

GRATTAN TOWNSHIP BOARD
Special Meeting of August 23, 2010

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

D. Timmons read the roll call. Members present: Supervisor F. Force, Treasurer Sabrina Freeman, Clerk J. Fues, D. Heffron and Trustee P. Knoerl. Members absent: none. Alan Rumbaugh, Tom Manikowski, Dale Oberlin and Jen Medema also attended the meeting.

3. Approval of the Agenda

P. Knoerl added Grattan/Vergennes irrigation project status as item C under working agenda. D. Heffron moved and S. Freeman seconded to approve the amended agenda. All ayes. The motion carried.

4. Working Agenda
Hearing of the Public

There were no public comments.

Sewer Finances

a.) Current Status/Funds Committed

Board members discussed the financial status of the current sewer budget and reviewed revenues and expenditures by line item. J. Fues said at the current rate of spending sewer accounts will be \$43,000 over budget at the end of the current fiscal year. F. Force said power outages this season have already cost \$20,000, but noted insurance covered \$11,000. He asked if money already spent on assessment of facilities recommendations can be put back in sewer enterprise and repair and replace accounts. S. Freeman said if the project is funded by a loan, no soft costs can be paid with that money.

Alan Rumbaugh suggested creating a third account for money collected for capital improvements (CI). Board members agreed this was a good idea. ~~Board members agreed to put a freeze on any further sewer spending for the next 8 months.~~

They also discussed committed expenditures and expected revenues. F. Force reviewed several items listed as committed funds that are required by the MDNRE. There was a discussion about the MDNRE's required hydro geological study. F. Force said he asked the MDNRE if this was required because they thought the old orchard would be used for irrigation at the Grattan site. The MDNRE said it was not requested for that reason and would

be required. D. Heffron said they may be looking for the source of high nitrate levels at that site. He said irrigating when no crops are there (spring and fall) to take up the nitrates could be a factor. He said old sod and roots for the orchard site could be contributing to the nitrate levels. He recommended using the old orchard site for irrigation at the Grattan site. Jen Medema was concerned about nitrate levels in drinking water and would like this matter further investigated. Tom Manikowski agreed and asked if the township has data regarding nitrate levels. F. Force said that data is available at the township office.

b.) MDNRE Requirements

Board members discussed creating a new ordinance with recommendations for methods of water softener treatments to reduce sodium chloride levels in waste water at both sites. P. Knoerl suggested sampling water coming into the sewer system to verify what sodium chloride levels are entering the system.

There was a discussion about the timing of MDNRE's duck weed removal requirement at the Grattan site. F. Force said chemical treatment is recommended, but there is no guarantee the duck weed will not return. He has requested a delay in treatment until the irrigation season has ended, but noted there may not be any duck weed in the ponds at that time.

c.) Pump Replacements in PS #6 and PS #15

F. Force said a motion to approve replacement of PS 6 and PS 15 was denied at the Township Board's August regular meeting. He asked Board members to reconsider this matter because if both pumps at those sites are not running properly there is risk of an SSO. Board members discussed the matter.

P. Knoerl moved and D. Heffron seconded to approve replacement of PS 6 and PS 15 at a cost of \$12,000 contingent upon and provided that there is a freeze on spending for sewer O &M, sewer capital improvements and secondary contractors thru November 15, 2010. Roll call vote: Ayes: S. Freeman, P. Knoerl, J. Fues, F. Force and D. Heffron. Nays: none. The motion carried 5-0.

d.) Hydro geological Study

Board members discussed three options for the hydro geological study, William & Works' \$12,000 quote, Prein & Newhof's \$7400 quote and Prein & Newhof's \$1000 quote to write a letter to the MDNRE to persuade them not to require the hydro geological study. P. Knoerl said he would like more details regarding that letter. F. Force will contact Prein & Newhof and provide that information at the next regular meeting.

5. Grattan/Vergennes Irrigation Project

Draft: 08/25/10

Approved: 09/13/10

F. Force said last week Williams & Works submitted the work plan and construction plan to the MDNRE. If approval is received in a timely manner Williams & Works will go out for bids at the end of September and work will begin on the project in October. D. Heffron asked when irrigation will end at the Grattan/Vergennes site. F. Force said Infrastructure Alternatives might be able to stop irrigation at that site in the beginning of October. He said the new irrigation system must be up and running May 1, 2011.

P. Knoerl said funding for the project should be secured. Board members discussed funding the project with a loan or bond. As an exact cost for the project is not set yet, it was agreed to contact 3 banks regarding rates on a loan for \$500,000 and \$750,000 and have that information available for a September special meeting to approve bids and loans.

6. New Business

There was no new business.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, F. Force declared the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Jim Fues, Township Clerk

Date

Franklin J. Force, Township Supervisor

Date

Diane Timmons
Recording Secretary