

Draft: 04/08/08  
Approved: 5/12/08

GRATTAN TOWNSHIP BOARD  
Special Meeting  
April 7, 2008

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

Supervisor Frank Force called meeting to order at 12.35 p.m.

**Board Members Present**

Supervisor Frank Force, Treasurer Sabrina Freeman, Clerk Jim Fues and Trustee Dennis Heffron. Also in attendance were: Dave VerSluis, Marc Middlestadt and Mike Houlihan from Sierra Consultants. Chad Sosnowski, Jim Hegarty from Prein & Newhof.

**Board Members Absent**

Trustee Paul Knoerl, excused

**Approval of Agenda**

D. Heffron moved and J. Fues supported a motion to approve the agenda as presented.  
**All Ayes**

**Approval of Minutes**

April 3, 2008 Special Meeting Minutes

J. Fues moved and S. Freeman supported a motion to approve the special meeting minutes of April 3, 2008 as presented. **All Ayes**

**Old Business**

Grattan Lagoons

Supervisor F. Force informed the board of the two current options in regards to the critical levels at the Grattan Lagoons. One of the options would be to irrigate now without a permit, the second option would be to remove waste water by tanker trucks. According to the estimate submitted by Fuller Septic Services, it would cost \$1,500 per day to remove just the amount coming in to the lagoons daily. Based on load limits only half that amount per truck could be hauled that is noted on the quote. Further discussion took place on details regarding pumping, hauling and disposing from the lagoon site. Discussion on the able capacity at the Grattan/Vergennes site was a concern. Clerk Jim Fues recommended that detailed calculations regarding the Grattan/Vergennes site be made.

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Jim Hegarty stated that Prein & Newhof would not have anything to do with the decision making that violates the law. He also informed the board that P&N is currently working with the DEQ to establish an expedited permit for the current irrigation plan. His last correspondence with the DEQ was to discuss starting up the existing irrigation site. After learning about the impact of the rainfall, Mr. Hegarty sent an email to the DEQ reporting that a large amount of remaining storage was used up because of rainfall. The goal of his email was to encourage the DEQ to respond as quickly as possible.

The question was asked what would be needed to be done, to start the existing pumps. Sierra reported that the guns need to be prepared and this would take a half a day. It was agreed that this preparation should take place so the system would be ready to start.

Chad Sosnowski reported on the current levels of the lagoons and they were at the same level as the last readings, still giving 11-14 days to respond.

Mr. Hegarty thinks pumping and hauling should be the last resort. He cautioned that to let the levels rise over the berms the lagoon could be lost. If monitored carefully sand bags could give one to two extra days if needed.

Supervisor F. Force noted that letters were sent out to customers encouraging them to use less water for one to two weeks.

Mr. Hegarty noted that the irrigation system would need to run at full capacity to disperse the amount of water that will be in the lagoons. He recommended installing a flow meter to measure the amount of water coming into the lagoons daily. With specific amounts measured coming in to the lagoons, a much more reliable prediction could be made.

It was noted that a large amount of water is coming from the Willow Lawn Trailer Park on Big Pine Island into pump station #1 which feeds directly into the Grattan Lagoons. An estimation of about 33 thousand gallons a day during hard rainfall is coming from this line. Sierra stated that they found a main that was not on any prints coming from a private hook up at the trailer park. When they video taped the line, they found that a lot of sand was entering through that line.

Trustee D. Heffron asks if the DEQ could give a permit to irrigate on some additional grounds. Mr. Sosnowski responded that the DEQ was not in favor of that.

Clerk J. Fues asked what would it take to get the apple orchard ready for irrigation. It was noted that a lot of work and cost would be required for this option.

Supervisor F. Force asks Mr. Hegarty for his recommendation, Mr. Hegarty recommended having both a hauler and the irrigation systems prepared and ready to go. Mr. Hegarty recommended monitoring the lagoons very closely. He also stated that he would email the DEQ tomorrow, and communicate to them that an emergency meeting took place and encourage them to respond as soon as possible.

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Mr. Sosnowski reported on the details and cost of renting and/or buying a traveler system to use on the orchard site for irrigation. He noted that the DEQ leaned more towards the orchard site than the existing site.

Trustee D. Heffron was in full support of having trucks as back up and allowing P&N to work with the DEQ to get an early discharge permit. He was also in favor of early irrigating if needed and documenting all aspects of the irrigation process.

The short-term goals and long-term goals were discussed in detail. The punishment towards irrigating without permission from the DEQ was clearly stated by Mr. Hegarty.

Mr. Hegarty asks how many days a week would the pumps have to be run to get rid of the allowed amount of water. Mr. Sosnowski noted that they would need to run for four days per week. It was then noted that there are three extra days that could be used to disperse more water if needed.

Trustee D. Heffron stated that corn would be the best crop to plant because it did not require a lot of time to dry out before harvesting could take place.

In review, Supervisor F. Force stated that waiting for approval from the DEQ to irrigate early is the best choice. Also, keeping a close watch on lagoon levels, and wait until one or two days before the water runs over the berms, for the board to make a decision to either irrigate early without permission or start trucking water.

Dave Versluis from Sierra had a concern about Mark Middlestats license being in jeopardy if he was the one turning the system on without permission from the DEQ. He recommended that the township be completely responsible if the decision was made to irrigate without permission.

Supervisor F. Force states that preparation on the orchard site would need to begin soon. Things that would need to be done would be; trees would need to be cleared, plan how to get the wastewater from the lagoons to the traveler system and what kind of pumps will be needed.

Trustee D. Heffron moved and J. Fues supported a motion to have trucking as a last resort and only be done if the system fails to irrigate. Supervisor F. Force would have authority to turn on the existing system for irrigation without approval from the DEQ.

J. Fues moved and D. Heffron supported an amendment to the motion stating that Supervisor F. Force would have that authority based on the economic conditions known.

**Roll Call Vote: J. Fues-y, S. Freeman-y, F. Force-y, D. Heffron-y. 4-eyes – 0-nays**

Willow Lawn Trailer Park

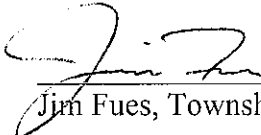
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Supervisor F. Force has scheduled a meeting with the owner and his partners of the trailer park to discuss the existing problem in the trailer park lateral. In the mean time, Sierra will be doing a smoke test through the trailer parks system to find out what the problems could actually be.

The discussion regarding the investigation of the extra line and consequences of that line proceeded in depth. A recommendation was given that the Trailer Park be notified and be given one week to commence to address this situation and thirty days to repair it. If they comply, no additional penalties will be required. Supervisor Frank Force will request compensation for the labor and material costs already incurred and created by the groundwater and sand infiltration.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

  
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Jim Fues, Township Clerk      5-13-08  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Franklin J. Force, Township Supervisor      5-13-08  
Date

Recording Secretary,  
Monica Burt

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