th. June has a lot of graduation parties. Popp wondered about using Waste Management. Discussion followed. For 2014, the third weekend in May will be requested. **Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Lawson, to accept May 4th as Clean-Up Day. On voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Tabled Items

None

Board Comments/Discussion

Benak advised that newsletter articles need to be in by March 25th. Discussion followed. The newsletter will be mailed in April, no later than the 2nd week.

Announcements

Next meeting date is the March 14th Budget Work Session. The proposed General Fund budget is still \$16,000 in the red. Popp wants to look again at revenue sharing numbers. Brief discussion followed.

The March 26th regular meeting date was discussed. Consensus was reached to cancel the March 26th meeting date.

Public Comment

William Mouser stated that at last year's Clean-Up Day there was a tire removal glitch; the price had to be renegotiated. Also inquired whether it can be confirmed that a document shredder will be present. Last year, the document shredder person did not show up, but many people still dropped off documents.

Adjournment

Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Lawson, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Walton
Whitewater Township Clerk