

MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
4338 BEELINE ROAD
ALLEGAN COUNTY
HOLLAND, MI 49423
REGULAR MEETING
December 13, 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, Ed Stielstra,
Gary Dewey, Linda Howell
MEMBERS ABSENT: None
STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Clerk Wendy Van Huis led the pledge of allegiance and offered prayer.

ARTICLE III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board members reviewed the minutes of the November 8, 2017 meeting. **A motion was made by Dewey and seconded by 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 2017. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Van Huis and seconded by Howell 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 – No report.

B. COUNTY COMMISSIONER – KAPENGA

Kapenga reported the county is working on year end business as follows: vote to build a facility within the jail (\$.5 million project) to house the probationary parole offices; approve three more sanitarians and new fee structure to significantly reduce the timing to obtain septic permits; approve support for the Blue Star Trail System spanning from M-89 to Baseline Road. Kapenga advised that a group of approximately 200 private citizens organized funding to be put into the Allegan County Foundation to fund the Blue Star Trail System. Kapenga spoke to his role on the Health and Human Services of Lansing Board and WMET addressing the opioid epidemic in the state and Allegan County where 170 of the 300 probationary parole cases

involve substance abuse issues. It is a critical epidemic in Allegan County. Kapenga also reported on several schools in the area hatching salmon to be released on April 27 at the Allegan Bridge. Lastly, Kapenga is working on an appeal to a state mandate to provide defense attorneys in the county exceeding the available funding.

COUNTY CLERK – GENETSKI

Genetski reported that the election went very smoothly with all precincts reporting by 10:30pm. The Annual Report was provided to the County Commissioners and the Board drawing specific attention page 20 of the report relative to the filing of veterans' paperwork. Utilization of this service has doubled in the past three years helping veterans to gain access to the benefits they deserve. Genetski shared a story of two elderly women served to research information on their grandfather who served in World War I, O.B. Van Dam. The office was able to provide paperwork so they could seek proper recognition for the gravesite of their grandfather as a veteran. Genetski reported that he declared candidacy for State Senate for District 26 as Tonya Schumaker will term out. Genetski addressed the US 31 Emergency Access proposal and thanked the board for their hard work. Van Huis commended Genetski for the good work that he is doing for the County.

C. PLANNING COMMISSION

Meshkin reported that the Planning Commission met on December 6, 2017 and the following items were discussed: Guardian Brewing Co. Special Use Request was approved; Eldean Rezoning Request was denied; Darby Planned Unit Development for preliminary approval was approved.

D. ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – ED STIELSTRA

Stielstra reported that the Zoning Board of Appeals did not meet in November.

E. PARKS COMMISSION – MICHELLE SALL

Sall reported that due to a quiet month, the Parks Commission did not meet in November and the next meeting is scheduled in January. Earlier in the year, the Parks Commission submitted a grant to make improvements to Laketown Beach to include acquiring an inholding parcel and smaller lots near the parking lot to expand the lot. Unofficially, the township has been recommended for approval in the amount of \$640,000.

F. FIRE CHIEF AND FIRE BOARD – DEN BLEYKER

Chief Den Bleyker reported the response calls for the month of November were as follows: 54 calls total, 33 calls from Laketown, consisting of 23 medical/rescue and 10 fire calls and 4 smoke alarm installs; 11 from Fillmore, consisting of 10 medical/rescue calls and 1 fire call. There were 5 fire assists to other departments, 2 to Saugatuck and 3 to Holland and 1 medical assist to Holland. Den Bleyker reported that call volume is 30% higher than this time last year.

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

Dick Becker of 2382 Valley asked that the township board cap spending at \$75,000 for the emergency access project noting the board's responsibility to watch the township's expenditure. If the federal grant for \$300,000 is not approved, then the township should not go through with the project.

Doug Den Bleyker of 6237 140th and Graafschap Fire Department Chief spoke in support of the Emergency Access Contract. Den Bleyer stated that it is the department's responsibility to respond to that portion of U.S. 31 and I-196 and this access will provide a much quicker response time to emergencies. The department actively seeks cost recovery on non-resident response calls and to date has collected \$24,880. The fire department is the first to respond to medical and hazmat emergencies which often occur on the expressway.

Fire Chief Janik of Saugatuck Fire Department spoke in support of the Emergency Access Contract explaining that Saugatuck is not a substitute for Graafschap Fire Department. Saugatuck calls have increased over 60% at 900 calls per year of which 220 calls were back to back so there is no allowance for being a substitute or primary responder for other departments. The sooner we get emergencies off the highway the better it is for everyone, particularly for the safety of the responders.

Mitra Delaney of 6298 144th Avenue stated that she and her husband wrote a letter of objection and reminded board members of previous letters and comments at earlier board meetings stating the residents do not want the emergency access at 60th and 144th Avenues. Delaney stated that she and the others have the highest respect for the first responders but do not feel this access is needed or fair to the property owner asking that the imminent domain efforts be stopped. She is certain that Holland Fire Department and Saugatuck Fire Department are doing a good job of covering this area.

Tom Achterhof of 6226 144th Avenue and member of the Graafschap and Holland Fire Departments spoke in support of the Emergency Access project. It is important to get to the scene quickly. Both departments have had a record number of calls this year and it is important to respond to calls in a timely manner for the residents and the transients. Holland Fire department is busy covering their own calls and cannot be primary on calls for service in Laketown.

Jim Delaney of 6298 144th Avenue reiterated what his wife Mitra said and is against the access. He does not agree with the imminent domain approach going across someone else's property and feels there are other options.

Ryan Wardlow of 4404 64th Street spoke in objection of the Emergency Access. He understands the need but it must be weighed against other options, does it have to be at that location? Is there a loop hole in the law where you can steal property from a resident? He does not want to see any more tax money spent on this project nor does he want to see a business owner have its property taken away.

Hofmeyer clarified that an easement is being pursued which will include a new paved driveway and new deck on the bridge that crosses the creek. A fence will be erected that would only be opened by emergency personnel. An appraisal was done for the property and a fair offer was made. The property owner will see improvements to the property and the township will maintain the easement.

Sara Zawila Bushee of 2670 56th Street, Graafschap Fire Department and AMR servicing Allegan provided statistics from research she had done on response time and human survival rates. An emergency access will save lives. Can a price really be put on a life?

Mitra Delaney disagreed and again noted that the residents are against this project. She will provide the list of 100 names of residents that are against this access.

Meshkin clarified the resolution is to approve the contract with the State of Michigan to allow the emergency access. Negotiations took place for well over a year with the property owner to acquire the easement but the property owner wanted over \$65,000 in landscaping on her property. That would not be a prudent use of tax payers' dollars. Meshkin stated that he too is a resident of Laketown and is in favor of the project.

Ryan Wardlow thanked Hofmeyer for the explanation of the easement process but noted that a price cannot be put on life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Hofmeyer said the site proposed is the site approved by the State of Michigan and the Federal Highway Administration. The federal, state and township have responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of residents. This project has been in the works for years and finally coming to fruition.

ARTICLE VIII. OLD BUSINESS – None

ARTICLE IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. RESOLUTION TO APPROVE PUBLIC ROADS IN WEST WIND LAKE ESTATES

Following discussion, a motion was made by Dewey and seconded by Howell to approve Resolution 2017-20 West Wind Lake Estates P.U.D. agreeing to make Windfield Court, Lake Wind Avenue, Lake Ridge Drive and West Lake Drive public roads.

Meshkin said the West Wind Lake Estates will have public roads and have to meet the county criteria and Laketown Township approves it. Stielstra asked about the two private eye brow roads and Meshkin responded that the majority of the roads are public roads but two eye brows are not but will have hydrants and built to the standards. Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

B. RESOLUTION TO APPROVE EMERGENCY ACCESS CONTRACT

Following discussion, a motion was made by Dewey and seconded by Howell to approve Resolution 2017-21 Michigan Department of Transportation Contract 17-5518 to improve access to US-31 for the Graafschap Fire Department and other first responders for emergency access. Hofmeyer asked if board members had additional questions or comments. There were none. Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

C. GUARDIAN BREWING SPECIAL ASSESSMENT CONTRACT

Meshkin clarified that this is for sewer and water and should it become available the applicant would agree to connect. Following discussion, a motion was made by Dewey and seconded by Howell to approve the Guardian Brewing Special Assessment Contract. Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

ARTICLE X. CITIZEN’S COMMENTS

Mitra Delaney asked for a copy of the contract regarding the emergency resolution that is an approval from MDOT. Delaney also stated that residents want to be involved in the upcoming township budget preparation.

ARTICLE XI. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Dewey and seconded by Van Huis to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 P.M. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTON APPROVED

Wendy Van Huis, Township Clerk

Diane Ybarra, Recording Secretary