

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

REGULAR MEETING
December 10, 2014

HELD AT THE FELT MANSION

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,
Ed Stielstra, Linda Howell
MEMBERS ABSENT: Gary Dewey
STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Cal Haverdink – GFD Chief
Charlene Fields – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

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

ARTICLE III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board members reviewed the minutes of the November 12, 2014 meeting, **a motion was made by Wendy Van Huis and seconded by Linda Howell 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 November 2014. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Ed Stielstra and seconded by Wendy 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 – None

ARTICLE VI. REPORT OF OFFICERS

- A. STATE REPRESENTATIVE GENETSKI – No report.
- B. COUNTY COMMISSIONER KAPENGA – Dean Kapenga

Commissioner Kapenga stated the County will be voting on the 2015 budget tomorrow. Pension plan funding continues to be issue. The state has allowed for additional bonding to secure a reduced interest rate which has helped improved budget conditions. The County is selling a bond to fund existing

pension liabilities. The county currently has an AA bond rate. The new jail is being utilized, inmate numbers are holding below capacity limits with the use of drug court and mental health services. Westside Park improvements are scheduled to start in the spring of 2015.

C. PLANNING COMMISSION – Linda Howell

Linda Howell reported that the Planning Commission met on December 3 and the following items were discussed: Good Intentions Laketown LLC Special Use Request remained tabled pending the legislative update; approval of the report and resolution for the Rod Obbink Builders P.U.D. Amendment for recommendation to the township board; RPE Trust Special Use Request for which Township Attorney Bultje will prepare a report and resolution for review at the next meeting.

D. ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – Ed Stielstra

Ed Stielstra reported that the Zoning Board of Appeals met on November 24 and the RPE Trust Variance Request was discussed and a decision will be delayed until the January meeting.

E. PARKS COMMISSION –

Commissioner Chuck Strabbing suggested everyone get out and enjoy the parks during the winter season.

F. DEPUTY SHERIFF – No Report

G. FIRE CHIEF AND FIRE BOARD – Chief Cal Haverdink

Chief Haverdink reported the response calls for the month of November were as follows: calls total, 36 calls from Laketown, consisting of 22 rescue and 5 fire, 8 calls from Fillmore, consisting of 6 rescue calls and 2 fire calls. There was 1 assist fire call to Saugatuck.

H. DDA – No report.

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

ALL RELATING TO THE MACATAWA WATER PROJECT:

Judith Canel of 2382 Waukazoo Trail stated she would like to see the Macatawa water project halted for numerous reasons. She feels the petition and resolution are not valid, stating most thought the petition was for a feasibility study only and not a construction project, therefore, the petition does not support the resolution. Ms. Canel also read correspondence from Steve Grunst and suggested the petition was altered during circulation by someone from the township office. She feels the petition was originally drafted as a majority vote and was later changed to a vote by land mass/weighted vote. Township Manager Al Meshkin later replied that the only change was to correct language on a letter drafted by Mr. Grunst and not to the petition. He also noted state law requires the vote to be done by land area.

Dorie Sligh of 891 Indiana stated she recalls emails inquiring about interest in the project but was never approached to sign a petition.

George Zainea of 2250 Maksaba Trail stated the south hill curve is sinking and in need of repair, noting the cost is too expensive and contractors have not yet been willing to take on the project. Repairing the road and the proposed \$40,000 cost for water would be too much for 90 households to bear. Mr. Zainea stated the project should be killed now.

Scott Brundage of Mishawaka Avenue stated he was in agreement with previous comments. He stated this issue has been confusing from the beginning, costs have increased exorbitantly and the process should be done by democratic vote. He noted he believes eighty percent of those on the north hill are opposed. Asked the board to make the right decision.

Dave Martin of 2389 Waukazoo Trail stated he is a new resident and new to this issue. He is in agreement with previous comments tonight and expressed concern for the bidding process, cost overruns, level of opposition and misunderstandings, expected burden on homeowners and questioned if there would be another vote.

Peter Schwarz of 2281 Crescent Walk stated he too is in agreement with previous comments. He originally signed the petition thinking it was a survey of interest and has since removed his signature upon realizing what it entailed. He also read a letter of opposition from Merrill Tutton at 2418 Grizwold. Mr. Schwarz stated absence of a vote is never a yes and requests full disclosure to residents to allow for a new vote.

Eric Deaton of 2265 Maksaba Trail stated he originally signed the petition assuming it was for a feasibility study and knowing the need for fire protection. He stated the costs don't match the benefit and it seems road repairs proposed were now being cut to reduce costs. He noted homeowners have projects pending the result of this project and asked the board kill the project.

Fire Chief Cal Haverdink stated he appreciates Mr. Tutton's email, noted need for road improvements for fire protection and requested a copy of the engineer study.

Tom Sligh of 891 Indiana asked if this project can still be halted. Township Supervisor Hofmeyer stated – yes.

John Korb of 2387 Maksaba Trail stated he felt the proposed road repairs were used to lure homeowners to sign the petition. He asked what the threshold would be to kill the project and requested the costs be looked at again and a new vote offered.

Tom Cath of 2411 Cedar Walk stated he feels misled in regards to the petition process. The study has led to unexpected things, things he can't afford.

Jeff Prince 2393 Valley Avenue requested a copy of the petition spreadsheet, questioning the final results and validity of petition. Questioned why the continued work on project the people are against.

Roy Welton 2256 Crescent Walk stated he thought he was signing a petition to proceed with a feasibility study. He understands the need for improved fire protection, some homeowners do have issues with wells, while his works fine he was willing to consider concerns of his neighbors. Mr. Welton stated there has been much confusion and misstatements from the beginning and noted the board has a responsibility to work with the residents and urged a stop to the project.

Randy Woodall of 2367 Belmont Way stated she has no problems with her water. She did not sign the petition and feels the project is too expensive and the process has been very threatening. She requested the project be stopped.

Supervisor Hofmeyer closed the public comments.

ARTICLE VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. MACATAWA WATER PROJECT UPDATE

Township Manager Al Meshkin offered an update on the Macatawa Water Project, noting the process was started when Steve Grunst requested Al draft a petition to design, construct and install a public water system. A petition was circulated with no one changing any language to the petition. The petition process following, a public hearing was held and over 50% of the land mass, as required by state law, had signed the petition. The project took approximately nine months to design and bids were opened in September of 2014. Few bids were received and the proposed costs were too high. The current bids are good for 90 days and that time will lapse this week. Mr. Meshkin stated he would like the Board to consider approval of \$15,500 for an alternate engineering firm, Fleis & Vandenbrink Engineering, to do a value engineering review to see if costs can be reduced. He stated their process will break the project into numerous smaller projects, allowing additional smaller contractors an

opportunity to bid and allow the township to act as general contractor. The current S.A.D. roll is at \$24,500 per parcel with a margin of +/- 5%, anything over that would require another public hearing and a vote by the township board.

George Zainea stated the process has been a bait and switch, noting he thought he was signing for a feasibility study. He requested another vote, noting enough doubt has been raised.

Randy Woodall asked when the board will listen and stop this project. She referenced a quote from Steve Grunst regarding changes made by the township to the petition letter. Al Meshkin advised the language to the petition "letter" was corrected, not the petition.

Supervisor Hofmeyer stated the board has a responsibility to provide certain services to the residents; water service and fire protection. He noted the board believed the residents had interest, the petition process was completed, plans were drawn and bids received. Unfortunately, the bids received are very high but the board still has a responsibility to provide water and fire protection within reason. The board would like to rebid the project and if the costs are still too high he doubts the project would proceed, if close, the project would most likely proceed with a special assessment.

A motion was made by Wendy Van Huis and seconded by Linda Howell to consider approval of a cost not to exceed \$15,500 for a value engineering review by Fleis & Vandenbrink. Following discussion, Supervisor Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

ARTICLE IX. NEW BUSINESS –

A. PRESENTATION BY COMMUNITY GREEN SOLAR

Township Manager Al Meshkin gave a brief overview of proposed plan, noting the estate is currently holds a Gold LEED certification and is also listed on the state and national historical registry. The solar array would be used to provide service to the estate and offer the community an opportunity to buy into the services.

Mike Erickson of Community Green Energy offered some history on solar and renewable energy, noting a project at the estate would be a good economic development plan and community project. It would be a good fit for the estate based on its history and current long-range plans. Project would limit increases to about 2% per year, generate \$460,000 worth of electricity and save approximately \$135,000 over 20 years. Community Green Energy would build and finance the solar array, neighbors could buy panel shares and in return receive payment for energy purchased. Their company is less than 10 years old and has approximately 40 – 50 projects nationwide. The arrays would last about 40 years, average rate for a subscriber would be \$3.00/watt, there would be no Interconnection Agreement with Consumers Energy and there would be no insurance, maintenance, etc. to the township. Current tax credit incentives are scheduled to decrease from 30% to 10% in 2016. Mr. Erickson said the next set would be to sign a development contract and create a viable concept. If it is shown that they could save money then we would enter a power purchase contract.

B. POLICE SERVICES LETTER

Supervisor Hofmeyer offered an overview of the current law enforcement contract with Allegan County, noting an annual cost of approximately \$100,000 per year for one deputy. The "Termination of Contract" was read. He stated law enforcement services for the township have always been paid for out of the General Fund but it can no longer cover these expenses. This will no longer be a line item on the budget. Should things change in the future, that could change the situation.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Ed Stielstra and seconded by Wendy Van Huis to authorize sending the "Termination of Contract" letter to the Allegan County Administrator. Supervisor Hofmeyer called for a vote. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

C. BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Supervisor Hofmeyer stated there are 8 appointed positions scheduled to expire at the end of the year. At this time he would like to recommend the following appointments:

- Helen Heneveld – Board of Review
- Donald Van Huis – Board of Review
- Warren Rasmussen – Board of Review
- Robert Jaskulski – Board of Review

The remaining appointments will be addressed at a later date.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Wendy Van Huis and seconded by Ed Stielstra to approve the appointments as recommended. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE X. CITIZEN’S COMMENTS

Randy Becksvoort of 3930 Beeline Road asked is the \$15,500 fee for the value engineering review of the Lake Macatawa water project would be paid for out of the General Fund. Township Manager Al Meshkin replied it would be paid with water project funds. Mr. Becksvoort also asked about funding of the Felt Mansion as a line item and noted a recent move from a separate fund to a line item on the budget. Mr. Meshkin replied current revenue is covering a good portion of the mansion expenses. Revenue is increasing each year.

David Martin of 2389 Waukazoo Trail asked timeframe for completion of value engineering review, noting many residents are seasonal and would like consideration in planning future meetings. Al Meshkin replied he hopes to have the results by next month with a possible rebidding process by February/March and construction in the fall of 2015.

Trustee Ed Stielstra noted some timing is out of the boards control but they will do their best to accommodate timing for all residents to participate.

Keith Becksvoort of 4468 64th Street suggested that the retiring Fire Chief’s wages could be used to fund the law enforcement, noting he does not think there is a need for a full-time Fire Chief.

ARTICLE XI. ADJOURN

A motion was made Linda Howell and seconded by Wendy Van Huis to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 P.M. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTON APPROVED

Wendy Van Huis, Township Clerk

Diane Ybarra, Recording Secretary