

**Whitewater Township Board
Minutes of Regular Meeting held April 14, 2015**

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Popp called the meeting to order at 7:03 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: County Commissioner Carol Crawford, Ambulance Coordinator Dawn Martin, and 9 others

Set/Adjust Meeting Agenda

Popp noted that if the Road Commissioner shows up, we may need to make an adjustment.

Goss noted that Melissa Melton (PRAC) sent an e-mail asking to present some costs on diamond dust for the ballfield. She is planning to attend this evening.

Melton's request will be added as New Business #4.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

Public Comment

None

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

Carol Crawford gave the following report:

- The Road Commission has offered to pay the county's portion of reconstructing the Cass Road bridge. However, the county would be responsible for any overruns on the bridge. The County would also be responsible if the \$3.1 million of funding does not come through. They are still negotiating with the Road Commission.
- They had a joint study session yesterday with the City Commission and heard preliminary details about the redevelopment of the Park Place site. The redevelopment includes tearing down the dome and replacing it with an updated and more useful conference center. It also includes 700 additional parking spaces and affordable housing. There will be no new hotel rooms. Both commissions agreed that the project should go to Brownfield Redevelopment for application. It qualifies due to contamination, historical relevance, blight, and better use of the area.

- The county commission has asked the road commission to investigate possibly re-routing U.S. 31 to become a bypass, which would increase the possibility of a Hartman-Hammond bridge.
- The BOC decided to move forward with the results-based budgeting process. They had a presentation about the process. There will be focus groups and studies to find out what constituents want. Several people will attend a Government Finance Officers Association conference in Philadelphia to learn about going through the process. It is lengthy; it will not be for the 2016 budget. It is priority and not departmental budgeting.
- Tomorrow night they will be discussing the county administrator contract. The contract is up 12/31/2015 and a decision must be made by July 1st.

Brief question/answer followed.

Grand Traverse County Road Commission Report

Marc McKellar gave the following report:

- The Road Commission was asked by the county board to come up with a plan to help offset the expense of a major project. A proposal was presented and turned down. The funds came out of their transportation dollars (MTF), not from the millage. The plan was presented at the recent Resource Management and Administration meeting. There were questions regarding the Cass Road dam and the bridge. The BOC chairperson launched a personal attack on the Road Commission and bore false witness that they did something in private on a policy matter and deliberated, and stated she had evidence to prove it. It has been in the news. An internal investigation was done. They have done nothing of the sort. At the 3/26 meeting, a question was asked about the lawfulness of a sign in the window. At the 4/2 special meeting, McKellar followed up on the discussion about the no-firearms- allowed-in-building sign and asked the manager to speak to the concerned commissioner to find out if taking the sign down would address his concerns. They were sideswiped at the RMA meeting. After the smear campaign, the evidence cannot be produced. They are clearing the record. They will continue to move forward with the project. Chairwoman Maxbauer called for dissolution of the County Road Commission. That is not how they conduct business. They are going to take the high road and move forward with the project.

Lengthy question/answer followed.

Fire Captain Report – No one is present from the Fire Department.

Ambulance Coordinator Report

Dawn Martin gave the following report:

- As of today, they are up to 50 runs. There were 12 runs in March. As of 03/31/2014, they had 19 runs. They have done 29 transports to this date.
- The construction has not been an issue.
- The EMS conference is April 24-26 at the Grand Traverse Resort. Several providers would like to attend to get licensure credits.
- Driver training is scheduled May 25-26 at the fire training center.
- Dawn was not able to attend the Med Control meeting this morning due to working duty crew. Whitewater is compliant with the field notes.

- Regarding the Williamsburg Road fatalities, one was due to high speed, not road condition. One was due to ice/snow conditions.

Planning Commission Report

Lloyd Lawson gave the following report:

- The Planning Commission had a meeting on April 1. The main discussion was about sending the announcement out to stakeholders about the Master Plan and getting it published. The PC officers will write the letter. It will be available on the website; hard copies would be provided upon payment of the cost.
- There was discussion of open houses. The PC would like to have two open houses before the public hearing. The plans are to have the public hearing in August.
- The PC started reviewing ordinances. They discussed a process to use for that review. They would like each PC member to have a workbook copy of the ordinance.

Goss requested a copy of the letter that was sent out, as well as the list of recipients.

Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee Report

Melissa Melton gave the following report:

- Melissa introduced herself as the chairperson of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee.
- They have been working on the plan (Recreation Plan), looking at the structure of the plan, trying to make it a bit more cohesive with the Master Plan. They are engaged in a lot of drafting right now.
- She commended the Board for providing funding for parks and recreation and asked if unused funds could be held over from year to year in the parks budget as some projects may require more than one year's funding to accomplish.

Consent Calendar

Receive and File

1. Supervisor's Report for March 2015 (none)
2. Clerk's Report for March 2015 (none)
3. Zoning Administrator's Report for March 2015 (none)
4. Fire Captain's March 2015 Activity Report (none)
5. Ambulance Coordinator's March 2015 Activity Report
6. Approved 03/11/2015 Historical Society Minutes

Correspondence

1. Grand Traverse County Sheriff Department Statistics for March 2015 and 1st Quarter 2015 Totals
2. Grand Traverse Rural Fire Department Draft Minutes of 03/18/2015
3. Letter 03/02/2014 Charter Communications re: Channel Lineup
4. Letter 03/20/2015 Dawn Martin re: Road Construction
5. Letter 03/27/2015 Charter Communications re: New Channel
6. Letter 03/31/2015 Terry Witt re: Message to Mabel Road Residents
7. Letter 04/03/2015 Terry Witt re: Community Cleanup
8. Letter 04/07/2015 Networks Northwest re: Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Minutes

1. Recommend approval of 02/23/2015 special meeting minutes, 02/24/2015 regular meeting minutes, 03/02/2015 special meeting minutes, 03/10/2015 regular meeting minutes, and 03/24/2015 regular meeting/budget public hearing minutes

Bills for Approval

1. Approval of Alden State Bank vouchers # 39280 through 39396
2. Approval of First Community Bank Miami Beach vouchers # 1160 and 1162
3. Approval of First Community Bank WMDLS voucher #1025

Budget Amendments (none)

Revenue & Expenditure Report (none)

Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Lawson, to approve the Consent Calendar as presented.

There was no further discussion. **Roll call vote: Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, yes. Motion carried.**

Unfinished Business

Review PRAC Recreation Plan

There is no new draft to review.

Review Ordinance 22 Pension Plan

Tabled until 04/28/2015.

Review Graded Wage Scale

Popp stated we are attempting to generate an application for the document; how should it be used moving forward.

Goss noted that there was approximately 25 minutes of discussion concerning this topic at the 03/24/2015 meeting. Questions were generated. Goss is to get some information about how other municipalities use a similar type document but is not likely to have time to do it before May 5 (election).

Consensus was reached to table this agenda item until after May 5.

New Business

Mobile Medical Response

Matt Holtcamp and Steve Myers are present on behalf of Mobile Medical Response. Holtcamp provided information packets to the Board and the public and gave a brief overview as follows:

- MMR has been in business since 1994. They were formed when two competing ambulance services in Saginaw decided to merge to form one service.
- They are a private nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization operating in 14 counties.
- They survey 100% of the patients they transport, receiving 7-11% of them back, with a 92% satisfaction rate (done by an independent company).

- Antrim County is the newest addition to their service area. They have a lot of rural systems.
- Holtcamp has been a paramedic for 20 years, all of which were spent in rural systems.
- MMR is a full service ambulance system, operating BLS, ALS, and specialty care ambulances. In Antrim County, they are dispatched directly from Antrim County 911. Once dispatched, MMR's medical communications center in Saginaw takes over.
- MMR provided Antrim County Dispatch with technology that allows them to see the location of the MMR ambulances as they travel the roads. This capability would be offered to Grand Traverse County as well.
- MMR has 600+ employees and 100 ambulances. They are CAAS and ACE accredited. They are the first ambulance service in Michigan to hold both accreditations.
- They do around 84,000 transports per year, responding to 100,000 calls per year.
- They cover 7500 square miles and drive 3.5 million miles a year.
- Annual payroll is \$18,000,000.
- Last year, they did \$5 million worth of charity/uncompensated care.
- MMR is a community-based company. They go to football/basketball/volleyball games. They participate in parades, pass out candy at Halloween, volunteer in soup kitchens.
- In 20 years, MMR has never lost a contract with any of their service areas.
- They have a sustainable business model. They are a debt free, financially solid company. After researching Whitewater Township, they believe they can develop a solid, sustainable model here.
- They offer additional services such as CPR courses for the community at no cost, free medical first response courses for local fire services, continuing education courses for local providers.
- MMR is a turnkey company. They have full-time billers who work just for them. They do their own in-house vehicle maintenance with 7 master mechanics. They have a robust maintenance program, replacing water pumps, alternators, serpentine belts, tires, brake pads long before they are due for replacement.
- They employ EMTs and paramedics, offering full-time opportunities for many. It is extremely important that they hire from local communities because of their familiarization with the geography, the community, events. They do not bring EMTs and paramedics from other areas.
- Upon looking at the size of the Whitewater Township community, the potential volume, reimbursement and expenses, MMR's proposal is to offer a 24/7/365 ALS ambulance, parked here, stationed here, for \$295,000 annually. For that amount, MMR would provide a fully trained paramedic and EMT 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Adding Whitewater Township would allow MMR to develop a system whereby the Elk Rapids ambulance would back up the Whitewater ambulance when the Whitewater ambulance is on a call. Resources can be shared. MMR ambulances in Grayling would also be available to serve as backup for the Whitewater ambulance.

In response to questions, Holtcamp provided the following additional information:

- MMR leases local ambulances for \$1. At end of service life, MMR buys a new chassis, updates the box, bolts it to the new chassis, and puts it back into service, all at MMR's cost. The township maintains ownership of the new ambulance.

- The only cost to Whitewater Township is the \$295,000. Everything else is paid for by MMR.
- MMR does provide service to other tribal-owned facilities.
- In counties where there is sufficient volume, there is no subsidy from the taxpayers.
- MMR hires both EMTs and paramedics for full-time. They have programs for EMTs who aspire to become paramedics. Myers provided details of the paramedic education program.
- Regarding MMR's pay scale, Holtcamp stated they are competitive. They just completed a market assessment of their packages, with favorable results. They offer health care, dental, prescription, vision, retirement, education allowances, free uniforms, short-term disability, free life insurance up to a certain amount, up to 3% 401(k) match. Holtcamp will provide the entire package via e-mail.
- Holtcamp provided details regarding the operation of the Elk Rapids ambulance service prior to MMR taking over.
- MMR is now backing up North Flight in Acme Township.
- MMR leased both of the Elk Rapids ambulances, reconditioned them, added infrastructure, had them re-inspected and relicensed, and put them back in the Elk Rapids station.
- MMR's goal would be to lease both Whitewater Township ambulances.
- Milton Township does not have an ambulance stationed within Milton Township due to lack of space at the station. They have never had an ambulance stationed in the township.
- Regarding response times, the contract with Elk Rapids/Milton states MMR will respond within 12 minutes and 59 seconds or less 80% of the time. From 12/07/2014 through a few days ago, they are meeting the response time 88% of the time. Time is measured from the time they are dispatched.
- Response time to the very southeast corner of Milton Township is more than 12 minutes and 59 seconds. There may be areas of Whitewater Township with a longer response time.
- MMR's proposal is to have an ambulance stationed in Whitewater Township 24/7/365. The employees would need a bedroom and a shower.
- The contract would state one ambulance staffed. Holtcamp stated he would erase township lines. MMR would send the ambulance closest to the patient, regardless of which township it is in.
- MMR deals with dozens of dispatch authorities. One of their employees facilitates cooperation between dispatch centers and sets up the radio infrastructure for multiple disciplines.
- Required infrastructure for personnel would include sleeping quarters, a shower room, a bed for each staff member. A kitchen facility is nice to have, if possible. MMR provides outdoor grills.
- MMR pays rent and utilities for any facility they use.
- Contracts can be re-negotiated. MMR cannot raise the subsidy without board approval or justifying an increase. On the flip side, as the system is developed and the economy grows, there is a possibility the subsidies will decrease.
- MMR would like to do a 5-year contract.
- If Whitewater Township had a large increase in billable volume during the term of the contract, it is possible the contract could be revisited to reduce the subsidy.

- The contract is performance based because it is measurable. If MMR is not meeting the expectations or doing what they said they would do, the unit of government can get out of the contract. In 20 years, they have never had it happen.
- MMR cannot prove they have decreased response times in their communities. The response times in Elk Rapids are the same as they had. There are only so many roads you can drive, so fast you can drive, so many ways to get there. The times are not going to change, but they can be sustained and, importantly, they can provide a second ambulance in the system.

Popp invited comment from anyone who would like to speak on Holtcamp's behalf.

Holtcamp stated that he appreciates some of the guys showing up but said he did not invite them; they are here on their own accord.

Hubbell stated he invited the Elk Rapids supervisor.

Bill White, Elk Rapids Township Supervisor, stated he did not come prepared to say anything but would answer questions. They have been happy with MMR since they have started and it has been nice not having the responsibility. They have the bill and that is what it is going to cost. Milton Township is getting covered as they were before. The ambulances came out of the Elk Rapids station, one full-time staffed, sometimes two people on call, sometimes one. They first talked about Elk Rapids, Milton, and Torch Lake. Torch Lake wanted to run their own ambulance. With Whitewater looking at MMR, he sees it as running how it was originally pictured, with three townships covering for each other.

Popp invited questions or comments from the public.

Dawn Martin stated being the Ambulance Coordinator has been a privilege and a joy and a learning journey. It is no secret the struggles they have had covering shifts. Hats off to her team; they sometimes go unnoticed for the work they do. She said she is on board for MMR and would suggest for them to come in. She does think it is best for our community. Matt and Steve are very qualified in what they do, and she thanked them for coming down to give the information.

Myers commented on his career in EMS, the uncertain future of healthcare, ambulance patients who do not need emergency room care, and the fact that MMR is more of a rural EMS company than an urban company.

Tim Shaffer, 5309 Moore Road, stated his concern is multi-car accidents on M-72 and bringing an ambulance from Elk Rapids. If Acme still has North Flight, will there be a mutual aid response.

Holtcamp replied that there will be mutual aid with surrounding areas.

Shaffer inquired, if MMR took over service, how soon would local personnel reach the paramedic level.

Holtcamp stated the process takes two years. Since Whitewater currently has no paramedics and they cannot wait two years, they would have to hire some paramedics. The EMTs hired would be encouraged to pursue paramedic education.

Dorance Amos, Elk Rapids Township Trustee and Whitewater Township landowner, stated Elk Rapids went from BLS to ALS and they experienced a tremendous budget issue. It kept climbing and they could not get control of it. They were told collections would be 70%, but they ended up to be about 50%. Milton Township ran a millage and passed it. The numbers really grew. Elk Rapids looked at that and long-term sustainability with a 5-year contract, quality of care, and still wanted some response from Holtcamp as to where they would be. They have a community group who meets every month to discuss the interaction of the townships. Milton and Elk Rapids each have their own contract. Amos stated he was very concerned about the liability. They also had a lot of non-transport runs, which increases liability tremendously. MMR are the professionals. Amos stated, as a board, they did not feel they were qualified to run that type of care system. He stated MMR gets along with their fire department extremely well. They are cross training, getting more people involved, so they have a better group. He stated it is a really good situation for their townships. They all have an understanding of where their place is. They feel, as a board, they have a very good group professionally. They have to look out for taxpayer expenses as well as be able to service the people. The community demanded ALS. Some of the other ones, it did not appear as if they would be able to be long term and sustainable. Elk Rapids Township went for the long-term plan that would be sustainable both financially and with good quality care. Amos stated the Board is asking the right questions and he commended them for looking into it. As a taxpayer, he appreciates it, and as a service he would appreciate it as well.

Goss stated bids are needed, as well as a written proposal. An RFP should be put out. She spoke with the Elk Rapids Clerk today and requested permission to use their RFP language, which would be adapted to Whitewater Township.

Discussion followed.

Holtcamp asked that the RFP be directed to him.

Popp thanked everyone for attending.

Township Computer Replacement

Popp provided a memo detailing the need to eliminate the Windows XP “server” computer in the Treasurer’s office, improve security, and better utilize space. This would be a capital expenditure, which the Board must approve. Three good companies have been interviewed, but they want recurring revenue.

Discussion followed.

Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Lawson, to approve up to \$5,000 for computers. There was no further discussion. **Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, yes; Benak, yes. Motion carried.**

County Road Improvement Agreement for Brining

Popp noted that last year three brine applications were recommended; only two were applied because of the season. He would recommend planning for three applications again this year.

Goss noted that last year's cost per application was \$5,885.50. This year's proposal is a \$47.40 increase per application.

Motion by Hubbell, seconded by Popp, to approve the brine agreement for 2015, three applications, if needed. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote: Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, yes; Benak, yes; Goss, yes. Motion carried.

Hi Pray Park Capital Expense

Popp noted he would like the Board to give him and the Clerk approval to spend up to X number of dollars for diamond dust, paint, roof issues, and electrical issues.

PRAC Chair Melton expressed that they would like to do a community project with the Little League association jointly with Parks and Recreation and any community volunteers that would like to help. The purpose is to freshen up Hi Pray Park and get the baseball diamond to a point where it can be utilized for the Little League machine pitch league. The lower field parking area is very small, there are no bathroom facilities, and there is no playground equipment. The Little League association is in favor of doing the project. Pruning, cleanup, and diamond dust is needed. Melton has received quotations for diamond dust. A 2" layer for both fields would require approximately 34 yards. Kasson Sand and Gravel's quote, including delivery, is \$920. Michigan Ag had similar pricing but does charge for delivery. Melton would like to get enough for both fields. Access to tractors, landscape rake, box grader has been promised. They would like to do this soon.

Another expense would be for bases. Cost for three bases is \$150.

Hubbell reminded that volunteers would have to sign a waiver.

Melton clarified that the re-roofing project at Hi Pray would be for the pavilion/bathroom. The Board has already approved that project. A gentleman from Little League has offered to quote the project.

Melton has been advised that painting of the dugouts will be done by the Thursday night ballplayers and offered that they would be willing to coordinate with that crew.

Popp noted the roof bids came in at around \$2500-2600, plus \$1000 for diamond dust, \$200 for bases, \$1000 for electrical conduit/lift truck.

Motion by Popp, seconded by Lawson, to spend up to \$5,000 on general park repairs at Hi Pray Park to include ball diamond surface, new bases, bathhouse roof, landscape improvements, and electrical work.

Discussion followed regarding overgrowth of bushes.

Popp recommended another \$1000 be added to the total for contingencies.

Hubbell stated he will buy the bases.

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

Tabled Items

None

Board Comments/Discussion

Goss stated the park reservation system went live on April 6 and did over \$33,000 in business that day, with just a handful of duplicate booking issues. Reservations have continued to come in. Four of last year's rangers would like to return. The park opens May 8 with the free camping weekend. Goss also stated that, since April 1, she has been keeping track of the hours she spends on park and plans to bring to the next meeting a proposal to get paid for some of that time. She stated she enjoys doing it and would like to be involved with the park.

Popp noted that two years ago we would have paid somebody three weeks' labor to do the reservations. The first rollout (of the reservation system) was a little rocky but now is much smoother.

Announcements

The next Township Board meeting is on April 28.

Benak noted that the township newsletter did go out on Monday.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

Motion by Lawson, seconded by Popp, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Goss
Whitewater Township Clerk