

GRATTAN TOWNSHIP BOARD
Regular Meeting of April 12, 2010

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, and Trustee P. Knoerl. Members absent: Trustee D. Heffron (arrived later).

4. Approval of the Agenda

F. Force added Kent County Drain Commissioner Bill Byl as item 1 and aerial maps as item 6 under new business. J. Fues added fireworks request as item 7 and Seventh Day Adventist notification as item 8 under new business. J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to approve the amended agenda. All ayes. The motion carried.

5. Officers Report (Clerk's Report)

Approval of Minutes

J. Fues moved and S. Freeman seconded to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2010 regular meeting as presented. All ayes. The motion carried.

(D. Heffron arrived at 7:04 p.m.)

J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2010 budget meeting as presented. All ayes. The motion carried.

J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to approve the minutes of the March 22, 2010 special meeting as presented. All ayes. The motion carried.

Budget Amendments

There were none.

Accounts Payable

J. Fues moved and S. Freeman seconded to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$77,827.86 (checks 33226-33294 inclusive). All ayes. The motion carried.

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Approved: 05/10/10

6. Consent Agenda

Payroll

Treasurer's Report (all funds)

Correspondence

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

7. Working Agenda

Hearing of Public

Dale Oberlin said according to the minutes 2 companies will test sludge in the sewer ponds and questioned why 2 samplings need to be done. F. Force said there will be two companies sampling sludge, but only one lab sample taken. D. Heffron said the bulk of the cost of sludge removal is hauling the sludge away. If the sludge is deemed safe for farm land application, that will reduce the cost of removal. F. Force said lab testing of the sludge is completed and everything is fine so the sludge will be able to be applied locally. There was discussion about when the sludge will be removed.

Nancy Benner said when the Board considers approval of a rezoning they must give explanation why the property should be rezoned (i.e. uniqueness of land) in order to avoid setting a precedent that could leave the township open to problems later.

Curtis Magoon said he has submitted a bid for select cutting of trees at both irrigation sites. Board members said they are required to have more than one bid. Bids will go out at a later date and the land will be cleared later this year.

Department Reports

Fire Department

F. Force read the March Fire Department Call report out loud. There were 3 brush fires, 1 vehicle fire, 2 structure fires, 1 personal injury accident without extraction, 1 personal injury accident with extraction, 11 medical calls, 4 non fire, and 5 trainings for a total of 28 in the month of March.

Fire Administration and Safety Committee

F. Force said the FASC discussed ISO ratings, dispatch system, bylaws, and the FEMA grant and again said they were not in favor of charging non residents for emergency runs. D. Heffron asked why the FASC was not in favor of charging for emergency runs. It was noted that some other area fire departments have discontinued charging for emergency runs because of public opinion and the cost of collecting payments.

Zoning Officer Report

F. Force gave a brief update on issues the Zoning Officer is currently working on.

Safety Board of Appeals

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There was no meeting.

Sewer Report

Monthly Report

John Rydbeck, Infrastructure Alternatives, provided copies of and reviewed the monthly sewer report. He said 2' free board markers were installed at the lagoons.

Storm Report/Damage and Grattan Irrigation Upgrade

John Rydbeck provided copies of reports on damage to sewer equipment due to March 31, 2010 and April 3, 2010 power surges. F. Force said he authorized necessary emergency repairs, with support of J. Fues and S. Freeman, due to the power surges. He said he contacted Consumers Energy to find out why those surges happened, but has not received an answer. Board members discussed filing an insurance claim for damages. There was discussion about authorizing additional repairs to insure that the sewer system is able to handle power outages due to storms this spring.

P. Knoerl moved and D. Heffron seconded to approve Infrastructure Alternatives recommended list of repairs totaling \$20,342.00 as listed on page 2 of their April 9, 2010 monthly report. All ayes. The motion carried.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission held a public hearing for a lot width to depth variance and rezoning request for Barb Poulas.

Zoning Board of Appeals

There was no meeting.

Building Department

There were 1 other building permit, 1 electrical permit and 2 mechanical permits for a total of 4 in the month of March.

Unfinished Business

PDR Update

D. Heffron said applications are being taken for the current cycle.

Budget Issues

There were none.

Ordinance Amendment- Non Conforming Lots

Board members reviewed a proposed ordinance to amend the zoning ordinance (nonconforming structures and lots). F. Force said the changes were suggested in order to make that section of the ordinance easier to understand and defend. There was discussion about the distance between houses and Board members agreed they needed confirmation that in all cases setback measurement is from the

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closest points to the lot line. F. Force agreed to verify this and report back to the Board at the regular May meeting.

Assessor's Agreement

J. Fues recommended changing the Township Assessor's job description to read *prepare and present assessment roll per statute*. F. Force moved and J. Fues seconded to approve the amended agreement between the Township of Grattan and Frain and Associates. Roll call: Ayes: J. Fues, F. Force, S. Freeman, D. Heffron and P. Knoerl. Nays: none. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

(There was a 3 minute recess at 8:27 p. m.)

New Business

Bill Byl, Kent County Drain Commissioner

Bill Byl gave a brief presentation explaining his elected job of managing storm water in Kent County. D. Heffron asked about petitioning the Drain Commission. Bill Byl said the Drain Commission maintaining the drains to original capacity usually requires a 2-4 year assessment. Those charges would be included on tax bills of residents in the drainage district. He said the county has been funding 30% of the costs for repairs, but was uncertain what the new county budget would include. If work on the drains goes beyond maintenance the Drain Commission must be petitioned by residents of the district. He said the township can also petition by resolution.

F. Force said there have been lots of problems with gravel roads in recent years. Bill Byl asked the township to e-mail a list of areas to inspect.

Steve Williams, Williams & Works, G/V Irrigation Upgrade-Select Irrigation Method

Steve Williams provided estimates of life costs for irrigation methods. Board members discussed the options. Terry Conley, Sewer Advisory Committee member, said he did not have enough information to make a choice, but had been favoring the solid set or center pivot irrigation system and leaned toward center pivot. J. Fues asked Terry Conley what other Sewer Advisory Committee member's opinions were. T. Conley said most favored center pivot. There was a discussion about using a tree or farm crop at the irrigation sites. D. Heffron was opposed to a tree crop because the tree roots damage under drains. He said existing under drains would probably be damaged if trees are removed and had great reservations as to whether those under drains are working well. He recommended a 30' spacing for drains noting the cost would not be that much more. S. Freeman was in favor of center pivot irrigation. She asked about electrical costs associated with center pivots. Steve Williams said those costs are included in the life cycle costs. P. Knoerl and F. Force were also in favor of a center pivot system. J. Fues said although he would like to see the trees remain he would go with the Sewer Advisory Committees recommendation of a center pivot system.

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Board members gave Steve Williams direction to move forward with design for a center pivot irrigation system. He said he should have a presentation ready for the June Township Board meeting.

Leave of Absence

Board members discussed Ann Ward's request for a leave of absence from June 8th or 9th to August 8th or 9th. J. Fues noted that employee handbook states a leave of absence can be no longer than 30 days. Board members had no problem with the request and agreed to amend the employee handbook.

J. Fues moved and D. Heffron seconded to remove *not to exceed 30 calendar days per year* in regards to unpaid leaves of absence from the employee handbook. All ayes. The motion carried.

P. Knoerl moved and D. Heffron seconded to approve a 60 day leave of absence for Ann Ward, Deputy Fire Chief. All ayes. The motion carried.

Sewer Advisory Committee Resolution

Board members reviewed resolution 10-016 to establish the Sewer Advisory Committee and their by-laws. Minor corrections and additions were made.

F. Force moved and D. Heffron seconded to approve the amended resolution. Roll call vote; Ayes: D. Heffron, S. Freeman, P. Knoerl, J. Fues and F. Force. Nays: none. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

Poulias Ordinance Amendment

D. Heffron said the Poulias' requested a rezoning of a proposed 10-acre split from A1 to A2. The Planning Commission reviewed this request at their April 7, 2010 meeting and agreed that the proposed split area was not prime farm land and adjoined land zoned A2. At that meeting D. Heffron said it is poor planning to split off the 10-acre parcel and then come back for additional splits later. He asked the applicants if they planned any additional splits. They said they did not. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the proposed rezoning to the Township Board.

D. Heffron agreed with Nancy Benner's concern about setting a precedent for future rezoning requests. N. Benner said the Board should justify the rezoning with specific reasons.

Board members reviewed the proposed rezoning resolution and questioned why there were no findings of fact included in the resolution to document reasons for allowing the rezoning.

(There was a 5 minute adjournment at 10:15 p.m.)

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D. Heffron moved and F. Force seconded to approve resolution 2010-013 with the addition of findings of facts after further review by the attorney. Roll call vote: Ayes; D. Heffron, F. Force, S. Freeman, J. Fues and P. Knoerl. Nays: none. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

Aerial Maps

F. Force said the cost of updated aerial maps is \$720.00. He said this was not included in the budget. Board members discussed the need for updated maps and agreed to consider purchasing maps next year.

Fireworks Request

J. Fues said he received and signed a request for Township Board approval of an application by Great Lakes Fireworks for a fireworks display at the Grattan Raceway in May. He said his signature does not authorize the display, but denotes the Township's awareness of Great Lakes Fireworks' request for a State permit.

Notification- Seventh Day Adventists

J. Fues informed the Board that he received notification of a Seventh Day Adventists youth missionary project in the Township from June-August 2010.

8. Board Member Communications

Meeting Dates

The alternative Board meeting date is April 26, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. The Sewer Advisory Field Trip is April 27, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. The next regular Board meeting date is, May 10, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. Kent County "Lunch on the Grill" is May 18, 2010 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, F. Force declared the meeting adjourned at 10:40 p.m.

Jim Fues, Township Clerk

Date

Franklin J. Force, Township Supervisor

Date

Diane Timmons
Recording Secretary