

Grattan Township Board

Regular Meeting of May 12, 2008

Call to Order

Township Supervisor Frank Force called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

F. Force led the Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

D. Timmons read the roll call. Members present: Supervisor, F. Force, Trustee P. Knoerl, Treasurer S. Freeman and Clerk J. Fues. Members absent: Trustee D. Heffron. Township Fire Chief also attended the meeting.

Approval of Agenda

J. Fues added Saint Patrick's Church request for a liquor license under working agenda, discuss Citizen Planner and a park update under old business. F. Force added Steve Saunders under Sewer Report, a recess for closed session under new business and golf tournament, May 25, 2008 and Bridge Walk, May 26, 2008 under meeting dates. The alternative Board meeting date was corrected to May 27, 2008. P. Knoerl added Grattan Website under new business.

P. Knoerl moved and J. Fues seconded to approve the amended agenda. All ayes. The motion carried.

(D. Heffron arrived at 7:03 p.m.)

Officers Report (Clerk's Report)

Approval of Minutes

D. Heffron moved and S. Freeman seconded to approve the April 7, 2008 minutes as printed. All ayes. The motion carried.

D. Heffron moved and J. Fues seconded to approve the April 14, 2008 minutes as written. All ayes. The motion carried.

Budget Amendments

S. Freeman presented the proposed budget amendments. Each budget amendment transfers revenues from the fiscal year end balance to the fund balance carry forward. The amendments are as follows; Big Pine Island Weed (\$549.00), Big Crooked Lake Weed (\$567.00), Cowan Lake Weed \$1406.00 and Round Lake Weed \$18.00.

P. Knoerl moved and J. Fues seconded to approve the budget amendments as presented. All ayes. The motion carried.

Accounts Payable

J. Fues moved and S. Freeman seconded to approve checks 31924 thru 31957 totaling \$74,414.34 for payment. All ayes. The motion carried.

Consent Agenda

Payroll

Treasurer's Report

Correspondence

P. Knoerl moved and J. Fues seconded to approve the consent agenda. All ayes. The motion carried.

Working Agenda

Public Comments

There were none.

St. Patrick's Church Request for Liquor License

Stacy George, St. Patrick's Church representative, requested a three day liquor license for the sale of beer and wine at the annual church festival. The event will be held June 27-29, 2008. J. Fues said he contacted St. Patrick's with a reminder about the liquor license so a special meeting would not be required for their request. He asked Board members to consider giving 1 Board member authority to approve the request when it is submitted. The State of Michigan will then give final approval. Board members discussed the matter.

J. Fues moved and D. Heffron seconded to give Supervisor Frank Force authority to sign for the Township approving St. Patrick's request for a liquor license for the end of June 2008. All ayes. The motion carried.

Department Reports

Fire Department

Fire Chief Lou Kirkbride reported 7 brush fires, no vehicle fires, 0 structure fires, 1 personal injury accident (w/o extraction), 0 personal injury accidents (with extraction), 17 medical calls, 1 hazmat call, 2 service calls, 1 false alarm, 9 non-fire, 1 mutual aid given, 2 illegal burn totaling 40 for the month of April.

Fire Administration Safety Committee

P. Knoerl said the new fire hydrant and well to fill the tanker should be completed by mid August. He noted that Cannon Township recently received a new ISO rating. This rating will help residents by lowering their homeowner's insurance premiums rates. He said Cannon went thru a lengthy evaluation in order to receive the higher rating. Board members discussed having Grattan's Fire Department evaluated also and agreed it would be beneficial to township residents.

Zoning Officer Report

F. Force said a recent junk complaint regarding the Harris residence on Lessiter Avenue has uncovered an old legal challenge for that property that was never resolved. Mr. Force said the matter will be addressed again.

Safety Board of Appeals

There was no meeting.

Sewer Report

- Grattan Lagoons

F. Force said he would like to postpone replacement of the remaining 9 guide rails to help save capital costs. He contacted Prein & Newhof who said Grand Tech would like payment now for equipment they purchased for the job. D. Heffron asked if that equipment would belong to the Township or Grand Tech. Mr. Force said he would ask that question.

Mr. Force said irrigation in the old orchard has not begun. The traveler irrigation equipment is not on site and the Township has not yet received DEQ approval. He said the irrigation equipment should be in place and ready to go by the time DEQ approval is received. D. Heffron asked if DEQ approval for the Grattan Vergennes irrigation site has been received. Mr. Force said it has not been received. Mr. Heffron said he would like to plant that site when the weather warms up and asked if irrigation could be stopped for a couple of days. There was a discussion about supervision of the traveling irrigator. D. Heffron said that type of irrigator will require more supervision. He said the operator from Sierra Consultants checking lagoons should be watching the traveling irrigator also. He said the Township should negotiate the costs for this with Sierra. J. Fues suggested

beginning irrigation at the site when all the equipment is in place. P. Knoerl asked if he meant without a DEQ permit. Mr. Fues said yes, because he was concerned about the cost of repairs to lagoons if they are damaged due to high water levels. D. Heffron did not think the lagoon walls would be damaged. F. Force was not in favor of irrigating without a DEQ permit.

F. Force said by State law abandoned orchards can't stand for more than 2 years. Board members discussed the cost of tree removal by a service or allowing residents to cut the trees for fire wood. Board members agreed to try allowing removal of the trees for fire wood by residents, with the requirement that they leave any brush between the tree rows. Anyone cutting trees on the site will be required to sign a liability waiver.

Board members discussed how flow rates are being used to estimate the number of gallons the Township can remove from the lagoons and the number of gallons of waste water generated. F. Force said flow meters are very expensive. D. Heffron said the Township could use rain gauges and will provide free rain gauges. J. Fues estimated it will take 3 years to get the water levels back to where they were a few years ago. D. Heffron said the Township should run the irrigation system to the maximum this summer. P. Knoerl would like a weekly report showing how much waste water was taken in and how much was pumped out.

F. Force said mission dialers are in the budget, but each dialer needs an external enclosure. The additional cost for these will exceed budgeted amounts. He also said Prein & Newhof does not think redundant floats are necessary. Sierra Consultants believes they are necessary. Board members discussed and agreed to add the redundant floats at a later date the budget allows.

- Willow Lawn Trailer Park

F. Force informed Board members of a recent meeting with the owners of Willow Lawn Trailer Park regarding compensation for sewer repairs. The owners agreed, but asked for help with half of the \$522.50 excavation bill. Mr. Force said it was originally thought sand from the trailer park was leaking into the pump, but it was discovered that the pump was already worn out. Board members discussed the matter and agreed the Township would compensate the owners for the cost of the excavating, contingent upon successful completion of repairs.

- Steve Saunders

F. Force advised Board members that no one is living in the house Mr. Saunders owns near Woodland Park and Parle. Mr. Saunders is currently paying for sewer at that address. He has been unable to sell the home and would like to disconnect from the sewer system in the basement of that house rather than outside the house. Board members agreed that would set a bad precedent and said Mr. Saunders must follow the ordinance.

Planning Commission

F. Force said the Planning Commission eliminated PUD zoning for the Slayton Hills development at the request of the developer, Tom White. The Planning Commission discussed establishing new ordinances for PODS, outdoor wood furnaces and wind turbines.

Zoning Board of Appeals

There was no meeting.

Building Department

There were 3 building permits, 6 others, 5 electrical, 1 plumbing and 0 mechanical permits issued for a total of 15 permits in April, 2008.

Old Business

PDR Update

There was no report.

Citizen Planner

J. Fues said the Citizen Planner study guides have been received and there has been a good response from Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals members. One person has not yet registered.

Park Update

F. Force said a title search has been approved. Once an appraisal is complete a buy/sell agreement can be created. F. Force said the Township may be able to negotiate the 2-year verbal agreement based on the appraisal.

New Business

Closed Session

P. Knoerl moved and J. Fues seconded to adjourn to a closed session regarding Sierra Consultants. D. Timmons read the roll call. All ayes. The motion carried.

The regular meeting was reconvened.)

Sewer System Audit

F. Force provided information from Richard Pierson, Water/Wastewater Management Consulting regarding a review of public sewer systems. The estimated cost of the audit is

\$3000.00. D. Heffron said the Township should check references for this company. P. Knoerl suggested reviewing a sample report to see if the information would be useful. F. Force will follow up on this matter.

Foreclosure

J. Fues said some local governments are buying foreclosed homes in order to influence future use of the property. Grand Rapids has purchased foreclosed homes and repaired them for resale. Board members discussed this matter and agreed this practice would be too risky for the Township to pursue.

Review and Authorize PDR's

J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to approve Phillip J. Heffron's PDR application for parcel 41-12-01-300-019. Ayes: J. Fues, P. Knoerl, S. Freeman and F. Force. Nays: none. Abstain: D. Heffron. The motion carried.

J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to approve Philip J. Heffron's PDR application for parcels 41-12-11-100-024 and 41-12-10-226-003. Ayes: P. Knoerl, S. Freeman, J. Fues and Frank Force. Nays: none. Abstain: D. Heffron. The motion carried .

J. Fues moved and D. Heffron seconded to approve Gerald R. Poulias' PDR application for parcels 41-12-19-100-025 and 41-12-20-100-023. All ayes. The motion carried.

J. Fues moved and D. Heffron seconded to approve Dennis Malone's PDR application for parcel 41-12-25-200-002. All ayes. The motion carried.

J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to approve Joseph Jakeway's PDR application for parcels 41-12-05-400-003 and 41-12-0-40-002. All ayes. The motion carried.

Review Employee Pension Plan

J. Fues said the Township is currently using 2 different pension plan facilitators. He would like to check into using the same company for both plans. S. Freeman contacted one of the current providers, John Hancock, who said there would be no change in cost. This company allows employees to contribute to their own plan. Board members agreed to have Mr. Fues check further into this matter. Mr. Fues informed Board members that he has been contacting former employees asking them to take control of their pension plans. If no response is received, a check will be issued to those former employees. He said this is standard procedure in the industry.

Fee Schedule- Building Contractor Registration Fee

F. Force said the building contractor fee was inadvertently left off the Township's fee schedule. F. Force moved and D. Heffron seconded to amend the fee schedule to include a \$5.00 fee for registration of building contractors. All ayes. The motion carried.

Grattan Township Website

P. Knoerl said he received bids for website development from Addorio Technologies, LLC, 3 rd Wave Computing and Egov Strategies. Board members reviewed the bids. P. Knoerl moved and J. Fues seconded to award the contract to updated and redesign the Township's website to Addorio Technologies. All ayes. The motion carried.

Board Member Communications

The alternative Board meeting date is May 27, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

The regular Board meeting date is June 9, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Family, Friends and Neighbors is hosting a fundraising golf tournament for the Veterans Memorial fund on May 25, 2008. F. Force said there has been lots of support for this event, but not many golfers have signed up. He asked Board members to spread the word about this event.

F. Force said the Memorial Day Bridge Walk is “ready to roll”.

Adjournment

There being no further business, P. Knoerl declared the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Jim Fues, Township Clerk

Franklin J. Force, Township Supervisor

Diane Timmons

Recording Secretary