

GRATTAN TOWNSHIP BOARD
Special Meeting of October 27, 2008

1. Call to Order

Township Supervisor Frank Force called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

D. Timmons read the roll call. Members present: Supervisor F. Force, Treasurer Sabrina Freeman, Clerk J. Fues and Trustee D. Heffron. Members absent: P. Knoerl. F. Force said the absence was excused. Jim Hegarty, Chad Sosnowski and Bob Vander Male, Prein and Newhof also attended the meeting.

3. Approval of the Agenda

J. Fues moved and D. Heffron seconded to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes. The motion carried.

4. New Business

F. Force distributed a copy of his October 27, 2008 review of the lagoon overflow and Prein and Newhof's involvement and read the document out loud. He questioned the amount Prein and Newhof charged the Township for services involving the lagoon overflow. Board members said they received conflicting reports from Prein and Newhof and Sierra Consultants regarding the number of gallons needed to be irrigated in order to avoid another sewer overflow in 2009 and found it difficult to make decisions regarding irrigation of the lagoons with such varying information.

J. Hegarty, Prein and Newhof, said their numbers were based on a 52,000 gallon average daily flow. This number was based on Sierra Consultant's draw down information. He said Prein and Newhof have been recommending that the Township install flow meters in order to have a more accurate average daily flow number. F. Force said the Township has considered that recommendation, but the high cost of flow meters has prohibited the Township from authorizing the

expense. D. Heffron said Prein and Newhof should have done their own draw down test. Chad Sosnowski, Prein and Newhof, said they discussed doing a draw down test, but a broken check valve had been repaired after the sewer overflow and their test would have recorded the number of gallons with a working check valve. J. Hegarty said draw down tests are a snap shot of the system at that time and should be similar over time. It was noted that Sierra's draw down numbers varied widely. Board members said these fluctuating numbers should have raised a red flag.

J. Hegarty said the Geotechnical Engineer's report was a sentence in their March 2008 Grattan Lagoon Overflow Analysis.

J. Hegarty distributed copies of Prein and Newhof's Lagoon and Pump Station Overflow Investigation and the group discussed the report. The report showed low amounts irrigated in 2006 and 2007 that led to the overflow. J. Hegarty said Prein and Newhof's projected number of gallons to irrigate in 2008 to avoid another overflow is very close to actual number of gallons irrigated.

J. Hegarty said Prein and Newhof got MDEQ approval for the Township to use the orchard for irrigation, an additional 30 days of irrigation in the IMP and saved the Township \$50,000 on the traveler. He said the Township had the opportunity to nearly empty the lagoons in 2008, but did not use the traveler. F. Force said the Township could not afford the operating cost of the traveler.

J. Hegarty said Prein and Newhof taught the current operator how to make the irrigation system work (calculations and programming).

J. Hegarty said the berms are probably okay and not weakened by high levels in the lagoon. B. Vander Male said wave action in the lagoon can cause erosion of the berms. There was a discussion about the stability of berms at the irrigation site and the possible effect of high lagoon levels on those berms.

Prein and Newhof recommended continued irrigation until November 30, 2008. They estimated the number of gallons in the lagoon May 1, 2009 at 25,576,000 gallons leaving the Township no cushion.

There was a discussion about the height of the free board at the lagoons. J. Hegarty said the free board at the lagoons is more than 2 feet above the overflow pipe and measurements should be made from the top of the overflow pipe.

J. Hegarty encouraged the Township to look for additional space to get rid of waste water. D. Heffron asked if irrigation would be permitted in the 83 acre field across the road from the lagoons. He said he might consider paying for the irrigation system on that property. J. Hegarty said the hydrological capacity of the field to take water would be the issue. B. Vander Male said if the lagoons are irrigated optimally each year the Township should be gaining on lowering the lagoon volume. J. Hegarty said everything Prein and Newhof have done was to keep the Township out of trouble. He did accept the Township's criticism that Prein and Newhof should have done their own draw down test, but said a draw down test would have to have been done each week and they did not have that option during a critical overflow.

J. Hegarty said he was concerned about the direction the Township is heading for the Grattan Vergennes site irrigation upgrade and offered the Township a \$5000.00 credit on design of that project. F. Force said he appreciated the offer and will contact Prein and Newhof soon. B. Vander Male said at the time of the sewer overflow the Township and Prein and Newhof did not have an agreement on the scope and price of the overflow investigation. F. Force agreed. D. Heffron said the problem was partially the Township's fault, but said the burden should have been on Sierra Consultants to fix the problem.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, F. Force declared the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Jim Fues, Township Clerk

Date

Franklin J. Force, Township Supervisor

Date

Diane Timmons
Recording Secretary