

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

ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 12, 2014

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

Supervisor Terry Hofmeyer opened the meeting with prayer and led the pledge of allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Hofmeyer, Wendy Van Huis, Ed Stielstra, Gary Dewey
MEMBERS ABSENT: Bob Scanlan
STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Kathy Stoike – Administrative Assistant/Finance
Charlene Fields – Deputy Treasurer
Jennifer French – Deputy Clerk
Staci Veldt – Felt Mansion Rental Coordinator
Paul Smith – Township Assessor
Janel Hagerty – Township Deputy
Cal Haverdink – Fire Chief
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary
Dan Williams – Facility Maintenance

ARTICLE III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF 2013 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES –
Clerk Wendy Van Huis

Clerk Wendy Van Huis reviewed the minutes of the March 13, 2013 annual meeting. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Udelis Kuipers and seconded by Philip Bohlander 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. We have had a busy year including the recent Board of Review meetings. One of the things that caught attention was the new state language that provides support for disabled veterans with injuries; their entire tax bill is forgiven totaling one half of the adjustments that were made. Paul Smith will follow up on what that impact might mean in the future.

ARTICLE V. REPORT OF OFFICERS

- a. State Representative – Bob Genetski

Bob Genetski provided a legislative update covering the topics of: General Fund/General Purpose; Proposals for one-time GF/GP resources totaling \$636.4 million; Revenue sharing funding increases

with GF/GP impacts; The School Aide funding proposal. He reported just leaving a meeting in Lansing where the local DHS of Allegan and Monterrey Township were working aggressively on the DHS budget. He also discussed the State surplus and explained that the almost \$1 billion is really spread over three fiscal years and is “one-time” money not to be built into the budget. The governor just introduced his proposed budget that will be voted on June 1st which includes a request for \$52.1mil increase for K-12 education. A new class of state troopers will also be funded at a cost of \$7-9 million noting that Allegan County has benefited from the last couple of classes by the addition of officers. There has been some movement on auto no fault insurance to protect from additional increases. Close attention is being paid to the Detroit situation; it would send a message across the nation to move them out of bankruptcy. There is a plan to fund \$350 million of state money that would be used for lost pension monies including some charitable and non-profits agreeing to put up \$350mil as well. The Detroit artwork would stay in-tact which the city owns unlike other municipalities. A solution to give local municipalities the chance to put an emergency millage in place to cover the losses from the removal of the Business Personal Property Tax will be on the ballot in August. A complete documented recap of Representative Genetski’s report is available from his office or in the Township office.

b. County Commissioner – Dean Kapenga

Terry Hofmeyer thanked Commissioner Kapenga for the personal tour of the new Allegan County Jail. Commissioner Dean Kapenga gave an overview of the new site which will now hold 325 inmates. He read a review from Judge Bakker noting that the new correction holds the promise of building a better Allegan County. It allows correction officers to be in a safer place as well as appropriate segregation of the inmates based on the crimes committed and the rehabilitation offered. It will be very effective for the Sheriff Department and the inmates. The Commissioners are working on a 15-year capital budget with a 5-year general budget plan. One large expense that will be greatly reduced is the cost to transport prisoners back and forth from the jail to the courthouse. A new polycom system has been put in place to handle the conversations eliminating the need to transport. Work is being done with the various fire departments to improve the communication systems throughout the county. Hamilton is currently testing a new radio system that may be an option for all departments. Keith Becksvoort asked what final cost was for the new jail. Dean responded that it was approximately \$20 million, less than the original plan estimated to cost \$32 million.

c. Library Representative – Gary Dewey

Gary Dewey reported the library budget is finally stable. Staffing went from 67 employees to 41 with retirements and attrition including the retirement of the former director. A search is underway for his replacement. Philip Bohlander asked if the library will ever go back to being open 7 days per week. Gary responded no, due to the decrease in tax revenue that is not possible with the current funding. Mr. Bohlander commented that Wednesday is the slowest day and Sunday was busier, asking that be taken into consideration.

d. Pool Authority – Jack Huisingsh

Jack Huisingsh thanked voters for passing the increased millage proposal noting that it will provide funding for much needed improvements to the facility and programming. There is a great team in place including Troy Emmons who is heading up the programming while Jack focuses on the business side of things to maintain the ability to teach K-5 children to swim at no cost. The new method being introduced is without floatation devices which provide false security in the ability to swim. The facility is valued at \$25 million dollars, is appreciating well with a debt of just \$4 million. The S & P rated it a B- and a recent audit resulted in Moody’s rating at AA3. Jack discussed the cost sharing strategy with the rates of the bond sale and the use of the millage to reduce debt and capital expenditures for future maintenance and development. Laketown Township contribution to budget reflects approximately \$200,000 annually. Of the 100 employees, 12 are full-time and 88 are part-time which supports many young people in our community with employment. This week-end there will be 350 athletes competing at the facility bringing their families into our community which trickles down to the hotels, restaurants, etc. The final goal for the next ten years is to be fully sustainable and be the finest facility in Michigan to compete with the top three in the local three states. We have every reason to do that and we have the right business model in place now to do so.

e. Zoning Board of Appeals – David Weishaar

David Weishaar reported it has been a light year with only four meetings consisting of five variance requests of which four were approved and one denied. The next meeting is scheduled for March 31 at 7:00 PM.

f. Planning Commission – Ed Stielstra

Ed Stielstra introduced the members of the Planning Commission highlighting their talents. The Commission deals with the land use in the Township. Big efforts in the last year have been in the Blue Star Highway Corridor; public structure area; site plan reviews and Planned Unit Developments. In general, it is a very fine group to work with bringing wisdom and expertise. Ed noted all meeting minutes and all board information are located on the township website including the ordinances.

g. Parks Commission – Linda Howell

Linda Howell introduced the members of the Parks Commission. Linda discussed the current work being done to develop the Township Hall Recreation Park and the grants being sought for the project. Actual work will begin this summer, moving dirt and planting grass. The bike trail at Shore Acres is being used on a daily basis for the fat tire bike riders and also snow shoe activity. Shore Acres is an active park for hikers and particularly the disc golfers. Linda invited those interested to attend the meetings held on the third Wednesday of each month. Cal Haverdink asked what the plans are for the beach stairs. Linda said the same contractor will do the stairs at the beach again this year. Wendy Van Huis asked what the long-term plans are for the stairs. Linda said it has been almost 20 years since the last grant so once that date is hit we will look for more opportunities to make it accessible for those challenged with mobility and emergency responders.

h. Deputy – Janel Hagerty

Deputy Janel Hagerty reported there have been an abundance of slide offs on the roads. The glow necklaces were a huge hit on Halloween so thank you for that support. There were a number of successful events held in the township this year such as the “Duneathon”, fat tire bike race and other road bike races. Deputy Hagerty has provided the local bike shops with copies of the local laws as it relates to riding on the rural roads. There were 474 complaints logged in the Township and an additional 574 in Allegan County. The complaints consisted of domestic violence, drug arrests, prescription drug sales and use including sales through Facebook and text messages at costs of \$5-\$15 per pill. There were also a number of breaking and entering complaints over the last few months. One of the suspects is in custody and another currently believed to be living in the east side of the county continues to be pursued. There was one major personal injury accident that resulted in a death and two more that resulted in serious injuries. The incidents took place on 60th Street and Blue Star Highway and also 64th and 138th Avenues. Lastly, there was one criminal sexual assault that occurred at Laketown Beach.

i. Felt Mansion Project Manager – Wendy Van Huis

Wendy Van Huis is standing in for Patty Meyer reporting that 2013 was a record setting year for rentals at the mansion and the interest remains high. The year has also seen many more guests and visitors from far and near. The 2014 rental schedule is also seeing record numbers as bookings are coming in for 2015, too. Wendy thanked the rental team for the hard work and dedication for all that they do. LEED-EB Gold Certification (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design For Existing Buildings) was obtained for the mansion this year. The mansion fund received \$112,000 in historic tax credits. The second floor plumbing project has been completed. Two grants from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs were received, one for the fashion show event and the other for the outdoor stage made out of the existing foundation adjacent to the carriage house. The chapel has become a popular addition to the venue as it has seen a number of rentals this past year and bookings for 2014. Ed Stielstra asked if there is a plan in place to restore something of the farm as it existed. Wendy said there is a dream of that but right now the carriage house is the focus. Al Meshkin said in the next 10 years an example of the farm will be developed on a much smaller scale. Wendy noted the Holland Sentinel included the Felt Mansion in its article of “signature assets” in the Holland area.

j. Fire Board – Jim Lorence

Terry Hofmeyer explained we have a joint venture with Fillmore Township. Jim Lorence said this is his second year on the board. We have been patiently waiting to move forward with the emergency access to the highway but now been delayed again by MDOT due to a drainage issue so it could be 2017 or 2018 before we see any progress. Jim gave a brief overview of the formula used to calculate the financial support required of each township noting that it is fair and equitable. The rescue calls outnumber the fire calls for both townships and given the demographics of the population it is likely to increase. Jim noted that the fire departments are staffed with very professional, frugal, tireless workers and we should all be grateful for their dedication.

k. Graafschap Fire Department – Cal Haverdink

Chief Cal Haverdink reported there were 390 calls in 2013. Laketown had 290 runs; Fillmore had 87 runs. There were 13 assists to other departments. The radio tower project has been completed and has helped immensely with paging. Central dispatch has put a repeater on the widows walk on the Felt Mansion and it has helped tremendously to improve radio coverage on the lakeshore. There will also be a repeater placed on the top of the Mount Baldhead tower in the next couple of months. There is some progress being made on efforts to secure funding for computer technology in the fire trucks. Along with that, the grant we pursued for the new hose came through and has been installed on the truck. The old hose has been shared with other departments in this area. Cal reported that Graafschap, Salem, Fillmore and Hamilton departments are providing free smoke alarms and will be installed by the department members at no charge to the homeowners. Applications are available in the township offices or at the fire departments. The mobile home parks and condo developments will be especially targeted for this 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 Carl Blauwkamp from Lamar Construction, a local company owner who is very supportive of the efforts at the Felt Mansion. Every year Carl provides the overhead lift to enable the beautiful Christmas lights to be installed for the holiday season. Unfortunately Carl is unable to attend the meeting so Terry asked that a round of applause be given on his behalf. David Weishaar noted that Carl also sits on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

ARTICLE VII. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

Bob Slikkers said thanks for a great year.

ARTICLE VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Gary Dewey and seconded by Wendy Van Huis to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 P.M. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED