

**Whitewater Township Board  
Minutes of Regular Meeting held July 13, 2021**

**Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

Supervisor Popp called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.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 in person: Treasurer Benak, Clerk Goss, Popp, Trustee Vollmuth

Board Members present via Zoom: Popp

Board Members absent: Trustee Hubbell

Others present in person: Fire Chief Brandon Flynn, County Commissioner Darryl Nelson, and 6 others

Others present via Zoom: None

**Set/Adjust Meeting Agenda**

There were no adjustments.

**Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None

**Public Comment (4:50)**

None

**Public Hearing (6:09)**

**Proposed Industrial Development District**

The public hearing was opened at 9:04 a.m.

Legal notice of the public hearing was published in the Traverse City Record-Eagle on 07/01/2021.

One written comment was received from John Haggard on 06/29/2021.

Public comment was received as follows:

Kraig Johnson, 8300 M-72 East, said they are trying to understand how it impacts them, the difference between industrial/industrial, industrial/commercial, and COPUD/industrial, and how it impacts the taxable value on the property.

In response to questions from Mr. Johnson, Popp provided the following information:

- There will be no impact to their property taxes.
- Their classification will not change.
- Industrial district is a 50% property tax exemption vehicle that looks at new investment in a particular district. It will not affect anything currently in place.
- Explained zoning/assessing classification of properties.

Mr. Johnson explained that the second parcel owned by their corporation is used for testing of equipment. He thinks the pond on this parcel has always been there and is used for water runoff; it is not part of their fire protection water.

Chet Grant acknowledged he received a notice of the hearing.

Kim Mangus said she does not have any immediate objections but raised concern that the map put out bears little resemblance to the industrial district on the zoning map, has included properties not in the industrial district, one property in the industrial district was not included, may not have noticed everyone required to be noticed and map is very misleading when combined with text.

With no further comments in person or on Zoom, the public hearing was closed at 9:22 a.m.

### **Reports/Presentations/Announcements/Comments (23:55)**

#### **County Commissioner Report**

Darryl Nelson gave the following report:

- He is currently residing in Whitewater Township, camping at Whitewater Township Park and enjoying it very much.
- He reported that Cherry Capital Airport is in the final stages of becoming an airport authority.
- They are working on new software to assist in tracking permitting. It is called EnerGov; their version is called EPIC-GT. They will let the township know when it is available. There will be a cost to participate.
- Regarding the road brining situation, he read aloud a letter from Brad Kluczynski, manager of the road commission, explaining reasons for the lack of brine.

General discussion followed concerning the brine situation.

#### **Fire Department Report (40:08)**

Brandon Flynn gave the following report:

- There was an uptick in calls for June, likely due to some of the COVID restrictions being lifted and life slowly getting back to normal.
- One of the highlights of the month was the VFIS ATV/UTV training. All of the firefighters spent an entire Saturday, 8 hours, taking the class, including himself, and are now all certified ATV and utility vehicle operators.
- Regarding vehicles that have been ordered, he was given a 10/31 date for the chief's vehicle. He has not heard back about the wildfire truck cab and chassis.

#### **Planning Commission Report (41:56)**

The township board representative to the planning commission position is currently vacant.

Kim Mangus provided the following report:

- The PC completed their text for the marijuana amendments and set three public hearings for 8/4, medical marijuana, adult use marijuana, and an amendment to Article 25 concerning major home occupations.

- They discussed moving to an EPIC system in the zoning ordinance and would like to see this completed for the entire township prior to the end of the year, with a goal to readopt in map form what the township has now.
- They are prepared to set a 4th public hearing to adopt a map for the industrial district.
- The PC would like to move forward with master plan review and are awaiting the township board's decision on the selection of an advisor.
- Mangus asked the township board to remove the confidential restriction from the attorney's input on the marijuana amendments.

Brief discussion followed regarding the confidential material.

### **Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee Report (48:48)**

Cheryl Goss reported that the committee's regular meeting last night did not take place due to lack of quorum.

### **Consent Calendar (50:19)**

#### Receive and File

1. Supervisor's Report for June 2021
2. Clerk/Parks & Recreation Administrator's Report for June/July 2021
3. Zoning Administrator's Report for June 2021 (not available)
4. Mobile Medical Response June 2021 Activity Reports
5. Fire Department June 2021 Report
6. Historical Society Report for June 2021
7. Treasurer Reports 05/31/2021
8. Approved 05/05/2021 Planning Commission Minutes
9. Approved 05/10/2021 Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee Minutes

#### Correspondence

1. Grand Traverse County Sheriff Department Statistics for June 2021 and 2nd Quarter Totals
2. State of Michigan - Public Notice Land Lease
3. Gosling Czubak - American Rescue Plan Funding
4. Bob Campbell - Skegemog Point Road
5. Mark Taylor - Skegemog Point Road
6. Cathy Gee - Broomhead Road
7. Sue McCraven - Skegemog Point Road

#### Minutes

1. Recommend approval of 06/08/2021 regular meeting minutes

#### Bills for Approval

1. Approval of Alden State Bank vouchers # 46702 through 46836

#### Budget Amendments (none)

#### Revenue & Expenditure Report (none)

**Motion by Benak to approve Consent Calendar items as presented; second by Goss. Roll call vote: Vollmuth, no; Benak, yes; Popp, no; Hubbell, absent; Goss, yes. Motion failed.**

Goss indicated this month's Consent Calendar will be put on the agenda for next month.

**Unfinished Business (51:39)**

**Planning Commission Professional Services**

**Motion by Goss to approve Grobbel Environmental & Planning Associates proposal for Master Plan Update dated 06/21/2021 in the amount of \$9,950; second by Vollmuth.**

**Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Vollmuth, yes; Hubbell, absent; Popp, yes; Benak, yes. Motion carried.**

**New Business (52:55)**

**Mobile Medical Response 2021 Service Proposal**

Steve Myers is present from Mobile Medical Response.

**Motion by Popp to contact Kalkaska EMS and East Bay Ambulance to determine availability of ambulance services to Whitewater Township, if any; second by Vollmuth.**

Myers explained the reasoning for a combined Acme Township and Whitewater Township proposal. The current Whitewater Township model on its own is not financially sustainable. They see sustainability with combining the two townships as a unit, as they have done with Elk Rapids and Milton Township. He said he has a meeting after this with Acme Township to talk to them about it. He encouraged the township to look at other opportunities if they feel the need to, and noted that EMS is an expensive business today and in rural, small volume systems it is very difficult. They have tried to keep the subsidy the same and project it out for five years. He noted the goal of the letter was to see the interest in combining with Acme and offered to answer questions.

He advised the board there was an accident with the township's ambulance yesterday, no one was hurt, and it was immediately backfilled. He will advise the board when he finds out where that truck is going to be. He does not know if it is totaled or not but will keep the board apprised.

Popp said Doug White reached out yesterday morning and indicates he wants to get together with this board to discuss items of this nature.

Lengthy discussion followed on the topics of:

- Wages, benefits, staffing.
- Hastings Street base in Traverse City is going to become an education center and will be an accredited EMT and paramedic training center. Scholarships will be available.
- Whitewater truck responding to Acme. Myers will follow up with Grand Traverse.
- 24-hour truck between the two townships, 12 hours during the day in Acme, 12 hours at night in Whitewater, or conversely.

- Cost difference between Acme and Whitewater. Acme has a little more than double the call volume of Whitewater.
- The Metro position would be out of it if the two townships shared service.
- Acme pays less because they have more billable volume than Whitewater.
- MMR pays \$600 per month rent at the Emergency Services Building.
- The sharing of hours can be modified at the townships' pleasure.
- Myers provided his business card to Vollmuth for questions.
- MMR's efforts to solve staffing issues will be to create their own education center and do their own education, stating there has never been an aggressive push to provide essentially free EMT and paramedic education, and they are full steam ahead with that. Their goal is to start classes September 27th.
- Paramedic and EMT wages were discussed. On a 48-hour matrix, brand new paramedics are making mid to upper 40s. With the overtime available, he believes the annual wage is \$60-70,000, plus Blue Cross, 401k, optical, dental, etc. He noted the challenge is that the younger work force does not really care about benefits.
- The challenge is that about 70% of the service they provide is reimbursed through some type of government mechanism, i.e., Medicare, Medicaid, and said those payments are not going up. They make less from Medicaid today than they did in 2002 in reimbursement. It is a transport-only benefit with Medicare.
- Leasing or sale of the ambulance would have to be worked out between the two.
- The question of what MMR's cost would be to maintain the Whitewater service at the current level was raised.
- Seeking proposals from other ambulance services was discussed.
- Myers clarified that the deployment of ambulances has not changed since MMR took over. Also, MMR did not buy NorthFlight. Munson Healthcare is now a minority owner of Mobile Medical Response. MMR has not changed the deployment model that NorthFlight had. They want more resources on, but staffing is the Achilles heel.
- East Bay Ambulance has made a proposal to Acme.

Benak would like to see MMR also added to the motion and get an apples-for-apples, if it is the 24/7 or if it is the 12.

Discussion followed.

Popp said right now we are asking whether or not these companies and anyone else, MMR included, can provide Whitewater Township with ALS services; that is the intent of this motion, and noted if there are independent questions or ancillary questions that come up, he is going to ask them and he is going to answer them.

The motion was repeated: **Motion to contact Kalkaska EMS and East Bay Ambulance to determine availability of ambulance services to Whitewater Township, if any.**

**Roll call vote: Benak, yes; Hubbell, absent; Goss, no; Vollmuth, yes; Popp, yes. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Goss to engage in discussions with Mobile Medical Response and the Acme Township Board regarding a contract for a combined ambulance service with Whitewater Township; second by Benak.**

Brief discussion followed.

**Roll call vote: Popp, yes; Goss, yes; Vollmuth, yes; Benak, yes; Hubbell, absent. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Popp to engage with discussions with all ambulance services willing to supply Whitewater Township; second by Benak.**

**Roll call vote: Hubbell, absent; Popp, yes; Benak, yes; Goss, no; Vollmuth, yes. Motion carried.**

**Resolution #21-12 Establishing Whitewater Township Industrial Development District No. 1 (1:59:55)**

**Motion by Goss to adopt Resolution #21-12; second by Popp.**

Benak expressed reluctance to vote on this today, citing numerous questions concerning the zoning ordinance map and the zoning on the AIS additional parcel.

After lengthy discussion, Popp suggested we include just those parcels by ID number that we totally agree on are in the N district, the 4 or 5 parcels that front Moore Road. Popp produced another map with no labels.

The parcel numbers, as recited by Popp, are: 28-13-004-012-32 (5814 Moore Road), 28-13-004-023-20 (5780 Moore Road), 28-13-004-012-11 (5770 Moore Road), and 28-13-004-015-25 (vacant parcel on Moore Road).

A copy of the resolution was modified to list the parcel numbers given and delete the reference to the zoning map.

**Goss rescinded her prior motion.**

**Popp rescinded his second.**

**Motion by Goss to adopt Resolution #21-12 as amended listing four parcels in the N-Industrial District; second by Popp.**

Benak said she agrees with the changes made and will support it but does not agree with the personal attacks she received from Popp for doing a job that Popp was supposed to do.

Discussion followed between Benak and Popp.

Popp apologized to Benak.

Vollmuth and Popp commented briefly on fixing the maps.

**Roll call vote: Benak, yes; Vollmuth, yes; Popp, yes; Hubbell, absent; Goss, yes. Motion carried.**

Goss noted that Grand Traverse Plastics has to put in an application for this tax abatement, which also has to go to public hearing.

**2021/2022 Budgeted Transfers (2:46:12)**

**Motion by Goss to transfer \$5,000 from the General Fund to the Road Fund; second by Popp.**

**Roll call vote: Popp, yes; Benak, yes; Vollmuth, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, absent. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Popp to transfer \$100,000 from the General Fund to the Road Repair/Replacement Fund; second by Benak.**

**Roll call vote: Vollmuth, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, absent; Benak, yes; Popp, yes. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Goss to transfer \$20,000 from the General Fund to the Recreation Fund; second by Popp.**

**Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Hubbell, absent; Benak, yes; Popp, yes; Vollmuth, yes. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Benak to transfer \$50,000 from the General Fund to the Public Improvement Fund; second by Goss.**

**Roll call vote: Hubbell, absent; Popp, yes; Goss, yes; Vollmuth, yes; Benak, yes. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Vollmuth to transfer \$45,000 from the General Fund to the Fire Capital Improvement Fund; second by Benak.**

**Roll call vote: Vollmuth, yes; Benak, yes; Popp, yes; Hubbell, absent; Goss, yes. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Vollmuth to transfer \$100,000 from the Fire Fund to the Fire Capital Improvement Fund; second by Popp.**

**Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Vollmuth, yes; Hubbell, absent; Popp, yes; Benak, yes. Motion carried.**

**Park Ranger Wage Approval (2:50:18)**

**Motion by Goss to approve 2021 wages for Alexandria DeVol, Tyler Smith, and Lauren DeVol, as recommended by the clerk; second by Benak.**

Vollmuth said she hopes we are just as concerned about giving ambulance people more money as we did for park rangers.

**Roll call vote: Benak, yes; Hubbell, absent; Goss, yes; Vollmuth, yes; Popp, yes. Motion carried.**

**Brine Agreement Update (2:52:26)**

There was further discussion of the brine problem.

Popp recommended we stay with what we have got; they are supposed to be here this week.

There was board consensus to follow that procedure.

Darryl Nelson said this issue is on his radar now and he will work with the road commission to find out if there is some reimbursement available if the township goes its own way, and would like to be included in any meetings where this is discussed.

**Tabled Items (3:11:04)**

None

**Board Comments/Discussion (11:07)**

None

**Announcements (3:11:11)**

Next regular meeting is August 10, 2021, at 9:00 a.m.

**Public Comment (3:11:20)**

Heidi Vollmuth suggested sending an e-mail to the planning commission and let them fix the maps.

**Adjournment (3:11:59)**

**Motion by Benak to adjourn; second by Popp. Roll call vote: Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, absent; Popp, yes; Vollmuth, yes. Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Goss  
Whitewater Township Clerk