

**Whitewater Township Board  
Minutes of Special Meeting held March 14, 2013**

**Call to Order**

Supervisor Popp called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. at the Whitewater Township Hall, 5777 Vinton Road, Williamsburg, Michigan.

**Roll Call of Board Members**

Board members present: Benak, Hubbell, Popp, Walton, Lawson (arrived at 6:45 p.m.)

Board members absent: None

Others present: Vaughn Harshfield

**Set/Adjust Meeting Agenda**

No changes.

**Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None

**Public Comment**

Vaughn Harshfield stated it was his understanding that some people who ran for office this time were looking for a reduction in board pay and inquired whether that had happened.

Supervisor Popp responded no, not in salary, and advised that there is a law stating an elected official cannot lower their own wage during their elected term. Popp stated this board can vote to decrease the incoming board's wage in 4 years. Hubbell added that the outgoing board took a look at that, how long it had been since it was done, the cost of living, hours, the desire to attract good people. Hubbell feels what the prior board did was warranted. Popp also added that was one of the reasons why he selected personally to not have any additional bonuses added to his wage, and a certain part of the job should be duty of service.

Harshfield further stated there was something in the literature about all the reductions that were going to take place. In a prior conversation with Lawson, Harshfield was told the previous board was a very high paid board compared to townships of similar size.

Popp stated he still agrees with that statement but says the board will have to wait 3 years and 6 months for the next proposal to lower the wage. Hubbell states 3 of the board members put in a lot of hours and he personally has never gotten on the board for the pay. Popp states many Planning Commission members make more than the Whitewater Township trustees do. Popp never anticipated finding an MCL which says he cannot lower his own wage. Benak pointed out that Attorney General Opinion 7238 says if an elected official wants to reduce a portion of their township salary, they may do so but only after they have paid the appropriate federal and state taxes withheld. Walton stated that applies to a situation where you have received the money and the taxes are due. Benak disagrees.

Walton stated she has refused to take the pension plan, which is 10% of salary, and further states

it is her personal opinion that the pension plan should be abolished because the private sector does not have part-time employees who get 100% employer-funded pension plans. Since being used as a comparable to Whitewater Township, Elk Rapids Township has raised their board salaries. Walton also stated that she will not take a raise during her term of office and, as stated, has already lowered her wage by 10%.

**Budget Work Session**

Another lengthy review and discussion of all township budgets was undertaken. After review, all proposed budgets are balanced with the exception of the General Fund, which has an approximate \$6,400 deficit. Consensus was reached to discuss this deficit further at the Budget Public Hearing on 03/20/2013.

**Additional Agenda Items**

None

**Public Comment**

None

**Announcements**

None

**Adjournment**

**Motion by Popp, seconded by Lawson, to adjourn.** Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Walton  
Whitewater Township Clerk