

**Whitewater Township Board
Minutes of Regular Meeting held April 8, 2014**

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Popp called the meeting to order at 7:02 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, Goss, Hubbell, Lawson, Popp

Board members absent: None

Others present: 19

Set/Adjust Meeting Agenda

Goss indicated the following corrections: Receive and File No. 2, Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee 02/10/2014 minutes did have attachments, but the agenda does not indicate that.

Also, Receive and File No. 4, the Planning Commission 03/05/2014 minutes do not have attachments despite the agenda stating they do.

Goss also stated the Ambulance Coordinator March 2014 Activity Report should be added to Receive and File. It was received after the packet was prepared.

Popp stated he will ask for clarification on a word in the PRAC minutes.

Agenda set as modified.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

Public Comment

Chuck Stewart, Turtle Creek Casino, stated he is the representative for the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. He thanked the Board for working with them over the last couple years on an important issue, i.e., a potential Intergovernmental Agreement which hopefully will lead to an emergency services facility. Buildings have been looked at and many discussions and committee meetings have been held. Pursuant to Tribal Council's request, Mr. Stewart delivered to the township a Notice of Intent as well as the first draft Intergovernmental Agreement and proposed Building Lease.

Larry Inman, 8971 Crockett Road, stated he is a candidate for the 104th District State Representative seat. He has been a county commissioner representing Whitewater Township for 22 years. He has thoroughly enjoyed representing the township and enjoyed working with all board members through the years. He will leave some candidate material at the township hall.

Public Hearing

None

Reports/Presentations/Announcements/Comments

Grand Traverse County Sheriff Department Report – No one is present from the Sheriff's Department.

County Board of Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Inman gave the following report:

- The Michigan Association of Counties' conference this year was heavily focused on the Governor restoring statutory revenue sharing for all local units of government. Road funding was also a big issue. The main thrust they are trying to send to the legislature is that they must find a way to fix roads and bridges without relying on the public having millages against their homes for that purpose. Inman prefers a different funding mechanism. Personal property tax is also an issue that is coming up. It is a deterrent for businesses to come to Michigan. Inman believes we have to find a way to get rid of it, but we have to figure out a replacement funding mechanism.
- The County Commission recently voted to maintain its current compensation level. He listed the benefits which county commissioners receive. The compensation level has been the same since 2001.
- Charter has changed the channel for the televised county meetings. The channel number is listed on the county website.
- The County Commission is monitoring the jail inmate population. The National Institute of Corrections assesses jail needs and assist municipalities with the process, and they are being consulted.

Hubbell stated when they get the road funding figured out, they should take a look at how roads are built in the UP; they have nice roads and get the same kind of weather we do.

Fire Captain Report

Captain Arbenowske gave the following report:

- He stated his report apparently got lost in e-mail, but he did supply the Clerk with a copy of it.
- There were 5 alarms last month, 3 fire and 2 rescue.
- There was a monthly Rural in-service for SCBA training.
- There is a possibility of two new members, both of whom are state certified Firefighter II. They are going through the process.
- Adam and Eric are going through the driving class.
- They did a public education session at Woodland School.

Ambulance Coordinator Report

Popp stated that he was contacted earlier today by Ambulance Coordinator Martin indicating that she would not be present this evening due to a work circumstance.

Consent Calendar

Referencing Page 2 of the PRAC 02/10/2014 minutes, Popp inquired about the word "fist."

Benak thinks it should be "fish."

Goss inquired if Benak knew who prepared Page 1 of the attachments.

Benak does not know; there is no name on it.

Goss noted there is also no name on Page 2.

Goss also stated that the word “antidotal” on Attachment Page 1, last paragraph, should be “anecdotal.”

Referring to the Roye Meis e-mail, No. 5 under Correspondence, Popp stated the 12/26/2013 bid from Roye Meis showed that for 2,080 hours of work the benefited paramedic is paid \$44,859, which works out to a little more than \$19.50 an hour.

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

Receive and File

1. Treasurer’s February 2014 Cash Balance and Bank Accounts Reports
2. Approved 02/10/2014 Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee Minutes
3. Approved 02/12/2014 Historical Society Minutes
4. Approved 03/05/2014 Planning Commission Minutes with Attachments

Correspondence

1. Grand Traverse County Sheriff Department Statistics for March 2014 and 1st Quarter 2014
2. 03/06/2014 Letter from Federal Energy Regulatory Commission re: Extension of Time to File Comments, Recommendations, and Terms and Conditions
3. 03/16/2014 E-mail from Andy Marek re: Traverse Area District Library Strategic Planning
4. 03/31/2014 E-mail from Debra Horner re: Report on the Impact of Tax-Exempt Properties on Michigan Local Governments, from the Michigan Public Policy Survey
5. 04/03/2014 E-mail from Roye Meis re: Correction to 03/11/2014 Meeting Minutes

Minutes

1. Recommend approval of 03/11/2014 and 03/25/2014 regular meeting minutes and 03/04/2014, 03/12/2014, and 03/20/2014 special meeting minutes

Bills for Approval

1. Approval of Alden State Bank vouchers # 37988 through 38078
2. Approval of Alden State Bank Miami Beach vouchers # 1146 through 1147
3. Approval of Alden State Bank WMDLS voucher # 1022

Budget Amendments (none)

Revenue & Expenditure Report (none)

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

Unfinished Business (None)

New Business

Rural Fire

Tim Trudell, Grand Traverse Rural Fire Board Chairman, stated he and Chief Weber are here to discuss some equipment that Whitewater Township owns and which Rural Fire personnel use in their daily operations. The current Intergovernmental Agreement states that any equipment used by Rural is to be titled to Rural. They have talked with Fife Lake Township about their Kubota unit; they have not said no but are looking into how it was funded. There are two pieces of equipment in Whitewater Township, a Kubota and an Expedition. They would ask that the titles be transferred to the Grand Traverse Rural Fire Department.

Chief Weber stated both he and Chairman Trudell are new and they have been looking at this agreement to make sure that Rural is following the agreement and the townships are following the agreement. The reasons for titling all equipment in Rural's name is for insurance purposes, operational control at fire scenes, being able to dispatch equipment where they need it and when they need it, also to enforce policies of how equipment is used, and for safety reasons. Weber stated the township is already being charged for insurance, maintenance, fuel, and all operational costs through the fee it pays to Rural. Because this equipment is not titled in Rural's name, Rural is not actually paying those bills, so the taxpayer is paying twice. Weber also stated the agreement says that if Whitewater decides not to be part of Rural in the future, the equipment is titled back to the township. Equipment is only used temporarily in other areas.

Lengthy discussion followed with various questions from Board members to Weber and Trudell, including the possibility of Rural providing ambulance service.

Benak requested that a copy of the new draft Intergovernmental Agreement be provided which shows the changes.

Chief Weber stated he would ask for that to be done.

Further discussion followed.

Popp invited the public to comment.

Arnell Boyd, 6447 Baggs Road, stated the value of the Expedition far exceeds what the township would gain with Rural paying for insurance, etc., and he does not buy into this.

Steve Donkers, 6754 Skegemog Point Road, former fireman, recounted an incident when a tanker was purchased and turned over to Rural, which was then sold by Rural and the township was given a 20-year old truck. He stated he would be reluctant to turn anything over to them.

Pat Miller, 10199 Elk Lake Trail, president of the Whitewater Fire Department Auxiliary, asked how the insurance was handled with the rescue and the brush rig owned by the DNR.

Weber replied that Rural is paying for that now and they are titled to Rural. Weber reiterated that they are not taking anything from anybody; it all stays here; it is just a housekeeping issue.

Further discussion occurred between Miller and Weber regarding boat equipment, as well as further comments by Weber and Popp on the topics of insurance and liability for injuries while operating equipment.

Trudell stated another reason for titling all equipment to Rural is so that cross-training on equipment can occur. Everybody needs to know how to run every piece of equipment. He stated they do not expect a decision this evening and asked that the Board discuss it and let them know.

Kim Halstead, 7923 Cook Road, stated Whitewater Township is unique in that it has a Fire Special Assessment District. Anything that goes to ambulance cannot be paid for out of the FSAD. A millage for ambulance may be needed.

Further questions from Board members were answered by Chief Weber.

Tabled Items

None

Board Comments/Discussion

Hubbell would like a copy of the Intergovernmental Agreement and stated it would be nice to have it on the next agenda.

Goss will scan it and distribute to all Board members.

Announcements

The next Township Board meeting date is 04/22/2014.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Hubbell, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Goss
Whitewater Township Clerk