

MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
4338 BEELINE ROAD
ALLEGAN COUNTY
HOLLAND, MI 49423
WORKSHOP MEETING
Wednesday, August 3, 2016

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER –

Terry Hofmeyer called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Hofmeyer, Ed Stielstra, Gary Dewey, Wendy Van Huis
MEMBERS ABSENT: Linda Howell
STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin
OTHERS PRESENT: Dave Allen and Todd Crandall, representatives from Midwest Energy

ARTICLE II. MINUTES – A motion was made by Gary Dewey and seconded by Ed Stielstra to approve the Workshop minutes from July 6, 2016, Unanimous decision – Motion approved.

ARTICLE III. CITIZEN’S COMMENTS:

John Fulenwider, 4513 Amphitheater – Mr. Fulenwider had questions regarding the ownership of a potential fiber optic system and whether the service provider would maintain the system at their expense. He also questioned how new residents would be charged. Al responded that there are 20-30 new homes per year, each could be established a drop, cost TBD. Re: a development, it would be the expense of the developer. The ISP provider would maintain the system at their cost. Bids will be received for installation. The Fiber backbone would be buried when possible. Mr. Fulenwider questioned whether any other Michigan communities have done this? Midwest Representatives responded that Sebawing, Michigan is one Michigan city. The City of Holland only supplies to a limited number of commercial/ retail businesses. Mr. Fulenwider would like to see costs before we have another vote.

Dick Becker, 2382 Valley – Mr. Becker met with Representative Mary Whiteford regarding the potential of funding a fiber project through an SAD as opposed to a millage.

Kathy McLeod, 3430 Cottage Road – Ms. McLeod questioned the funding of a fiber project, and said her comments at the last Township Board meeting were not appropriately recorded. She objects that non-homestead property owners would have to pay for a project that they had no say by a vote. She also questioned whether the members of the Board or township Manager have met with Charter Communications.

Tom Robertson, 6418 Oakridge – Mr. Robertson asked why the Board was considering another vote when the people already voted.

Following no further comments, the public comment portion of the meeting was closed.

ARTICLE IV. – PRESENTATION FROM MIDWEST ENERGY REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Allen and Mr. Crandall reported that they are currently doing a fiber build in the Cassopolis area. They are not prepared to respond to any questions regarding price at this time.

Dave Allen – asked the sentinel reporter his opinion as to the importance of fiber optics. Mr. Allen said there is an expectation that multiple devices can be connected at the same time. He highlighted the growing demand for better, faster connection to the internet. He detailed the background and growth of their business; and the current and future projects and customers being served. His sheaf of papers showed testimonials to support the value of fiber optics. “The people that have the smarts to pursue this are the ones that succeed. Young families will go where the connections are. This should be future proof, and offer better cyber security.”

Todd Crandall – gave his background in telecommunications. He expressed his passion to supply fiber to the rural areas. If you want a community to be viable, he sees power in having fiber to the rural communities. Energy efficiency and quality internet coverage both play into the value of homes. Upgrades to the electronics will be available in the future, but the fiber itself has a long life. Fiber can dedicate to each home that they get the speeds promised. Fiber optic to the home is the ideal situation. They have the information they need to proceed in getting numbers put together.

ARTICLE V. TENTATIVE AGENDA ITEMS

A. OLD BUSINESS

1. None

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. Michigan Cares for Tourism support

ARTICLE VI. NON AGENDA ITEMS

1. The Bills from July were handed out for review.
2. Fiber Optics – the Board discussed whether or not to place a fiber optics proposal on the November ballot. It was the consensus of the Board to not place a proposal on the November ballot. It was also the consensus of the Board to gather additional information and hold public meetings to inform residents.
3. Michigan Cares for Tourism - The Board discussed Township support for the MC4T project scheduled at the Felt Mansion in September.

ARTICLE VII. NEXT WORKSHOP– The next regular Workshop meeting is scheduled for 4:00 p.m., September 7, 2016.

ARTICLE VIII. – ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.