

**Whitewater Township Board
Minutes of Regular Meeting held February 10, 2015**

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: Goss, Hubbell, Lawson, Popp

Board Members absent: Benak

Others present: County Commissioner Carol Crawford, Ambulance Coordinator Dawn Martin, and 12 others

Set/Adjust Meeting Agenda

Popp stated he would like to add his memo dated 02/06/2015 to the agenda. Copies were provided for the public.

No other adjustments were made.

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Goss, to set the agenda that way. There was no further discussion. **Ayes: Goss, Hubbell, Lawson, Popp. Opposed: None. Absent: Benak.**
Motion carried.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

Public Comment

Dee Widener, 5417 W. Mobile Trail, Blair Township, stated she would like to address some issues regarding Whitewater Township Park. Their family reunion has been held there for over 20 years. They love the park and are invested in it. The issue is that they are a group and need several campsites each year. They formerly reserved their sites through the call-in procedure. With the new system and the inability to reserve as a group, their family would likely be spread over the campground. She provided details regarding how state campgrounds and other parks accommodate groups. This year, they are looking at 10 sites. She provided estimated revenue figures for their group for 2015 and for the next 20 years. She stated her family has spent over \$15,000 at the campground. They are invested in the campground and they love it. She asked if it is possible to reserve multiple sites at once. Dee also stated most campgrounds allow two tents on a site or one tent and one camper; right now, Whitewater does not. She asked if there is any way to get this resolved before the April 1st deadline, because they are a big group and they love to celebrate their reunion in the campground. She provided a sheet showing projected revenue figures. If it cannot be resolved, they will have to go elsewhere.

Brief discussion followed.

Public Hearing

None

Reports/Presentations/Announcements/Comments

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

County Board of Commissioners Report

Commissioner Crawford gave the following report:

- Regarding Soil Erosion, they are waiting on proposals from outside contractors so they can compare the cost of having their own department or outside contractors. Also, Pete Bruski is retiring.
- They have appealed to MERS to have the final two units having defined benefit retirement plans changed to a defined contribution plan. This is not supposed to be done unless there is 50% funding in those plans, which there is not. However, they have appealed to MERS to allow them to do that. This would help with the tremendous amount of money owed for unfunded pensions.
- They have been talking about bridges and dams. There is some concern about funding for the Cass Road bridge project, whether the funding is there, who is paying for it, exactly how much is the county on the hook for, and they are investigating this.
- They are having someone come in to explain results-based budgeting, which is a different way of budgeting, determining what things they are mandated to provide, and once they have budgeted for those, what do they have left and what do county residents really want them to provide. There are a lot of things that they provide that they are not mandated to provide and they want to know whether those are things that people value or a benefit that they want from county government.
- Their meetings are broadcast live every Wednesday night on Channel 191.

Brief discussion followed.

Fire Captain Report – Captain Arbenowske is not present.

Ambulance Coordinator Report

Ambulance Coordinator Martin gave the following report:

- As of today, they are up to 20 calls, 10 transports, 10 negative transports.
- In January they had 12 calls.
- They did not have training yesterday due to a cancellation. It will be on February 17 at 6 pm with Wendy Dawson.
- Whitewater EMS is asking for approval to be part of the VASA this weekend. This is something they have been doing for over 13 years.
- On February 16, John Depue will be going over HIPAA protocols.
- In response to Popp's request for run numbers, Martin noted the following: In 2011, 163 total calls. In 2012, 186 calls. In 2013, 185 calls. In 2014, 203 calls.
- She and Popp have been meeting each week to discuss scheduling, missed calls. The gaps have been closed for February and March.
- She has been spending quality time with each provider to see where they are at, how they can grow, how they feel about the EMS and about our community.

- She relayed that a call at 4:00 a.m. this morning was a nice reminder from a patient and their family of the professionalism they felt they were being provided. She thanked the Board and the community for the opportunity to be able to serve and hopefully the continuing EMS in the township.

Audience member Rich Hargreaves, Glendenning Trail, asked if we have gotten staffed up to where we need to be.

Popp replied that he has a few words that might help address that. He stated the group, especially Doug Straughen, has been putting in a lot of additional time. They now have computerized scheduling on board. For the first time ever, they have a schedule out more than 45 days where all of the shifts are filled every week 24/7. The goal is to have it scheduled out at least 90 days. They have the capability to trade shifts a little easier now. All trades have to be approved by the ambulance coordinator. They would like to have 18 people. The roster is currently 11. Overtime is being paid. As a comparison to other full-time services, NorthFlight's average employee works 56 hours a week.

Brief discussion followed.

Planning Commission Report

Lawson gave the following report:

- They had a meeting on February 4th. They adopted the new calendar for the year and adopted changes to the by-laws to allow for a temporary zoning administrator.
- They reviewed and had great discussion on the private road ordinance.
- Next meeting is March 4th.

Popp stated the PC chair asked for a flow chart of the process for amending, reviewing zoning ordinances. That will go to the chair and hopefully be distributed to everyone.

Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee Report – Board Representative Benak is not present.

Consent Calendar

Popp stated he would like to look at the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee minutes of November 10, under Old Business #2. A statement there talks about survey stakes that were placed in somebody's driveway and that someone's driveway falls within the 66-foot right-of-way of Lossie Trail. Popp stated that is not his recollection of how the survey came out. Popp stated he could not discern from the minutes who made the statement, but we need to make sure statements like this are correct. The surveyor may have to come back out and verify it. Popp stated he knows it is close, but he thinks there is two or three feet of space between a house or garage and the property line, which makes him wonder why zoning did not pick up on a side yard setback.

Receive and File

1. Supervisor's Report for January 2015 (none)
2. Clerk's Report for January 2015

3. Zoning Administrator's Report for January 2015 (none)
4. Fire Captain's January 2015 Activity Report (none)
5. Ambulance Coordinator's January 2015 Activity Report
6. Approved 11/10/2014 Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee Minutes
7. Approved 12/10/2014 Historical Society Minutes
8. Approved 01/07/2015 Planning Commission Minutes
9. Ambulance Financial Report for December 2014 and January 2015

Correspondence

1. Grand Traverse County Sheriff Department Statistics for January 2015
2. Draft Grand Traverse Rural Fire Department 01/21/2015 Minutes
3. Letter 02/02/2015 from Charter Communications re Channel Lineup Adjustments

Minutes

1. Recommend approval of 01/13/2015 and 01/27/2015 regular meeting minutes

Bills for Approval

1. Approval of Alden State Bank vouchers # 39123 through 39200
2. Approval of Alden State Bank Miami Beach voucher # 1158

Budget Amendments (none)

Revenue & Expenditure Report (none)

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Hubbell, to approve the Consent Calendar. There was no further discussion. **Roll call vote: Benak, absent; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, yes. Motion carried.**

Unfinished Business

Master Plan Review

Popp asked if there were any additional comments to be submitted.

Goss noted that she completed her comments and sent them to the Planning Commission on February 3rd.

Lawson stated Goss's comments were received and he got an email from Mickey Dean stating all the changes were made, except for a couple minor tweaks. Punctuation, spelling, and mislabels were corrected.

Goss noted an updated copy has been received.

Brief discussion followed concerning the correct spelling of Mabel/Mable. Historical Society Chairperson Snider has been asked to verify the spelling.

Hubbell stated he does not have comments; he has talked to Mickey a little bit.

Consensus was reached that the Draft Master Plan should be set for approval on the 02/24/2015 meeting agenda.

Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Popp stated he has reviewed the DNR checklist but not the pages that go along with it. He has nothing new.

Goss stated she did review the plan with the DNR guidelines and the checklist, and submitted all her comments to the PRAC and the Township Board members yesterday.

Lawson stated he looked over part of it, noticed there were some things included that were not necessary and some things missing, but he has not gone through the whole thing yet.

Goss noted every park must have an accessibility evaluation. Also, every park that has been grant-assisted must have an update, including photographs.

Lawson also said some of the statistics might read easier if they were put into chart or graph form. He will prepare written comments.

Hubbell stated he does not have comments at this time.

Brief discussion followed.

Popp will collect comments and get them to PRAC Chairperson Melton.

Review Ambulance Job Descriptions / Review Ordinance 22 Pension Plan

Popp stated the original job descriptions were limited to 24 hours a week, but that is not the way the emergency community operates. Many would prefer to pull longer shifts but fewer of them, in part, because they are sometimes working in 3-4 agencies a month. Popp stated he asked the ambulance coordinator to come to him with a core group of people who are willing to take as many shifts as possible and then relinquish shifts to other members who could substitute in. In the meeting with NorthFlight, it was revealed that, on average, their normal shift is 56 hours. Martin and the core group can fill their shifts with 48 hours, not 24.

Popp stated this means the job descriptions should be amended. This also takes into account Ordinance 22, the pension plan. The way Ordinance 22 is written, we have to cover those people under the benefit package. Early review of Ordinance 22 reveals that it was adopted by the township board seven years after the law authorizing it was repealed. This means that the existing pension plan could be affected by this, so we want to hear from the two people (on the township board) that this affects and find out what their thoughts are. Popp stated we are going to be paying overtime to the ambulance and he does not think benefits are in the immediate future for those folks or for anybody. The benefit side of things is a tightrope that is hard to get a year-to-year cost analysis on as far as rate hikes.

Popp stated he would really like to hear from Hubbell and Benak what their thoughts are on Ordinance 22. Do we repeal it? He stated he is open for some ideas. He noted that Ordinance 22 has been amended several times in the past to exclude certain individuals.

Popp stated he would like to know by the second meeting of this month what Hubbell's thoughts are. Also, the ordinance will be submitted to the attorney to see if it is even valid.

Ambulance Training Policy

This agenda item was initially skipped; see Page 2452.

Clerk's Memo re: Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee

Popp inquired of Goss what she would like to do with her parks and rec memo.

Goss stated that she provided the memo because of a concern she had about the Parks & Recreation committee members feeling that a new member was not going to be a good choice for them and the divisiveness that was being unnecessarily created. The memo asks for "the plug" to not be a topic for the PRAC. Goss stated she wants to see the PRAC be successful with all of their members. Also, pursuant to Benak's assertion on 02/04/2014 that the township board had given the PRAC authority to look into the plug issue, Goss reviewed township board minutes back to 11/09/2010 (before the PRAC was created) looking for this "authority" and prepared a 3-page document summarizing the results of the review.

Goss further noted that what really spurred her memo was Benak's comment that the plug issue could become something that would be the subject of a lawsuit for the township. Goss does not feel something that could be the subject of a lawsuit should be in the hands of an advisory committee. The Board should deal with that type of issue. Also, Goss stated she would like the PRAC to focus on the recreation plan and the long-ignored management plans for Petobego and Battle Creek Natural Area. Goss would like an agreement or consensus by the Township Board that the plug at the former mouth of Battle Creek is not an agenda item for the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee.

Lastly, on her review of the minutes, Goss did not find where the former board gave the PRAC "authority" to look into the plug situation.

Hubbell stated it should be brought back so Benak's side can be heard. She has had some unexpected health issues.

Consensus was reached that it will be put on the agenda for the 02/24/2015 meeting for the last time.

Review Ambulance Job Descriptions (continued)

Popp apologized and noted that he made a procedural error when moving on from the modification of the job descriptions, which needs a motion, and then skipped number 4 because numbers 3 and 5 affect one another.

Popp stated he would like to make a motion for the job descriptions that we amend the number of hours to read up to 56 per week. Some other items may need to be adjusted in the job descriptions. The question is: How does that affect our budget? Popp stated he will need to rewrite another ambulance budget to take these numbers into account and see how many paid on-call shifts we need to sprinkle in. Popp stated he is concerned, if we do not make adjustments, then we are going to have some open shifts. NorthFlight and Central Dispatch now want to know if we have any uncovered shifts.

Motion by Popp to amend all the ambulance job descriptions (MFR, EMT-B, EMT-A, and Pager Duty) to allow up to 56 hours of work per week.

Discussion followed regarding 56 versus 48 hours, 56 not being a multiple of 12, 36-hour shifts, flexibility of the industry, and maximum straight hour shifts.

Ambulance employee Alan McCullen stated that NorthFlight schedules 56. Somebody may work 60, 72, or 48 but are scheduled for 56. No one caps hours because you need that flexibility. Allied likes to keep it 48, but there are times where it is 60 straight. Kalkaska likes to only do 36. He has personally done 46, but they don't schedule two 24's back to back. Are they attempting to stay at 48? Yes. For the most part are we going to be at 48? Yes. It's all about flexibility within the agency to keep it a 24/7 service. Also, what was acceptable a year and a half, two years ago is not the case now, because the economy has improved. People who would be in this job in hard times have migrated to other jobs. In Kalkaska, they just had a 2% cost of living. They try to reassess the area averages every three years. They are probably going to get another 4% because they are falling behind other agencies. There are certain economic pressures out there.

Discussion followed.

Hubbell seconded the motion.

On further discussion, Goss stated she thinks 56 is too far and the overtime costs are going to be budget-busting.

Popp stated this is not what we are shooting for as the norm. Our goal will be to have the hours done. But until we can get additional responders, we need to be able to cover our shifts.

Goss stated that she knows Popp cannot predict how long it is going to be, but there was only one response to several recent ambulance ads. A couple years?

Ambulance employee Lesa Kreps stated she is one of the core group that has taken on responsibility of doing 48 hours, which she enjoys. If she has to do 56 hours, she is perfectly fine with that. She stated she wants to be here for the community. Don't make it so difficult that she cannot do her job. She stated if she has to do some overtime, she is okay with it because that is what she wants to do.

In response to a question of how many hours a week she works at her other job, Kreps stated she has quit that job and this is her full-time job. She just fills in (at her previous job) whenever possible, but it is few and far between.

Hubbell asked what the accommodations are for the 24-hour stays; are we legal doing it.

Popp stated if the building were built new, we would have to have fire sprinklers in the sleeping area, but we are going to have to address that in the very near future. Popp has a meeting potentially Friday with the tribe and will find out where their building is at. Also, some of the ambulance members have made some sketches of how they think some rearrangement can work inside the building.

Hubbell stated this is a moving thing, as he sees it, for Whitewater for the next year with the tribe to see if we can afford this. We might be doing something totally different a year from now, but we have to try to do it with what we have right now the best way we can.

Goss re-read the motion as follows: **Motion by Popp, seconded by Hubbell, to amend all ambulance job descriptions to allow up to 56 hours of work per week.** There was no further discussion. **Roll call vote: Goss, no; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, yes; Benak, absent. Motion carried.**

Ambulance Training Policy

Popp stated this is really for discussion purposes and that what we are looking to do is provide some value-packed incentives for these job descriptions, tie them around training. The training course is generally offered for free to the employee. Individual townships may sponsor these trainings. What we are trying to develop is how do we pay these people to go get this training. It is something we have done in the past and had absolutely no commitment coming back to us. We have paid for EMT training and continuing training and only gotten 4 or 5 shifts from personnel over a year.

Popp stated he has outlined some options in his memo and would like to have comments on this for the next board meeting as well.

Brief discussion followed.

New Business

AD Assessing Request for Representation

Popp stated a land division issue came up multiple times in 2010, 2011, and a potential land division in 2012, in about June. Some banks got involved. It has been a long drawn-out lawsuit between the two individuals, some bankruptcies, etc. Now the township and its assessor have gotten drug into it. The attorneys realize that our part is minimal, if any, so the people bringing the suit have provided a document that says right now things are going okay and both parties are acting responsibly, so we may not need to sue you after all. Dawn Kuhns, in her official capacity as assessor, is being drug into it. She is asking that the township defend her using the attorney of our choice, if the suit ever does come to hearing.

Popp stated he originally understood Dawn to be an independent contractor, but by statute, Dawn is required to be an employee of the township. Legally speaking, Dawn is our employee and she also represents one of our subcontractors. Her being an employee, we would protect her just as we would protect any other employee or committee member.

Hubbell agreed.

Dawn Kuhns stated she has no comments.

Wording of an appropriate motion was discussed.

Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Popp, to provide legal representation to Dawn Kuhns in her official capacity as Whitewater Township Assessor in the matter of Chase v Hill, et al. There was no further discussion. **Roll call vote: Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, yes; Benak, absent; Goss, yes. Motion carried.**

Review and Discuss Zoning Administrator Resumés

There was discussion amongst the Board regarding the resumés submitted in response to the zoning administrator posting. Each board member expressed their interview preferences.

Consensus was reached to interview Vey, Olson, Miller, and Schuster.

Special meeting(s) for the purpose of interviews will be scheduled sometime after the next regular board meeting, which is 02/24/2015.

Recommended Increases in Ambulance Service Rates

Goss provided a memo dated 02/04/2015. She stated the recommended increases will bring the rates current with the allowed reimbursements. The treatment/no transport rate does not apply to Whitewater but should be adopted.

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Goss, to increase the Whitewater Township Ambulance Service BLS Base Rate to \$435.00 per transport, to increase the Treatment/No Transport rate to \$405 per transport, and to increase the mileage rate to \$12.50 per loaded mile, effective February 10, 2015. There was no further discussion. **Roll call vote: Lawson, yes; Popp, yes; Benak, absent; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes. Motion carried.**

Whitewater Township Park 2015 Dates and Rates

Discussion occurred concerning the state park rate per night. County Commissioner Carol Crawford stated it was \$28 last year. Goss stated it has been six years since the township board looked at rates for the park. Goss recommends \$28 per night for peak season, \$23 per night for off peak season. The seasonal rate is based on the off-peak rate. At \$23 per night, the seasonal rate would be \$1541. There was discussion of leaving the camper boat launch fee (\$5) and reservation fee (\$8) at current levels.

Motion by Popp, seconded by Lawson, to establish the following rates for Whitewater Township Park for the 2015 season: Peak season camping \$28 per night, off-peak season

camping \$23 per night, seasonal camping \$1541 per 67-night increment, camper boat launch fee \$5, and reservation fee \$8. There was no further discussion. **Roll call vote: Popp, yes; Benak, absent; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes.**

The Board then undertook the topic of dates for the 2015 season.

Motion by Popp, seconded by Goss, to establish May 8 through September 30, 2015 as the 2015 camping season at Whitewater Township Park, further to designate the weekend of May 8 through May 10 as a free camping weekend. There was no further discussion. **Ayes: Goss, Hubbell, Lawson, Popp. Nays: None. Absent: Benak. Motion carried.**

Tabled Items

Review Administrative Policy Section 5 (tabled 10/14/2014)

No discussion.

Board Comments/Discussion

Popp stated his only comment is please read his notes from the 02/06 meeting; they will be on the second agenda of the month.

There were no other Board comments or discussion.

Announcements

Upcoming Township Board meetings are the budget work session on 02/11/2015 at 6 p.m. and the budget work session on 02/16/2015 at 6 p.m.

Brief discussion followed concerning the suggestion of using the 03/24/2015 regular meeting date for the budget public hearing. Popp stated we will have a good idea of where we are at on the 16th and may decide then.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Hubbell, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Goss
Whitewater Township Clerk