

GRATTAN TOWNSHIP BOARD
Budget Meeting of January 21, 2010

1. Call to Order

Township Supervisor Frank Force called the meeting to order at 9:07 a. m.

2. Roll Call

D. Timmons read the roll call. Members present: Supervisor F. Force, Treasurer S. Freeman, Clerk J. Fues, Trustee D. Heffron and Trustee P. Knoerl. Members absent: none.

3. Approval of the Agenda

D. Heffron added irrigation information under new business. P. Knoerl moved and S. Freeman seconded to approve the amended agenda. All ayes. The motion carried.

4. New Business
All Budget Issues

Board members discussed the possibility of a sewer rate increase to cover the costs of operating the system. It was agreed to discuss this matter with the Sewer Advisory Committee.

S. Freeman said she would like to pinpoint the cost of the Grattan/Vergennes upgrade assessment. F. Force said that information should be available soon. J. Fues said any money from an assessment must be used exclusively for that project and any unused money must be refunded to the sewer customers. Board members discussed completing sludge removal at both sites, sewer system improvements and the Grattan/Vergennes upgrade at one time with an assessment. D. Heffron said a large portion of sludge removal costs is hauling the sludge away. He suggested using area farms to reduce those costs. P. Knoerl asked for an updated cost for sludge removal. There was a discussion about removing sludge from both sites at one time or addressing the Grattan lagoon later. D. Heffron suggested getting quotes for sludge removal for both sites and separately to see if the Township receives a price break for removing both sites at the same time.

J. Fues left the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

There was a discussion about sewer emergency call outs. D. Heffron said sewer customers should be made aware of the damage baby wipes, rags, etc. can cause to sewer pumps. A letter to sewer customers will be included in the April 2010 sewer billing. P. Knoerl asked if the Township has data on emergency call outs.

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F. Force said he has that information from Sierra Consultants and Infrastructure Alternatives. P. Knoerl agreed to prepare a power point slide show of emergency call outs, sewer upgrade costs, sludge removal, etc. for the budget public hearing.

Board members continued to review the Township budget. They discussed billing non residents for assistance by the fire department at accidents. S. Freeman said the fire department is considering using remaining funds in their budget for equipment. S. Freeman said the cost to pay off the Township building and land is approximately \$76,000. She said funds from the reserve account are available. P. Knoerl and D. Heffron supported this and asked that this matter be discussed at the next regular Board meeting.

Irrigation Information

D. Heffron asked the Board to consider an adjustment of his bill for the lease of sewer land at the Grattan irrigation site due to loss of crops during 2009 season. Irrigation at that site left some of the land ponded with water and drowned the plants. He suspected outlets at that site are plugged and agreed to check those outlets. Board members agreed to discuss the matter at the next regular Board meeting. D. Heffron said if volume in the lagoons is high the Township will need the additional irrigation site at that site. He said irrigation pipe currently being used at the additional irrigation site is on loan. He would like to know if the Township will be using the pipe this year.

D. Heffron left the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Board members discussed the cost of acquisition of additional land for Seeley Creek Park and the cost of removing and replacing dead trees at the Township Hall.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, F. Force declared the meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Jim Fues, Township Clerk

Date

Franklin J. Force, Township Supervisor

Date

Diane Timmons

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Approved: 2/08/10

Recording Secretary