

MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
4338 BEELINE ROAD
ALLEGAN COUNTY
HOLLAND, MI 49423

ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 11, 2015

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

Supervisor Terry Hofmeyer called the annual Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

ARTICLE II. INVOCATION & PLEDGE

Trustee Ed Stielstra opened the meeting with prayer and led the pledge of allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Hofmeyer, Wendy Van Huis, Ed Stielstra, Gary Dewey, Linda Howell

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Kathy Stoike – Administrative Assistant/Finance
Charlene Fields – Deputy Treasurer
Jennifer French – Deputy Clerk
Paul Smith – Township Assessor
Aaron Hobbs – Township Deputy
Cal Haverdink – Fire Chief
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary
Dan Williams – Township Maintenance

ARTICLE III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF 2014 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES –

Clerk Wendy Van Huis reviewed the minutes of the March 12, 2014 annual meeting. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Udelis Kuipers and seconded by Randy Becksvort to approve the minutes as submitted. Supervisor Terry Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE IV. OPENING COMMENTS – SUPERVISOR TERRY HOFMEYER

Supervisor Hofmeyer recognized the Township employees including Al Meshkin who leads the team for their fine service and stated we are looking forward to another good year. In May we will vote on a proposal to raise funds for road improvements. Other townships and municipalities have voted to improve roads and road commissions from Ottawa and Allegan Counties are encouraging a yes vote. There are additional shared revenues of about \$45,000 per year that would increase our General Fund. The long awaited 145th Avenue work has been bid there are a number of environmental conditions we have to consider for that repair. The millage rate for General Fund remains unchanged, the same as it has for many years. The Holland Sentinel ran an article on Project Clarity, approximately a \$12 million project. Many of the surrounding townships and cities contribute to the water shed basin including Laketown Township so we will be asked to contribute to the project. The City of Holland and Holland Township have committed to the project and \$9 million has been raised from private sources so the remaining \$3 million will come from municipalities and grants. The Board of Review met and normally we have 40-45 appeals and this year we had only 7. Township Assessor Paul Smith said the Equalization Director said other areas had only 4 so we had the most. One final thing, the

Holland Historic Trust recently had a millage proposal in City of Holland, Park and Holland Township which required a yes vote in all three municipalities. The City of Holland and Park Township passed the millage but Holland Township rejected it so it was not approved. Laketown and Fillmore Townships were not invited to participate in the proposal but had we been, Terry hoped it would have received a favorable vote noting the importance of historical preservation not only in the City of Holland but in our own townships. Supervisor Hofmeyer thanked the residents for attending the meeting.

ARTICLE V. REPORT OF OFFICERS

- a. State Representative – Cindy Gamrat – No report
- b. State Senator – Tonya Schuitmaker – No report
- c. County Commissioner – Dean Kapenga

Commissioner Dean Kapenga introduced Undersheriff Frank Baker and recognized him for his work in law enforcement. Dean reported that the new jail is functioning very well; it is better and safer for the officers and inmates. The Allegan County court system does an excellent job of taking care of prisoners, veterans, mental illness cases and drug addicts with the many programs it offers. Dean went on to state that the duties of the commissioner include setting the county tax rate, approving grant applications, review and set fees, budgeting and works with the many department heads that oversee the activities of the county. He invited residents to visit the county website to see the many offerings and services the county workers provide. There are approximately 350 Allegan County employees made up of eleven different unions. This year the commissioners will work toward purchasing and installing a new radio system for the county to replace the antiquated current system which is near impossible to repair due to replacement parts no longer being available. The cost to replace the system is estimated at \$12-\$14 million. Lastly, the West Side County Park is undergoing a big renovation this year to better service the county residents and visitors. Lastly, Commissioner Kapenga stated that it is great serving the residents of the county and appreciates the opportunity to do so.

- d. Library Representative – Gary Dewey

Gary Dewey reported that former library director Jensen retired last year and Diane Kooiker, an internal candidate was selected by the hiring consulting firm to succeed in that role. The transition has been going very well with new and progressive initiatives being led by Diane Kooiker. The library has increased efficiencies, improved security, reduced personnel and maintains a stable budget. There will be a millage renewal in 2016 and Gary encouraged everyone to vote yes to sustain the great resource we have. Herrick Library has the 4th largest circulation rate of all libraries in Michigan which is a testament to the community intellect and interest.

- e. Pool Authority – Jack Huisingh

Jack Huisingh reported that the Holland Aquatic Center is a \$25 million asset to the community that employs 100 workers, many of whom are new and starting their careers, some coming through the ranks at the Center. There is currently \$5 million is debt recently refinanced for a savings of \$400,000. Jack thanked the township residents for supporting the Aquatic Center stating Laketown is one of its lead supporters also 20% of the employees live in the Township. Jack stated the he focuses on three priorities those being partnerships with schools and the community and competition to be the best center. The Center is one of few consortiums for schools in West Michigan affording the local schools the ability to have the resource but not the expenditure liability. Recent upgrade expenditures of \$70,000 in asset capability will have a return on investment in two years. Approximately 5,000 students coming from all private, public and home schooled sources pay \$2.00 per student for two weeks of swimming lessons every year. That is what the millage supports. We continue to look for ways to increase revenue and recently added Bouws Swimming Pool to our budget which is an excellent partnership working closely with Ryan Cotton and Mayor Dykstra. Jack stated that he has an open door to all suggestions.

f. Zoning Board of Appeals – Ed Stielstra

Ed Stielstra explained that the ZBA is a resource for residents that may have an issue with a zoning ordinance. We have one ongoing item that should be resolved soon regarding property development and ownership.

g. Planning Commission – Bob Slikkers

Vice Chair Bob Slikkers explained that he is representing Chairman Bob Cook. He explained that Commissioners are appointed by the Township Board are current comprised of Randy Becksvoort, James Lorence and Linda Howell. Bob acknowledged the service of Ed Stielstra who served for many years on the Planning Commissioner and is now on the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Planning Commission meets regularly on the first Wednesday of each month. In 2014, eleven meetings were held, an increase over recent years. In the past year there were seven special user permits for non-conformance, a Planned Unit Development on Beeline and two amendments to existing Planned Unit Developments, two site plan reviews for construction in critical dune areas and also a request for special use for a medical marijuana dispensary which was withdrawn. There are two pending special use requests that require a more in depth review of Section 38.465. Bob stated that the Commission welcomes all citizens to this and all meetings in the township.

h. Parks Commission – Bill Snyder

Treasurer Bill Snyder reported he is representing Chairperson Michelle Sall. He reported that a new maintenance person, Dan Williams was hired in the past year to support maintaining all parks and facilities throughout the township. He noted positive feedback on the Township Hall Recreation Park. Some may notice a perceived error in the ball field appearing to have a slope in the outfield. That has been measured and it is within specifications. We continue to contract with the group for maintenance of the stairs and beach grass planting at Laketown Beach. A “hunt” lottery was held to permit hunting at the Huyser Farm again this past fall. Laketown parks were recipients of volunteers from the United Way Day of Caring event. The many volunteers accomplished a lot of work at the Huyser Farm, particularly in the blueberry fields. We continue to partner with the Outdoor Discovery Center (ODC) on programming and events. Shore Acres Park is a very popular site for disc golf, hiking and bike trail riding. Work is needed on the parking lot to increase the number of spaces and decrease the tendency for reckless driving behavior in the lot. The Commissioners would also like to pursue work on the main house at the Huyser Farm; it is a sound structure but has suffered some water damage over the years. It needs to be brought up to code for either rental property or potentially an interactive learning center. The cost to renovate is estimated to be \$50-\$75,000. A suggestion was made to install a zip line at Wolters Woods or Sanctuary Woods. Lastly, Bill pointed out that the Parks Budget shows \$118,000, \$72,000 of which is designated for the bike path maintenance with the remainder used for park development. Terry Hofmeyer commented that Laketown Township has almost 300 acres of parks.

i. Deputy – Aaron Hobbs

Deputy Aaron Hobbs reported that it had been a busy winter with accidents and slide-offs on the freeway; summer was eventful with a string of breaking and enterings primarily involving on individual who is in custody. There has been some drug activity and one home invasion on the lakeshore with subjects apprehended. All in all things have slowed down but as weather gets better activity will likely increase. Undersheriff Frank Bakker reported that the department provided additional services in the township last month and thanked the board and residents for the support of partnership since 1990. We’ve accomplished a lot of amazing things and it’s been an honor to serve you. As the new Under Sheriff, please feel free to contact me if you have any concerns at all.

j. Felt Mansion Project Manager – Pat Meyer

Pat Meyer thanked the community for the overwhelming support. Great strides are being made to the work on the carriage house and surrounding grounds. The foundation of the garage was repurposed to be used as a stage and last summer we had several very successful free concerts. We will do it

again this year and have some great performers lined up for Thursday evenings in June and July. There were over 50 weddings and private events held at the mansion last year putting well over a million dollars into the local economy. The mansion is drawing Midwest visitors who are coming for this destination and stay in the area. Patty thanked the Friends of the Felt Board, the rental staff, Tammy Bloomfield, Dan Williams and all the volunteers to who make it possible. A comment was made regarding the Shore Acres/Felt Mansion parking lot and Patty advised more work will be done on the lot this summer to provide structure with additional spaces. There are five grants in the works to support the concerts and the facility.

k. Fire Board – Terry Hofmeyer

Terry Hofmeyer reported that the Fire Board is doing well. They met recently to review and approve the proposed budget. The big news is that Chief Cal Haverdink is retiring this year and we are working toward replacing him. Over 40 resumes have been submitted; five candidates will be interviewed, four local candidates and one from outside the area. One other side note is we are working with the City of Holland and Holland Township on an Auto Aid Agreement which should be approved at the April meeting.

l. Graafschap Fire Department – Cal Haverdink

Chief Cal Haverdink reported there were 435 calls in 2014. Laketown had 325 runs; Fillmore had 80 and there were 30 assists to other departments. Calls for January and February are down so far this year however there has been an upward swing over the last 3 years. The majority of the calls are rescue related. The department is now licensed for basic life support providing a higher level of service. A fundraiser was done this year to purchase a new piece of equipment called a Lucas machine to better respond to cardiac victims. The smoke alarm program was very successful and funding has been available to continue to provide residents with free alarms installed at no charge. There may also be funding for carbon monoxide detectors. These items are available to owner occupied residences with no restrictions regarding income. Lastly, thank you for allowing me to serve for the many years. I hope to be out and about in the future and hope to see you, it's been great and I have enjoyed my time in service.

ARTICLE VI. DE MULL AWARD PRESENTATION

Terry Hofmeyer explained that the volunteers in the township really make things happen. The De Mull Award is presented to an outstanding volunteer each year to recognize efforts made above and beyond the call of duty. This year the award is being presented to Chief Cal Haverdink. Cal thanked everyone for the honor.

ARTICLE VII. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS – No comments.

ARTICLE VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12pm.

Wendy Van Huis, Township Clerk

Diane Ybarra, Recording Secretary