

MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
4338 BEELINE ROAD
ALLEGAN COUNTY
HOLLAND, MI 49423
REGULAR MEETING
June 14, 2017

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

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

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary
Noah Sall – Deputy Zoning Administrator

ARTICLE II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Trustee Stielstra led the pledge of allegiance and Treasurer Dewey offered prayer.

ARTICLE III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board members reviewed the minutes of the May 10 and 17, 2017 meetings. **A motion was made by Howell and seconded by Stielstra to approve the minutes as submitted. Supervisor Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE IV. FINANCIAL REPORT / REVIEW & APPROVE THE BILLS

Supervisor Terry Hofmeyer reviewed the bills for the month of May 2017. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Dewey and seconded by Van Huis to approve and pay the bills as submitted. Supervisor Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE V. CORRESPONDENCE

A letter of apology was received from Tom Crum for his behavior at the last meeting.

Letters were received from David and Tiara Johnson of 4208 66th Street; Brian and Naome Holt of 6625 142nd Avenue; Laura Judge of 6510 Oakwood Lane in support of the fiber optic project in Laketown Township. One document was received from Jim and Mitra Delaney, Tom Crum, Mike Teekamp, Jim and Ronda Allen, Tom Robertson, Londa and Eric Anderson and Tom Shuff in objection to the fiber optic project in Laketown Township.

ARTICLE VI. REPORT OF OFFICERS

A. STATE REPRESENTATIVE – No report.

B. COUNTY COMMISSIONER – No report.

C. PLANNING COMMISSION – LINDA HOWELL

Howell reported that the Planning Commission met on June 7, 2017 and the following items were discussed: West Wind Lake Planned Unit Development was approved; Pastor & Benson Special Use Request for a dog daycare business was tabled; Schaap Special Use Request for accessory building was approved; Holt Special Use Request for accessory building was tabled; Saugatuck Dunes LLC Special Use Request for a non-conforming parcel split was approved; Brown Special Use Request for accessory building to be used for a riding arena was approved.

D. ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – ED STIELSTRA

Stielstra reported that the Zoning Board of Appeals met on May 24, 2017 and the following item was discussed: Chamberlain Variance Request for restricted road frontage was approved.

E. PARKS COMMISSION – MICHELLE SALL

Michelle Sall said the Commissioners met on May 17 at the Huyser Farmhouse to tour the home and the following items were discussed: Laketown Beach; Huyser Farm; invasive species; pickle ball and 5-year plan. Gary Dewey asked how the blueberries are doing at Huyser and Sall responded they will come out mid-July / early August. The field is not treated so the berries have a short shelf life but Michigan State continues to do research there. Van Huis asked about the trees that are coming up within the berries and Sall said we take them out as much as we can. Hofmeyer explained that without a 5-year plan, we cannot apply for grants. Hofmeyer also commented on the improved road at Laketown Beach and also the popularity of Shore Acres Park.

F. FIRE CHIEF AND FIRE BOARD – HOFMEYER

Supervisor Hofmeyer reported the response calls for the month of May were as follows: 47 calls total, 36 calls from Laketown, consisting of 29 medical/rescue and 6 fire, 1 smoke alarm install 9 calls from Fillmore, consisting of 7 medical/rescue calls and 2 fire calls. There were 2 fire assists, 1 to Overisel Fire Department and 1 to Holland Fire Department. Hofmeyer commented that the township's ISO rating dropped from 6 to 5, in the top 5-10% of townships in the state. Meshkin stated that there were 29 calls so far this month so it has been very busy.

ARTICLE VII. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS ON OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Matthew Gebben of 3963 64th Street, aside from a few years at university have always lived here want to say that he is glad the township has done research on different options for fiber optic and hopes that they continue to do so as his home is underserved. It has been extremely frustrating to see what other areas nearby have and to remain underserved here. The SAD bill seems to be stalled in committee so no progress made. Gebben gives support for whatever can be done.

Ron Dalman of 4056 Spring Beauty Lane expressed concern for the lack of adequate communication technology on his street. He is frustrated with the lack of services available to him and is particularly concerned with options for accessing the 911 service if he lives in a "dead zone". Communication technology is going through a transition and the township should keep up with it to provide utilities to the residents. He added that he has better service at a more reasonable cost at his condo in Florida than he does here and they use fiber optics.

Jim Delaney of 6298 144th Avenue spoke to the emergency access to U.S. 31 through property of Robin's Flower Garden. How can a nearly two decade old proposal still be a valid project? The purpose was to reach the highway for emergency vehicles. Delaney feels this is a project that is not needed. At the March 2017 Township Board meeting a request was made by residents to receive data to support the justification for this project. The business owner and residents do not want this proposed project. Please do not waste our tax dollars on this project because other options exist.

Mitra Delaney provided a copy of information presented by Jim Delaney.

Mike Tighe of 3660 65th Street said he has children at his house that cannot get on the Internet and need it for homework. Internet service was better on my trip to Costa Rico than it is here.

Dave Laupmanis of 6526 Creekwood Drive spoke to the lack of Internet access and gives support to the fiber project. In Indian River, a town of 2,000 had service and it seems we could do better.

Dick Becker of 2382 Valley thanked the board for all that they had done in regards to the fiber optics project. It is time to step back and see what happens at the state level. We are all for it but not to have the township get into that business.

Mitra Delaney of 6298 144th Avenue thanked the board and what we gave you is actually wonderful ideas for what residents can do. We are not against Internet in the township. Delaney read from the document that was submitted to the board. The last 20 months of this project there were people that signed up to get on board to get on Charter and dropped it. Our main objective is the government not get involved in that business. We are not just 25 people we have over 135 signatures throughout the township that are not in favor of fiber optics. So many felt they were misled at the last ballot proposal. There are group rates that can be obtained for reasonable rates. Delaney suggested that the township require developers extend it to their projects.

Biz Ter Haar of 4695 64th Street expressed concern for the condition of the bike paths not being taken care of in a timely fashion. The Laketown Crossings Development has trees that are dying between 64th on 147th to the driveway that are dying. Who will be held accountable for the condition of this development? Only three quarters of the property is being watered so a big concern about that property.

Hofmeyer said there is a section of the bike path on Beeline that buckled up from the heat.

John Fulenwider of 4764 Wildwood made remarks and suggestions regarding the need for fiber optics explaining that he had researched it back in 1972. It is now 2017 and it has matured considerably. He feels the board should map out areas of the underserved and work with providers to attract proposals for service as he agrees it is a much needed utility.

ARTICLE VIII. OLD BUSINESS – None

ARTICLE IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. HOLLAND SERVICE AREA WATER & SEWER CHARGES

Hofmeyer asked Meshkin to explain the changes. Meshkin said rates have not been changed since 2012 and the reason for the change in rates is due to the change in the cost of meters.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Dewey and seconded by Stielstra to approve the Holland Service Area Water and Sewer Charges. Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion.**

UNANANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

B. BROADBAND MOTION

Hofmeyer explained the board has discussed the topic at length.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Dewey and seconded by Howell that we not spend general fund money towards a millage proposal for broadband; but we continue to research options for high speed Internet for our residents and we continue working with legislators toward the passing of a SAD funding mechanism.**

Howell commented that she has been working with Meshkin and the EDA representative toward an idea that a couple of the new developments might act as anchors that might be able to provide a funding mechanism for the project. The one part of the motion she feels very tied to is that we

continue to look for answers for all of the answers and noted Delaney's comment, "...find out what you can do with and for your neighbors...".

Dewey said he will follow up with Diane Kooiker from the library in regards to her meeting with Ottawa County to discuss broadband. Dewey agrees we have to explore options but at this point pull back on expenditures.

Hofmeyer said frankly everyone is interested in doing the right thing and we need to find ways to have everyone in the township served with Internet service. The idea to break up the township into small neighborhoods seeking service is a bad way to look at development. The mobilization cost would be so much more economical to continue to work with Charter on a township wide basis. We are working on a map to outline where the underserved is greatest. We do have an SAD procedure that is available which would be at no cost to the township but only act as a financial mechanism for people who want to access if we can work out an acceptable program with Charter. We will continue to work diligently for options that are most economical but no further expenditures will occur.

Stielstra clarified that while we will not spend general fund money toward approval for broadband it should not be misunderstood that we will allocate time, just not money. Clearly, that this is about ceasing the expenditure and not about stopping the research. Hofmeyer agreed that staff time may be spent on it but not money. The long-term goal is to have broadband Internet access for all residents, however as of right now, will not see it on the agenda for a long, long time.

Supervisor Hofmeyer asked for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED.

C. COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM BOARD APPOINTMENT

Hofmeyer explained this is a group that was formed through the MACC to oversee community assets. The Felt Estate is considered a community asset so we have been asked to provide representation on the board. Nominations are Linda Howell as the principal representative with Gary Dewey as an alternate.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Van Huis and seconded by Dewey to approve the appointment of Linda Howell as principal representative and Gary Dewey as alternate to the Community Enhancement Program Board. Supervisor Hofmeyer asked for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED.**

ARTICLE X. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

Jessie Dalman of 4025 Spring Beauty Lane said she hopes the Parks Commission will come up with a great plan for the green house on 142nd and 64th Streets. She does not feel it is an asset to the township. She also questioned how many people go to the blueberry farm and feels the property could be put to better use. She supports the broadband because while she has a big dish, all access is lost during storms and bad weather. She hopes the board will continue to work toward a solution because it is the future.

Steve Williford of 6389 147th Avenue asked for clarification, does broadband work without electricity?

Jim Delaney of 6298 144th Avenue said based on his experience; it will cost much more than \$8 million to put fiber optic in the township. Fiber is great but it has its issues especially here in Laketown and also getting it to the house, it will cost a lot of money. And who would be the ISP? He is against a township run ISP.

Mitra Delaney of 6298 144th Avenue asked if the board will address the letter that was submitted at the March meeting.

ARTICLE XI. ADJOURN

**A motion was made by Howell and seconded by Dewey to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 P.M.
UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

Wendy Van Huis, Township Clerk