

GRATTAN TOWNSHIP BOARD
Regular Meeting of May 10, 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

D. Timmons read the roll call. Members present: Supervisor F. Force, Clerk J. Fues, and Trustee P. Knoerl. Members absent: Trustee D. Heffron (excused, may arrive later) and S. Freeman (excused). Fire Chief Lou Kirkbride, Zoning Administrator Gregg Converse, Planning Commission Chairperson Alan Rumbaugh and John Rydbeck, Infrastructure Alternatives, also attended the meeting.

4. Approval of the Agenda

J. Fues added election costs as item 10 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 P. Knoerl seconded to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2010 regular meeting as presented. All ayes. The motion carried.

Budget Amendments

J. Fues explained proposed budget amendments for the purchase of portable pumps for the Fire Department and fund balances carried forward for Big Pine Island, Big Crooked Lake and Cowan Lake weed revenues. J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to approve budget amendments as presented. All ayes. The motion carried.

Accounts Payable

J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$122,525.38 (checks 33295-33343 inclusive plus EFT Metlife/Ret.). All ayes. The motion carried.

6. Consent Agenda

Payroll

Treasurer's Report (all funds)

Draft: 05/12/10

Approved: 06/14/10

Correspondence

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

7. Working Agenda

Hearing of Public

There were no public comments.

Department Reports

Fire Department

L. Kirkbride reported 3 brush fires, 1 personal accident without extraction, 12 medical calls, 1 mutual aid given, 2 trainings and 3 training meetings for a total of 23 in the month of April.

Fire Administration and Safety Committee

F. Force said the FASC discussed fundraisers, progress on the ISO rating, poor visibility at the intersection of Lessiter and Old Belding Road, job descriptions and amending the bylaws regarding frequency of FASC meetings.

Zoning Officer Report

F. Force reviewed the Enforcement Officer's April 2010 complaint report.

Safety Board of Appeals

There was no meeting.

Sewer Report

IAI Monthly Report

John Rydbeck, Infrastructure Alternatives (IA), reviewed the April sewer report. He said there were extensive power outages to both systems in April. IA provided Geoffrey List MDNRE with a copy of the end of the season winter storage report. J. Rydbeck said this year's storage season was 5 months, not the usual 6 months. F. Force asked if would be using the orchard at the Grattan site for irrigation this season. J. Rydbeck said he was not sure, but would like to have the option of using the orchard for times when the farm field may not be available for irrigation.

Generator

F. Force asked Board members to consider purchasing a generator to replace an inoperable generator. The township is currently renting a generator at a standby rate of \$600 per week. He said if the township experiences power outages they run the risk of an ISO without an additional generator. He provided quotes from Cummins Bridgeway. Board members reviewed the quotes and agreed that a 50KW used generator would be the best option. F. Force said this generator was returned by Meijer after using the generator 133-414 hours when they redesigned power requirements for their refrigeration section. Board members discussed how

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to pay for the generator. Due to the absence of the Treasurer they were not sure what funds were available. P. Knoerl suggested requesting payment terms of July 31, 2010 from the vendor in order to allow receipt of July quarterly sewer billing funds before payment for the generator is due. J. Fues said he could not support a motion to purchase without knowing where the money was coming from.

(D. Heffron arrived at 7:50 p.m.)

P. Knoerl moved and D. Heffron seconded to purchase a 50KW Kohler generator provided the unit is inspected and approved by a qualified source and payment terms of due July 31, 2010 are agreed upon. Roll call vote: Ayes: D. Heffron, F. Force and P. Knoerl. Nays: J. Fues. The motion carried 3-1.

Insurance Claim

F. Force said he filed an \$8000.00 claim for damages to sewer equipment during the March 31 and April 3, 2010 power surges. He has not heard anything from the insurance company yet. He said he also contacted Consumers Energy who denied any responsibility because surge protection at the sewer systems is not up to specifications.

Planning Commission

There was no meeting.

Zoning Board of Appeals

F. Force said the ZBA approved a variance for an accessory building in a front yard on Wabasis Avenue.

Building Department

There were 6 other building permits, 15 electrical permits for a total of 21 in the month of April.

Unfinished Business

PDR Update.

D. Heffron said it looks like 5 farms in the county will qualify for federal funding and 2 more may qualify when appraisals are submitted.

Budget Issues

There were no budget issues.

New Business

Non-Conforming Ordinance Amendments

Board members said they were concerned that the proposed ordinance amendment for nonconforming structures and lots would not maintain a 10' setback between houses. Zoning Administrator Gregg Converse said the proposed changes were recommended after 2 recent applications for variances on small, nonconforming

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lake lots. A separation distance of 10' must still be maintained between structures. The proposed changes clarify how to measure the setback and where there are exceptions. The existing ordinance does not allow Planning Commission approval of the addition of a second story. Applicants were required to seek a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Board members discussed the matter. F. Force moved and D. Heffron seconded to approve the proposed ordinance amendments. Roll call vote: Ayes: F. Force, D. Heffron, J. Fues and P. Knoerl. Nays: none. The motion carried 4-0.

Art Ward- Leave of Absence

F. Force read a letter from Art Ward requesting a leave of absence out loud. J. Fues moved and D. Heffron seconded to approve the request for a leave of absence. All ayes. The motion carried.

Lawn Maintenance Contract

J. Fues provided bid information from 4 companies who submitted lawn care bids for 2010. D. Heffron asked if any bidders were from the township. J. Fues said no bids were received from township residents. D. Heffron moved and F. Force seconded to grant the 2010 lawn care contract to C & R Lawn Service and Snow Plowing effective May 10, 2010. All ayes. The motion carried.

Infrastructure Alternatives Contract Extension

F. Force said the second 6 month probationary period of Infrastructure Alternatives contract has expired. He asked Board members to consider extending the contract for a total of 3 years. He reminded Board members that Infrastructure Alternatives contract can be terminated for no reason after 30 days. Board members discussed the matter. J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to extend Infrastructure Alternatives existing contract by one year. J. Fues said this will be an addendum to the existing agreement. Roll call vote: Ayes: J. Fues, F. Force, D. Heffron and P. Knoerl. Nays: none. The motion carried 4-0.

Sewer Connection

F. Force explained Denny Wittenbach's inquiry regarding sewer availability for parcel 41-12-33-178-016 located at 11459 Willowbrook. After review by Prein and Newhof and the Township Attorney it was determined that a sewer extension could be approved. F. Force said Denny Wittenbach paid most engineering and attorney costs. D. Heffron moved and J. Fues seconded to approve the resolution as presented to allow the connection. Roll call vote: Ayes: D. Heffron, F. Force, J. Fues and P. Knoerl. Nays; none. The motion carried 4-0.

Property Foreclosure Sale

F. Force provided information from the Kent County Treasure regarding foreclosed properties in the township. Those properties are being offered for purchase by the township under the first right of refusal. Board members discussed the matter and agreed not to purchase the properties.

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Concrete Repair

F. Force said he received 2 bids for concrete work at the Township Hall. He said De Young Concrete recommended and bid the removal of more sidewalk than included in Joe’s Creative Impressions bid. D. Heffron was concerned that damage to existing sidewalks was caused because there is clay underneath. Board members took a 3 minute break to look at the sidewalk. F. Force will request revised bids to include all damaged sidewalks, a layer of sand and wired cement.

Ashley Cemetery

F. Force said he would like to understand how Ashley Cemetery is being run. He said the cemetery is not being run per township ordinance and noted the township is accountable for the cemetery’s money. D. Heffron explained the history of the cemetery. He said Ashley cemetery has an association with checks and balances formed about 100 years ago. After review of the cemetery ordinance Board members agreed amendments should be made to the ordinance. J. Fues will review the ordinance. He will contact the association to obtain a copy of maps and fund information.

Election Costs

J. Fues said townships will be required to pay for elections costs previously paid by the county. Polling locations will be required to be completely handicapped accessible and could be fined if not in compliance. Application for available grant money must be submitted by July 31, 2010.

8. Board Member Communications

Meeting Dates

The next regular Board meeting date is June 14, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. The second Board meeting date (as needed) is June 28, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. The next Sewer Advisory Committee meeting is May 18, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, F. Force declared the meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Jim Fues, Township Clerk

Date

Franklin J. Force, Township Supervisor

Date

Diane Timmons
Recording Secretary