

**GRATTAN TOWNSHIP BOARD**  
**Regular Meeting of September 14, 2009**

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

F. Force led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Roll Call**

Members present: Supervisor F. Force, Treasurer S. Freeman, Clerk J. Fues, Trustee D. Heffron and Trustee P. Knoerl. Members absent: none. Township Fire Chief Lou Kirkbride also attended the meeting.

**4. Approval of the Agenda**

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

**5. Officers Report (Clerk's Report)**

**Approval of Minutes**

P. Knoerl moved and J. Fues seconded to approve the amended minutes of the August 17, 2009 regular meeting. All ayes. The motion carried.

**Budget Amendments**

There were no budget amendments.

J. Fues provided a Township financial packet for review noting 2 sewer account balances are correct thru the end of July.

**Accounts Payable**

J. Fues moved and S. Freeman seconded to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$28219.64 (checks 32859-32894 inclusive). All ayes. The motion carried.

**6. Consent Agenda**

**Payroll**

**Treasurer's Report (all funds)**

**Correspondence**

Draft: 09/20/09

Approved: 10/12/09

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

**7. Working Agenda**

**Hearing of Public**

**Department Reports**

Fire Department

Fire Chief Lou Kirkbride reported 1 personal injury without extraction, 8 medical calls, 2 non fire and 4 training for a total of 15 for the month of August. He gave a brief report on the fire millage, grant work, a new Kent County dispatch fee and a request by firefighters to clear the apple orchard for firewood at the Grattan sewer treatment site. Board members discussed clearing the apple orchard and agreed that if first aid is available, at least 2-3 people are on site and Lou Kirkbride knows when they will be clearing it would be okay. It was also suggested they wait until Infrastructure Alternatives is done irrigating for the season. D. Heffron said they might want to clear further out from the orchard.

S. Freeman provided a recommendation from Addorio Technologies regarding computers at the Fire Station. L. Kirkbride said some of the recommendations have already been completed.

Fire Administration and Safety Committee

P. Knoerl said the ISO rating evaluation process is continuing, but this project may be a year or more away from completion. He said the department received \$50 from the pizza fundraiser. There is no news regarding FEMA grants.

Zoning Officer Report

F. Force said there have been few complaints.

Safety Board of Appeals

P. Knoerl said the SBA approved a final draft of the Dock and Boat Ordinance for consideration by the Township Board.

J. Fues asked who the SBA Secretary is. P. Knoerl said there was no Secretary. J. Fues asked who should sign approved SBA meeting minutes. It was agreed that P. Knoerl would sign those minutes.

Sewer Report

F. Force provided a copy of the Grattan/Vergennes pump station draw downs and design comparisons spreadsheet. Board members reviewed and discussed repairing those pumps requiring immediate attention. Kent Treirweiler said some pumps have already been pulled and sent out to be rebuilt. He said there is a correlation between pumps with worn parts and callouts to those pumps.

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P. Knoerl suggested waiting for an estimate of costs to repair pumps requiring attention within the next 3-6 months. J. Fues asked if pump maintenance data belongs to the Township. Kent Treirweiler said it does.

Kent Treirweiler reviewed Infrastructure's August activity report. He said lagoon levels are good and if there are no problems or lots of rain the levels should be in good shape at the end of the irrigation season. He said the DEQ is holding up on the Grattan irrigation permit review to make sure there is adequate storage at that site.

F. Force said the Township received a letter from the DEQ in August stating that the Township has 60 days from receipt of the letter to submit a Discharge Management Plan (DMP) for the Grattan/Vergennes site. He said he has done lots of preliminary work on that plan, but technical information is also required for the DMP. He said he is not qualified to compile that data. He asked Board members if they would like him to continue or seek bids for completion of the DMP. He noted that he has contacted 5 engineering firms and none have responded yet. P. Knoerl said the Township should go out for bids for completion and management of the project. He said the Township should also request an extension from the DEQ. Board members discussed the matter. P. Knoerl said the Township knew at some point an engineering firm would be required. D. Heffron agreed reluctantly.

P. Knoerl said the Township should begin looking at loan costs and other methods of paying for the irrigation upgrade. He asked S. Freeman to begin researching available loans.

#### Planning Commission

D. Heffron said the Planning Commission reviewed 2 requests for additions on non conforming lots and approved a revised resolution for Tom Skipper clarifying what materials must be removed at the end of the season.

#### Zoning Board of Appeals

There was no meeting.

#### Building Department

There were 5 new building permits, 2 other building permits, 1 electrical permit, 2 plumbing permits and 2 mechanical permits for a total for 12 for the month of August.

#### Unfinished Business

##### Outdoor Wood Burner Ordinance

F. Force said there was nothing new to report.

##### Fuller Septic Presentation

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Approved: 10/12/09

Charlie West, Fuller Septic, explained his proposal to use the Grattan//Vergennes site to receive residential septage from Fuller Septic. He proposed building a pole barn receiving station with geo tubes, a sludge pond and basin. He said they would pump septage into pond #1. Fuller Septic would then pay the Township a set rate per gallon of septage and lease rights to the building. F. Force asked if they had done a feasibility study. Mr. West said they had not. P. Knoerl asked what engineering firm they would use. Mr. West said they haven't looked into that yet. D. Heffron asked how they test septage coming into the facility. Mr. West said they typically do random tests. He said they can test every truck coming in, but that is more expensive. J. Fues asked if it was correct that Fuller Septic uses the geo tubes to collect sludge and then they dispose of the sludge. Mr. Fuller said that was correct. D. Heffron asked what the rate per gallon would be. Mr. West said they pay 3.5¢ per gallon at the site in Muskegon ~~site~~ they are currently using. He said Fuller Septic is looking for a closer place to use. He also said it appears there will be changes in how land application is allowed. He said many other local sites are not accepting septage.

Kent Treirweiler, Infrastructure Alternatives, said no solid should be added to the lagoons. He said he would need to review the proposal to make sure the added septage would meet the system's design.

Board members discussed a feasibility study. P. Knoerl said he would only be in favor of this proposal if Fuller Septic hired Prein and Newhof to do a feasibility study. He said the Township is not in a financial position to pay for that study. D. Heffron asked how many years Fuller Septic anticipated using the facility. Mr. West said 20-25 years. J. Fues asked how close residents are to that site. It was believed residents on Abrahams Drive are about ½ mile away. Mr. West said the pole barn would reduce the smell, but would need to be vented. D. Heffron said the Township would have additional costs if this proposal were approved and there must be an advantage to sewer customers who foot the bill for operation of the system.

Board members asked Mr. West to let the Township know if Fuller Septic plans to pursue this proposal.

#### Old School Demolition

F. Force said the estimated attorney costs for a hearing to try to make the owner remove this building are between \$4000.00 and \$5000.00. The Township could also hire an excavator to remove the structure (\$4000.00) or have the fire department burn the building and then pay someone to remove the debris (\$2000.00). Board members discussed these options and ~~agreed~~ DECIDED to send a letter to the property owner stating that the building must be removed or the Township will pursue a legal hearing on the matter.

#### Tom Lane- Sewer Disconnect

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Approved: 10/12/09

F. Force read Tom Lane's July 24, 2009 letter regarding his sewer bill out loud. In response to that letter, the Township dug up his lateral, checked the line for debris (there was none) reburied and capped the lateral at a cost of \$200.00. Board members discussed how to proceed with the matter. D. Heffron said it is the sewer customer's responsibility to notify the Township when they are no longer using the system and request a sewer disconnection. He said Mr. Lane should no longer be billed and should not be refunded any payments. S. Freeman agreed. P. Knoerl also agreed that Mr. Lane should not be billed for sewer in the future. J. Fues said Mr. Lane was not the owner of the property when the existing building burned down.

#### Grattan/Vergennes- 700' Easement

Board members discussed a request to relinquish a 700' easement on property adjacent to the Grattan/Vergennes sewer site. It was agreed to wait to see if this matter is pursued and not to relinquish the easement.

#### Technical Writer

J. Fues provided a proposed job description for a technical writer. Board members discussed this new position. J. Fues said this position will help the Township reduce legal costs and also save applicants money. It was agreed to notice the technical writer position on the door and on Grattan's website for 2 weeks.

#### New Business

##### Approval of Tax Rate & Form 614 (L-4029)

J. Fues moved and D. Heffron seconded to approve the 2009 tax millage rate of .7235 mills levied. All ayes. The motion carried.

##### Assessor-Requirement to be Employee for Assessment Role

It was noted that Assessors are now required to be an employee to do tax assessment roles.

J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to employ Matt Frain in the amount of \$175.00 per month as Assessor and reduce his monthly contract by that same amount. Roll call vote: All ayes. The motion carried.

#### Type Motions

There was a discussion about pre typed motions for meetings. D. Heffron said meetings used to tape recorded. F. Force said if Board members submitted proposed motions the Transcriber would probably type the motions prior to the meeting.

##### No Sewer Disconnect-Donald Kilts-4984 Abrahams Dr.

F. Force said there is no building at this location and no record of a sewer disconnection. The property owner has been paying sewer usage charges. D. Heffron said the Township should send Mr. Kilts a letter informing him if he does

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not need sewer service at this location he should apply for a sewer disconnection. When the sewer disconnection is complete he will not be billed for that service.

No Sewer Disconnect-Big Crooked Lake Association-4976 Abrahams Dr.

F. Force said this property is also vacant. The sewer account for this property is inactive and not being billed, but the Township has no record of a sewer disconnection. It was agreed to wait for a response from Mr. Kilts regarding disconnection and cap both properties at the same time.

Dock and Boat Ordinance-SBA suggested

Board members discussed Zoning Administrator Gregg Converse's recommendations. P. Knoerl read amended sections of the Ordinance out loud. P. Knoerl said the SBA recommended the proposed Ordinance changes.

P. Knoerl moved and J. Fues seconded to approve the Dock and Boat Ordinance draft dated 8/24/09 with a correction on page 5. Roll call vote: All ayes. The motion carried.

SBA Board Member Resignation

Board members reviewed 2 applications (Kim Bradburn and Tom Manikowski) to fill the vacancy on the Safety Board of Appeals. D. Heffron said he likes Tom Manikowski, but would also like to bring in new people.

D. Heffron moved and J. Fues seconded to nominate Kim Bradburn to fill the vacated position on the SBA. All ayes. The motion carried.

Fire Millage

P. Knoerl said there was discussion at the last FASC meeting about how to inform residents of the November 3, 2009 election for fire millage renewal. J. Fues said the cost of mailing the Township newsletter in October rather than including the newsletter in the winter tax bills would be \$1200.00. It was agreed the Fire Department would post signs, the information will be put on the Township web site and cable channel and a note would be included on October sewer bills. D. Heffron said the Fire Department does a great job.

**8. Board Member Communications**

Meeting Dates

The alternative Board meeting date is September 28, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. The next regular Board meeting date is October 12, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

**9. Adjournment**

There being no further business, F. Force declared the meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

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Approved: 10/12/09

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Jim Fues, Township Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Franklin J. Force, Township Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Diane Timmons  
Recording Secretary