

**Whitewater Township Board
Minutes of Regular Meeting held May 14, 2013**

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Popp called the meeting to order at 7:06 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: 9

Set/Adjust Meeting Agenda

Under Correspondence, Benak feels Tom Emerson's letter should have been included. Hubbell wishes to have the letter discussed. Letter added as #7 under Correspondence.

Under Receive and File, Walton noted that the Grand Traverse Rural Fire Board minutes of 04/17/2013 were received today. A copy was placed in the public meeting documents folder. Document added as #8 under Receive and File.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

Public Comment

William Mouser, 11644 Topview Drive, commented concerning the Lossie Road Trail Post Purchase agenda item. There was discussion at the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee meeting last night and they have a couple items to address to the board.

Public Hearing

None

Reports/Presentations/Announcements/Comments**County Board of Commissioner's Report**

Commissioner Inman gave the following report:

- The County Board has had preliminary discussions with the manager of the Road Commission. In 2008, the county received \$4 million in a bond issue. The county repaid half; the road commission repaid half. This money was used to resurface about 90% of the primary roads in Grand Traverse County. The Road Commission reported at their last meeting on the condition of those roads today. The Road Commission plans to approach the County BOC for another bond issue to fix more roads. The message from Lansing is that they cannot make a decision on how to fund roads. The previous bond was paid off early. They may go for \$6 million this time.
- The County has completed 2 strategic planning sessions and will have a meeting in June to go over the draft document and prioritize. They will have a full report when the plan is completed.

- At the last BOC meeting, there was a group of people wanting the chimes restored at the old courthouse building. The neighborhood was canvassed and a majority wanted it done. The community put together a fundraiser for this. Cost is approximately \$10,000. The county may be able to contribute some money.
- The county will start their 2014 budget next month and will have a \$1 million hole to fill. Fund balance has been used to fill the holes for the last couple years. The state previously took all revenue sharing away from the counties, but Grand Traverse County is scheduled to get some of this money back in 2014.
- The County has met with the tribe regarding the old (2%) agreement and the possibility of coming up with an impact fee or some kind of payment in lieu of taxes. The tribe seems receptive to putting something together to replace lost tax revenue. A number of followups are needed.

Grand Traverse County Sheriff Department Report

No officer present.

Battalion #3 Fire Captain Report

Captain Arbenowske gave the following report:

- This report is for March and April combined as he was not present last month due to illness.
- There were 5 calls and 8 trainings during the 2-month period. Total of 11 calls for this year, which is down quite a bit from last year at this time.
- Micaiah Foust and Levi Gaskin have graduated and are now certified Firefighter II. They are currently still on probation, though, until they get enough time in operating equipment, etc. Length of the probationary period is within Arbenowske's discretion.
- Graham Purvis will be resigning his membership in the department as his work takes him out of the area most of the time.
- Doug Straughen has finished the prerequisites for officer training.
- Tom Emerson and Captain Arbenowske re-did the box alarms.
- The department is in the process of getting together a small boat to be used for water rescue. A boat and trailer were gifted to the department. They need some work.
- The tribe is letting the department use the old Ashmore residence on Hawley Road as a training house. The department has been cleaning it; animals have been living in the structure. It may be used for a practice burn.

Ambulance Coordinator Report

Coordinator Martin gave the following report:

- There were 10 runs for April, 5 of which were transports to Munson. NorthFlight assisted on 5.
- They are cleaning currently at the Fire Station.
- She recently attended the monthly Med Control meeting. Whitewater Township EMS is compliant with Image Trend as well as with the EMS 3-page patient history and care form.
- Ambulance 3A2 is getting a deep cleaning in the patient compartment.

- She has also been busy obtaining information Popp requested regarding commercial transports.

Supervisor's Report

Supervisor Popp gave the following report:

- He has had a meeting with tribal members about the 2% money. The tribe supplies about \$1 million worth of support to the local area. The County is pushing hard to have the tribe abandon the process by which the tribe decides where the 2% money goes in favor of the tribe paying ad valorem taxes. The tribe is in agreement with this as it will drop their payment from about \$1 million to around \$200,000. (Board discussion followed.)
- Whitewater Township Park is now open. A couple more employees are needed.
- Applications for Zoning Administrator have been received. Popp will place this on the 5/28 agenda to narrow down the field.

Clerk's Report

Walton reported that the May 7th election went well. Voter turnout was low. Eighty-nine people voted in the precinct; 227 absentee ballots were processed. Deputy Clerk Terese Hooper and the Clerk traveled to Lansing on April 24 for Electronic Pollbook training, and 8 local election workers were later trained by them on this device. Elk Rapids Schools will be reimbursing the township for election-related costs. There may be an August election for an NMC millage proposal.

Consent Calendar

Hubbell commented that the letter from Tom Emerson was very nice and came from a well-respected member of the community. Hubbell feels Emerson has good points in the letter regarding the existing fire facility and thinks we have to do something. He has been "hearing through the grapevine" that there are 2 people on the board who want to do something with the tribe and 3 who do not want to do something with the tribe regarding a fire facility. Hubbell wants to get this issue out on the table because it is time that we act. The prior board did discuss this issue with the tribe, but it was put on the back burner until the elections were concluded. Previous discussion with the tribe centered on the tribe erecting a fire facility on tribal property, which would then be leased to the township. Hubbell feels this would be a win-win situation for the township.

Benak stated the proposed facility would be the first one in the nation to be built with this type of intergovernmental cooperation. Hubbell feels it is time we do something about it, get a meeting scheduled with the tribe and act on it. Benak agrees it should be on the agenda to start discussing it. Lengthy discussion followed.

Popp states his sources at the tribe are Chairman Al and Bob K, and encouraged Hubbell to call and talk to both of them. Popp states he has asked for all information that was supplied to the previous board. He stated the tribe's fear is that Bob has 1 year left before another election. What is currently happening is an attempt to get a proposal together that can be discussed at our board level and passed or denied before his term is up. Benak would like a meeting between the tribe and the full board. Popp stated information he requested just came through this week, and

also stated the tribe has a marina project in the works and their engineering staff is too busy to meet at this time.

Benak commented that she would like more information from Popp. Popp states there has been nothing to report. Benak would like to be advised that meetings have occurred and what was discussed. Hubbell feels we should push harder with the tribe, feels it should come from the supervisor that the board is requesting a meeting with them. The fire department needs a new building; the letter (from Emerson) should not be ignored.

Captain Arbenowske requested the opportunity to address the board.

Popp stated he has met with the tribe every month on their schedule. Benak stated the previous board did ask for additional meetings. Hubbell said he is asking Popp to get a meeting together between this board and the tribe's key people. Benak stated a legal agreement had already been started previously, as well as drawings, which could be all done and sitting there.

Popp stated his last proposal to them was that if there was a building that fit our needs, wouldn't we look at leasing it. Benak replied that she doesn't think the tribe will build the facility on the chance that we are going to lease it; they will want all cards on the table, all documents signed, before moving forward.

Arbenowske indicated that the process to build a new fire station started in 2004 or 2005, and provided historical details of the process. He stated Kingsley and several others have built buildings; Whitewater Township is still at stage 1 and really, really needs to do something. He expressed frustration.

Arnell Boyd asked to speak on the topic of the fire department. Popp denied the request, stating this was not even an agenda item.

Popp stated he has already contacted Peninsula Construction and Chris is working on what it will take for us to build one. Popp states we are moving forward. Benak reminded Popp of prior committees who have done a lot of work on this topic. Benak wants this issue put on the table right away. Hubbell just wants to make sure something happens. Brief discussion followed. Popp states an entire meeting should be set aside to address this topic.

Returning to the Consent Calendar, Benak stated she has a question about minutes. She asked the Clerk why draft minutes of other boards or commissions were being included; states she only wants to see approved minutes.

Walton replied that it is fine with her to stop including draft minutes of other boards or commissions in the packets.

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

Receive and File

1. Battalion #3 Fire Captain's March/April 2013 Activity Report

2. Ambulance Coordinator's April 2013 Activity Report
3. Approved Planning Commission minutes of 04/03/2013
4. Draft Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee minutes of 04/08/2013
5. Approved Historical Society minutes of 04/10/2013
6. Approved Planning Commission minutes of 04/17/2013
7. Draft Planning Commission minutes of 05/01/2013
8. **Grand Traverse Rural Fire Board minutes of 04/17/2013 (added as above)**

Correspondence

1. Grand Traverse County Sheriff Department statistics for April 2013
2. NWMCOG eNews 04/22/2013
3. Midge Werner 04/26/2013 e-mail with Planning Summit Invitation
4. Antrim County Operator of Dams letter of 04/29/2013 re: Elk Rapids Hydroelectric Dam
5. Antrim County Operator of Dams letter of 05/06/2013 re: Elk Rapids Hydroelectric Dam
6. Michigan Public Service Commission Notice of Opportunity to Comment re: Cherryland Electric Cooperative's Renewable Energy Plan
7. **Letter (e-mail of 05/07/2013) from Thomas and Vickie Emerson (added as above)**

Minutes

1. Recommend approval of 04/09/2013 and 04/23/2013 regular meeting minutes

Bills for Approval

1. Approval of Alden State Bank vouchers # 36866 - 36967
2. Approval of Alden State Bank Miami Beach vouchers # 1133 and 1134

Budget Amendments (none)

Revenue & Expenditure Report (none)

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

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

JS Interactive Contract for Website Creation

Popp inquired how board members felt about Sundberg creating a new website for the township. Walton stated she feels he will create an excellent website. Benak stated she has known the family a long time, likes his work, feels he will do a good job. Lawson likes his work, feels a new website will provide a lot more information to the public.

Walton noted the contract was drafted for the Clerk's signature and inquired whether this should be changed to the Supervisor's signature. Benak stated both should probably sign. Popp stated the money for this project was allotted in the budget and that what we currently pay is more than

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what JS Interactive charges; also, any re-work of the current site would be from scratch, even with the current provider. Lawson inquired whether we would want JS Interactive to take pictures for the website. Popp stated there are many individuals in the township who have good camera skills and could provide pictures. Discussion followed.

Motion by Benak, seconded by Lawson, to approve signing the contract for website design with JS Interactive, both Clerk and Supervisor to sign on behalf of the township. Roll call vote: Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Walton, yes; Benak, yes; Popp, yes. Walton will contact Sundberg to have the contract drafted for the additional signature.

Lossie Road Trail Post Purchase

Popp has met with the surveyor. There are approximately 97 survey stakes along 9,000 feet of roadway. At the east and west entrances, the surveyor has flagged both sides of the right-of-way. There are some building intrusions. There is concern that the center stakes will be pulled. Steve Donkers has reported that it has already happened. Benak inquired whether trees could be spray-painted to mark locations. Popp reports in one section the centerline is already gone that had been marked. Popp is meeting the surveyor on Friday. If stakes are verified to be missing, sheriff department will be contacted. Options were discussed. Popp suggests the 33 foot offsets should be marked as opposed to the centerline. The trail became non-motorized in 1992. Benak states signs should be put up. Discussion followed. Popp has estimated \$1,375 for additional markers, plus approximately \$900 in labor. Steve Donkers has volunteered some time. Popp stated since this was not budgeted for, the cost should probably come out of the contingency fund. Various marking methods were discussed. Lois MacLean, William Mouser, Kim Halstead, and Tim Shaffer commented. Discussion occurred concerning marking the offsets or the centerline. Consensus reached that the centerline should be marked first, as well as areas of documented trespass. Popp commented that 125 posts would probably accommodate the 97 survey stakes and some for the trespass areas, for a total of \$1,128, including labor. Brief discussion concerning which fund the costs would be taken out of.

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Popp, to mark the centerline of Lossie Trail with T posts, as well as mark the offsets of known areas of trespass, at a cost of \$1,128 for parts and labor. Roll call vote: Walton, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Benak, yes; Popp, yes.

Whitewater Township Park – State of the Park

Popp has spent time at the park getting ready for opening day. He has some safety concerns. Only one 2012 employee did not return this year. Current employees are good as park rangers with limited duties. Last year, the rangers operated chain saws. Popp showed the board a shower head which had to be repaired. The stairway from the upper park to the lower park is a fall hazard. He and William Mouser wrote a grant to replace this stairway, which they did not get. Popp recommends pulling the stairs and seeding the area. The incline is a 3-in-1 slope. People who cannot or do not want to go down the slope can use the driveway. Benak does not agree with taking the stairs out; feels a “careful” sign can be put up. The railroad ties can be replaced. It will be a hardship for the people on the bluff. The railings are sturdy. She feels it can be patched and try to find the funds to replace it properly. Discussion followed. Popp feels it could be blocked off with caution tape. Mouser commented that he would be concerned about liability. Hubbell stated it could be blocked off with caution tape and a sign until it can be fixed

permanently. Campers on sites 13 through 19 would be affected by a closing of the stairs. Popp does not agree with leaving the stairway useable. Discussion regarding whether the risk manager and/or township attorney should be contacted. Benak does not agree with closing the stairs. Park Ranger Edie Deveneau stated if the stairs are blocked off, she needs to contact the camper on Site 19 as they have no means to drive, and asks if she is authorized to do that. Popp stated campers on sites 13 through 19 should be contacted to let them know the stairs will be closed.

Benak inquired about split rail fence at the park that needs replacement. Popp stated signs should be posted indicating campers should stay away from those fences. Discussion held concerning various types of replacement material. Popp feels there is easily \$50,000 worth of repairs that need to be made at the park. Walton feels signs should be placed this week, and in the meantime, prices can be obtained for further discussion of replacement.

Benak stated the Plexiglas in the skylight at the pit toilets needs to be replaced. Also feels additional vents might help the odor problem; lids will not help.

Regarding the shed, Benak does not see that it is falling apart. There is a hole on the back, a broken window, and it needs shelving. Popp feels the shed could be moved and proper bracing could be installed.

Benak inquired about permanent installation of the air conditioner in the range station. Also, the screen is ripped and there is a hole at the air vent where animals are getting in. A handyman is needed to do some of these things.

Returning to safety concerns, Walton inquired what is meant by “guest-supplied electrical hookups.” Popp stated that, according to the electrician who made the repair, last year’s fire at the campground was caused by 30 amps of electricity running through a guest-supplied 18 gauge wire. Only properly rated cords should be allowed. Popp feels hookups should be inspected at check-in. Discussion followed. Lawson stated no extension cords or adapters should be allowed, that campers must be able to plug in directly. Popp noted some breakers are also failing. Upgrades are needed.

Popp stated there are broken hand tools, rakes, axes, shovels. Hubbell suggested purchasing 4 rakes and 4 shovels, to be identified as property of Whitewater Township. Popp stated there are 2 nice trim saws in good shape.

Popp suggested someone be hired to take down dead trees, an 8-inch birch and a 12-inch tamarack.

Benak inquired if bug spraying will be done. Hubbell suggested getting bids from Tony Dean and Hogarth’s.

Regarding rules, Popp inquired of board members if they were aware of the practice of not charging seasonal residents to launch their boats, but permanent residents are charged. Edie was told that anyone who lives on Elk Lake who has a boat is not charged to launch their boat at the park. Discussion followed.

Benak would like an Administrative Policies and Procedures book, as well as a Park procedures book. Discussion followed.

Popp stated there are well issues. There is a variable speed 3 horsepower pump. Very little water use results in the pump running. Discussion followed. The solution would be to have a person knowledgeable about wells take a look at it.

Lights are on in the shower 24/7. Bathhouse benches are rotted.

Popp brought to the board's attention that there is a full policy on hiring, including the publishing of open positions. With the Memorial Day weekend soon approaching, Popp requested permission from the board to review applications already received and make hiring decisions. Discussion followed. No objection voiced.

Regarding a handyman position, Benak will get the phone number of a man she knows of who might be available.

Review Zoning Administrator Applications

This topic will be put on the agenda for the May 28th board meeting.

Tabled Items

None

Board Comments/Discussion

None

Announcements

Next Township Board meeting is May 28th.

Walton suggested she and Popp come up with the wording of the letter to Sites 13 through 19 regarding the stairway closure.

Public Comment

Tim Shaffer, Moore Road, stated that regarding the fire station meeting he would like to hear something next month. He stated at one time Peninsula Construction presented a plan.

Regarding problems at the park, he feels they should be addressed next year, before campers get there. He feels the township should still publish an ad for park ranger in order to get more applications.

William Mouser, Topview Drive, stated the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee has a timetable of July for being done with the master plan. After that, they will look at policies and procedures at the park, seasonal campers, rates, etc., and undertake a comprehensive review of those policies in order to provide input to the board.

Popp feels this review needs to be done by the time the park closes for the season.

Edie Deveneau, Whitewater Township Park Lead Ranger and Host Camper, offered to help with scheduling, ordering, etc., at the park.

Adjournment

Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Popp, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Walton
Whitewater Township Clerk