

Whitewater Township Board
Minutes of Regular Meeting and Budget Public Hearing held March 24, 2015

Call to Order

Clerk Goss called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. at the Whitewater Township Hall, 5777 Vinton Road, Williamsburg, Michigan.

Goss noted that Popp is absent due to a grave family emergency which arose today.

Roll Call of Board Members

Board Members present: Benak, Goss, Hubbell, Lawson

Board Members absent: Popp

Others present: Jim Galligan, Vaughn Harshfield, Lois MacLean

Goss noted that a chairperson must be selected from among the board members.

Lawson nominated Goss to act as chairperson. Hubbell seconded the nomination. Roll call vote: Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, absent.

Set/Adjust Meeting Agenda

Benak stated she would like to add Clean-Up Day dates and vendor information to the agenda. She has provided a memo.

No objection to the addition. Added as New Business #13.

Goss noted that Popp has asked that zoning administrator interview dates be scheduled.

No objection to the addition. Added as New Business #14.

There were no other changes or adjustments.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

Public Comment

Lois MacLean, 5919 Linderleaf, relayed her wage history since the beginning of employment with the township, noting dates of increases as well as missed increases. She stated she has lost out on wages of approximately \$120 per year for two years. She stated she at first figured it was retribution for running for the clerk position. She further objects to the fact that her biweekly pension contribution is only submitted quarterly to Voya and inquired whether this could be set up as a direct deposit.

Correspondence

None

Public Hearing - 2015/2016 Fire Special Assessment District Budget

Goss opened the public hearing on the 2015/2016 Fire Special Assessment District budget at 7:17 p.m. and reminded those attending to sign the attendance sheet. Statements and discussion ensued as follows:

- The public hearing notice for this budget public hearing was published in the Traverse City Record-Eagle on March 11, 2015, and in the Elk Rapids News on March 12, 2015.
- The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed Fire Special Assessment District budget is 1 mill.
- Referring to the Fire Fund budget worksheet, total proposed revenues are \$192,902. Total proposed expenditures are \$187,300.
- The Clerk's office has not received any written comments on the proposed Fire Special Assessment District budget. There were no written comments received by other Board members.
- The public was invited to comment on the Fire Special Assessment District budget.

Vaughn Harshfield inquired whether the levy would be kept at 1 mill.

Goss replied yes, there is no change.

Hearing no other public comment on the Fire Special Assessment District budget, Goss closed the public hearing at 7:19 p.m.

Public Hearing – 2015/2016 Ambulance Millage Budget

Goss opened the public hearing on the 2015/2016 ambulance millage budget at 7:20 p.m. and reminded those attending to sign the attendance sheet. Statements and discussion ensued as follows:

- The public hearing notice for this budget public hearing was published in the Traverse City Record-Eagle on March 11, 2015, and in the Elk Rapids News on March 12, 2015.
- The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed ambulance millage budget is 1.5 mills.
- Referring to the Ambulance Fund budget worksheet, proposed revenues are \$347,500 (1.5 mills generating \$282,000, fees charged of \$28,000, other revenue of \$500, transfers from the General Fund of \$37,000). Proposed expenditures are \$346,336.
- The Clerk's office has not received any written comments on the proposed ambulance millage budget. There were no written comments received by other board members.
- The public was invited to comment on the ambulance millage budget.

Hearing no public comment on the ambulance millage budget, Goss closed the public hearing at 7:22 p.m.

Brief comment followed concerning the fact that the \$346,000 figure represents the projected cost of running the ambulance service for one year.

Public Hearing - 2015/2016 General Fund Budget and all other Township Budgets

Goss opened the public hearing on the 2015/2016 General Fund budget and all other township budgets at 7:23 p.m. and reminded those attending to sign the attendance sheet. Statements and discussion ensued as follows:

- The public hearing notice for this budget public hearing was published in the Traverse City Record-Eagle on March 11, 2015, and in the Elk Rapids News on March 12, 2015.
- The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed General Fund budget and all other township budgets (except ambulance and fire) is 1 mill, as reduced by the Headlee Amendment, MCL 211.34d.

Goss noted that she forgot to mention earlier that the ambulance millage levy is also subject to the Headlee Amendment.

- The actual rate levied for the General Fund and all other township budgets is 0.6021 mills.
- Referring to the General Fund budget worksheet, total proposed revenues are \$450,636. Total expenditures are \$623,856. The capital expenditure line item includes an allocation of \$100,000 for a proposed storage building. Transfers to other funds include \$37,000 to the Ambulance Fund, \$10,000 to the Road Fund, \$18,000 to the Recreation Fund, \$10,000 to the Ambulance Replacement Fund, and \$100,000 to the Road Repair/Replacement Fund.
- The public was invited to comment on the General Fund budget.

Lois MacLean, 5919 Linderleaf, stated it looks to her like we are spending down the General Fund from previous years. She listed previous year balances. She asked if anyone knew the amount the township should do in order to be in good financial standing for good ratings. She stated since she has not heard what the funds are for which are to be set aside in the Road Repair/Replacement Fund, as a member of the public, she stated she is against it. She does not want to see the township's fund balance go that low for \$100,000 worth of road repairs that she doesn't know anything about, and what roads are they going to be, and what is \$100,000 going to do for any of the roads that really need help. She stated the rest of it looks good and thanked the Board for all of their hard work.

There was no further public comment on the General Fund budget.

Goss stated the next budget is the Road Fund utilized for brining and street lights. Total proposed revenues are \$16,405. Total expenditures are \$18,000. Goss invited public comment on the Road Fund budget.

There was no public comment on the Road Fund budget.

Next is the Road Repair/Replacement Fund budget, a fund which was set up two budget cycles ago, at Supervisor Popp's recommendation, to put aside money for roads to cost-share with the County Road Commission. Total revenues are proposed to be \$100,005. Total expenditures are

proposed to be \$100,000. Goss noted that Popp did list some road names at the budget work session for this fund.

Benak stated she has trouble doing this without having a concrete idea of what the money will be spent on. She stated Popp was going to bring something back, but he didn't.

Goss invited public comment on the Road Repair/Replacement Fund budget.

Hubbell stated he is sensitive to what MacLean and Benak have shared. His only comment is that the road commission is not going to get any money and we need to start something somewhere along the line.

Benak stated her gravel road is traveled heavily, especially with the Meijer construction, and the county recently spent a whole day graveling and grading the Whitewater Township portion of her road. They did nothing in Acme Township and it is horrible. Acme has stated they want no maintenance done on that seasonal road in their township.

Hubbell stated the concern is putting money into a fund like this and not knowing where it is going to go, but it cannot be spent on anything but roads.

Benak replied that she wanted the list because she does not want the bait and switch; she does not want this \$100,000 paying for Baggs Road alone.

Brief discussion followed regarding tree work along roads.

Benak stated the history of who started this fund is wrong; it was not Popp. It was proposed by her.

There were no further comments on the Road Repair/Replacement Fund.

Turning to the Park Fund, Goss noted proposed revenues in the Park Fund are \$103,300. Proposed expenditures are \$129,016. Under Capital Expenditures, \$5,000 is proposed for road work in the campground, \$10,000 for the stairway, and \$5,000 for site prep for a future ranger station. Under Professional Services, \$1,500 has been allocated for an architect/engineer for the stairway. Under Facility Repairs/Maintenance, part of the \$15,000 is proposed to be used for shower repair.

Goss noted that the final budget document will show the breakdowns in each fund for capital expenditures and other specific allocations.

Goss invited public comment on the Park Fund.

Hubbell stated he hopes we get the stairway put in.

There was no public comment on the Park Fund budget.

Turning to the Recreation Fund, Goss noted that total revenues proposed are \$18,200. Total expenditures proposed are \$18,349. In the \$6,000 Capital Expenditure line item, \$3,000 has been set aside for a new roof on the bathroom/mechanical building at Hi Pray Park; \$3,000 is unallocated.

Brief discussion followed concerning possible repair of lights at Hi Pray.

Goss invited public comment on the Recreation Fund.

Vaughn Harshfield noted the tree used for the tree lighting ceremony is in very bad shape and inquired if there is any money to replace it or get a tree doctor.

Brief discussion followed concerning the condition of the tree and possible replacement.

Harshfield asked that some money be allocated to replace the tree.

There was no further public comment on the Recreation Fund.

Turning to the Ambulance Replacement Fund, Goss noted that proposed revenues are \$10,045. Proposed expenditures are zero. Goss invited public comment on the Ambulance Replacement Fund.

There was no public comment on the Ambulance Replacement Fund.

Turning to the Public Improvement Fund, Goss noted that this fund is not utilized. There are zero proposed revenues and zero proposed expenditures. Goss invited public comment on the Public Improvement Fund.

There was no public comment on the Public Improvement Fund.

Turning to the Fire Capital Improvement Fund, Goss stated it is proposed that \$6,700 be transferred into this fund from the Fire Fund. Combined with interest earned of \$45, total revenues are \$6,745. Total proposed expenditures are zero. Goss invited public comment on the Fire Capital Improvement Fund.

Vaughn Harshfield inquired why we need this fund if we are in Rural Fire.

Goss replied that it is her understanding it is for capital projects.

Harshfield stated Rural Fire needs to provide equipment for us. Previously, we were buying equipment that Rural Fire should have been providing and we did not have money to do the projects that we now can do, and he thinks that is a good thing. He stated he just does not understand what this fund is for if Rural Fire is supposed to do everything for us.

Benak replied that it was for construction of a building. Money that came out of there was for an architect, designing the building, all kinds of things. Running the water line came out of there.

Benak stated at this point she does not think it has a purpose. During budget meetings, we decided to leave it there so we did not tie the hands of future boards. If they ever decided to get out of Rural Fire, they would have some money sitting there.

Hubbell stated it could also be used for repair of the current building.

Goss noted that her office did not receive any written comments for this public hearing on the General Fund budget and all other township budgets.

Benak noted that she received written comments from MacLean concerning the wage, which were read in public comment.

Goss asked that Benak supply a copy of those written comments for attachment to the budget public hearing minutes.

Goss inquired if there was any other public comment on the General Fund budget or any other township budgets.

Hearing no further public comment on any budget, Goss closed the public hearing on the General Fund and all other township budgets at 7:54 p.m.

Goss then invited discussion and comments on the budgets from Board members, and noted that adoption of the budgets is done later with the general appropriations resolution.

Hubbell suggested the wage issue be addressed at this point.

Referring to the Salary/Wage Schedule, in the 2015/2016 column, Goss stated that Popp has recommended that wages for Board of Review be increased to \$50 per meeting or \$10 per hour. Referring to Page 3 of the General Fund budget document, \$300 would need to be added to the Board of Review salary line item, which will increase the amount allocated for salaries from \$650 to \$950. This increase is needed because their current wage of \$8 per hour is below minimum wage.

Benak inquired if the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee member wage should also be raised; they are at \$30 a meeting.

Goss noted that PRAC does not get paid hourly.

Brief discussion followed.

Consensus was reached to amend the budget to allocate \$950 to the Board of Review salary line item.

Turning to the Deputy Treasurer wage, Goss noted that she agrees that MacLean missed a raise in 2013. It was not in retribution for anything; no one got raises because they were not on Goss's radar four months after taking office. Goss apologized for missing the raise in 2013. Rough

calculations show approximately \$140 is due for 2013, as well as approximately the same amount for 2014. Popp has recommended adding \$300 to the Deputy Treasurer wage line item to cover these missed wages. Additionally, MacLean should receive an increase in April 2015 to \$13.11 per hour. For the new fiscal year, Deputy Treasurer wages are calculated to be \$5,244. With the addition of \$300 for the missed wages, Goss recommends that \$5,544 be allocated to the Deputy Treasurer wage line item.

Consensus was reached to amend the budget to allocate \$5,544 to the Deputy Treasurer wages line item.

Goss noted that park employees also did not get raises in 2013. Goss stated she has calculated that a 3% raise for two park employees for the 2013 missed raise would amount to \$175 total. They also missed their seasonal wage increase for the first half of the 2014 season. To cover both years, Goss recommends that an additional \$500 be added to the Park Fund wages line item, taking it from \$35,000 to \$35,500.

Consensus was reached to amend the budget to allocate \$35,500 to the Park Fund wages line item.

Goss inquired if there were other comments or discussion on the budgets.

Hubbell stated it makes him feel better that we are doing the right thing.

There were no further comments on the budget.

Goss noted that we will now return to the regular agenda at 8:15 p.m.

Reports/Presentations

None

Unfinished Business

Review PRAC Recreation Plan

Goss noted there is nothing to review at this time.

Review Ordinance 22 Pension Plan

Goss noted that, with Popp absent, we should probably skip this item. She stated one of Popp's biggest concerns is the lack of funds in the ambulance budget to include ambulance employees in the pension plan. It was not contemplated that the pension plan would be offered to ambulance employees; yet, some of them are working more than 35 hours a week. Goss invited the Board to comment.

Brief discussion followed.

Consensus was reached to table this topic to the April 28th meeting.

Review Graded Wage Scale TB Approved 07/22/2014

Goss began the discussion by stating that the question is how this document is supposed to function. Are these automatic raises? Do job performance evaluations have to be done each year before employees get the increases?

Lengthy Board discussion took place, including the following questions/comments:

- Lawson: Does it apply to part-time or full-time status?
- Benak: It is not based on evaluation. If you were doing that, you would not need a graded wage scale. You would award a percentage based on evaluation. The chart was meant to be a graded wage scale. These other questions have never come up.
- Goss: A footnote explanation of how the document functions should be part of the document.
- Benak: History has been that on your anniversary date you go to the next level. It is number of years of service. It has never been based off performance review. Who is going to do the evaluations?
- Comments were made regarding the way the evaluation was done for the zoning administrator.
- Suggestion of use of a personnel committee to do performance reviews, as opposed to one person.
- When do raises take place? On anniversary date? Beginning of fiscal year?
- Does seniority (years of service) follow the employee if they move to a new job classification? Do they get the starting wage in the new classification, or do they get the wage which correlates with their years of service? Utilizing the starting wage could result in a reduction in wage.
- Does an employee cease to get raises once they reach the highest year of service shown on the document?
- If a standard 3% is to be calculated each year, why is this scale needed?
- It will be difficult to craft the document to cover all scenarios.
- Is it a hard and fast rule that any new employee starts out at the first year rate shown on the document, even though they may have a number of years of experience in the same position elsewhere?
- It was suggested that basic guidelines be developed of the starting pay for each position, award 3% increases annually in April, and do away with the scale. Also, build leeway into the starting wage to allow for candidates with a higher level of education or experience.
- When do new people who start in November get their first raise?
- Flexibility should be built into the document.

Goss volunteered to gather more information regarding how graded wage scales work in other municipalities/organizations and bring it back to the Board.

New Business

Extension of Zoning Administrator Duties to Supervisor

Goss noted that the previous assignment of Acting Zoning Administrator duties to Popp expired on 03/10/2015. In the interim, he has continued to perform AZA functions, with the exception of signing documents. Popp's memo suggested that the remainder of the interviews should be set.

Brief discussion followed.

Consensus was reached to conduct three zoning administrator interviews on April 7, one hour each, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Goss will inform Popp immediately so the candidates can be lined up.

Regarding Popp's request for a 90-day extension of authority to perform the Acting Zoning Administrator duties, Goss stated that she questioned Popp as to why he needs 90 days; why not 60. Goss reported that Popp stated he regrets that the former zoning administrator was not shepherded more through the process of getting to know the zoning ordinance and the processes here, and would like to do that with any new zoning administrator.

Discussion followed.

Consensus was reached to modify the agenda for the April 7 meeting to allow for two 1-hour zoning administrator interviews and to schedule another meeting on April 8 at 6:00 p.m. for a third zoning administrator interview as well as for discussion of candidates and selection of the zoning administrator.

There was brief discussion of the zoning administrator wage.

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Benak, to extend Acting Zoning Administrator Ron Popp's duties from 03/10/2015 through 05/12/2015. Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, absent; Benak, yes. Motion carried.

Review One-Tent Rule in Campground

Goss noted that she had a recent phone conversation and e-mail exchange with the Department of Environmental Quality regarding this issue. The DEQ stated they do not really enforce the one-tent rule; they enforce the number of people on a campsite. The issue was also submitted to Attorney Fahey. Goss also provided information from township resident Fran Butler concerning how the Traverse City State Park handles this issue. With the online reservation system set to activate on April 6th, Goss inquired of the Board what they would like to do for the 2015 season regarding extra tents on campsites.

Discussion followed.

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Hubbell, to allow extra tents on campsites for sleeping of family members. Roll call vote: Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, absent; Benak, yes; Goss, yes.

Approval of Budgeted Transfers – Fiscal Year 2014/2015

Goss prepared a memo detailing the recommended transfers. Each recommendation was briefly discussed.

Motion by Benak, seconded by Hubbell, to transfer \$12,000 from the General Fund to the Road Fund, as budgeted. Roll call vote: Lawson, yes; Popp, absent; Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Benak, to transfer \$4,100 from the General Fund to the Road Repair/Replacement Fund, as budgeted. Roll call vote: Popp, absent; Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Hubbell, to transfer \$5,000 from the General Fund to the Recreation Fund, as budgeted. Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, absent. Motion carried.

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Benak, to transfer \$66,000 from the General Fund to the Ambulance Fund, as budgeted. Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, absent; Benak, yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Benak, seconded by Hubbell, to transfer \$10,000 from the General Fund to the Ambulance Replacement Fund, as budgeted. Roll call vote: Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, absent; Benak, yes; Goss, yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Hubbell, to transfer \$21,378 from the Fire Fund to the Fire Capital Improvement Fund, as budgeted. It was noted that the recommended wording of this motion in the memo is incorrect; it should have said “from the Fire Fund to the Fire Capital Improvement Fund.” Goss apologized for the confusion. **Roll call vote: Lawson, yes; Popp, absent; Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes. Motion carried.**

Resolution #15-05, Regular Board Meetings 2015/2016 Fiscal Year

Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Goss, to adopt Resolution #15-05. Brief discussion followed. The presidential primary has been moved from February to the second Tuesday in March. The third and fifth Tuesdays have been chosen as the March 2016 meeting dates. **Roll call vote: Popp, absent; Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes. Motion carried.**

A true and complete copy of said resolution is attached to the minutes.

Resolution #15-06, Salary for Supervisor

Motion by Goss, seconded by Lawson, to adopt Resolution #15-06. Roll call vote: Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, absent. Motion carried.

A true and complete copy of said resolution is attached to the minutes.

Resolution #15-07, Salary for Clerk

Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Benak, to adopt Resolution #15-07. Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, absent; Benak, yes. Motion carried.

A true and complete copy of said resolution is attached to the minutes.

Resolution #15-08, Salary for Treasurer

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Goss, to adopt Resolution #15-08. Roll call vote: Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, absent; Benak, yes; Goss, yes. Motion carried.

A true and complete copy of said resolution is attached to the minutes.

Resolution #15-09, Salary for Trustees

Motion by Benak, seconded by Goss, to adopt Resolution #15-09. Roll call vote: Lawson, yes; Popp, absent; Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes. Motion carried.

A true and complete copy of said resolution is attached to the minutes.

Resolution #15-10, General Appropriations Act

Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Lawson, to adopt Resolution #15-10. Roll call vote: Popp, absent; Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes. Motion carried.

A true and complete copy of said resolution is attached to the minutes.

Resolution #15-11, Ambulance On Call Salary

Goss explained that this resolution will replace Resolution #11-04 Ambulance Personnel Wages and Resolution #14-11 Ambulance Pager Duty Salary. Ambulance employees working on-call shifts will still be paid \$40 per 12-hour shift to be within 10 minutes of the station, but when actually responding to a call, they will be paid hourly according to their level of licensure on the graded wage scale for the period of time they participate in the response. Discussion followed.

Motion by Benak, seconded by Lawson, to adopt Resolution #15-11. Roll call vote: Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, absent. Motion carried.

A true and complete copy of said resolution is attached to the minutes.

Salary/Wage Schedule 2015/2016

Goss noted changes were made for Board of Review, Fire Personnel (now paid by Rural Fire), and Ambulance Personnel. Discussion followed. **Motion by Lawson, seconded by Hubbell, to adopt the Salary Wage Schedule for 2015/2016. Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, absent; Benak, yes. Motion carried.**

Graded Wage Scale TB Approved 07/22/2014

Goss noted that, for clarity's sake, the graded wage scale should be re-adopted in the budget process, as it has been in the past two years. However, Benak noted that, per earlier discussion, we will be discussing revision of at least the bottom portion of the document.

Consensus was reached that further discussion will take place with regard to this document and it is not necessary to adopt it now.

Clean-Up Day Dates and Vendor Information (added to agenda)

Benak prepared a memo with vendor information and provided explanation of the differences between vendors. Because the township did not hold a clean-up day last year, she believes we

will have a big year this year. American Waste has no weekends available in May; all weekends in June are available. Waste Management does not do Saturday scheduling. Erickson Salvage takes all scrap, provides personnel, and takes items with Freon.

Discussion followed.

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Hubbell, to use American Waste, TJ Tires, and Erickson Salvage for Clean-Up Day 2015, and to set the date for Saturday, June 13, 2015. On voice vote, all those present voted in favor, none opposed, Popp absent. Motion carried.

Benak noted it will take place from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at Mill Creek. She will call American Waste, TJ Tires, and Erickson's, as well as Mill Creek School.

Zoning Administrator Interview Dates (added to agenda)

Dates were set earlier in the meeting.

Tabled Items

None

Board Comments/Discussion

Hubbell stated we should make sure to allow lots of time on April 14th for the MMR presentation.

Announcements

The next regular meeting of the Township Board is 04/14/2015 at 7:00 pm. Special meetings are scheduled for 04/07/2015 and 04/08/2015.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Goss, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Goss
Whitewater Township Clerk