

GRATTAN TOWNSHIP BOARD
Regular Meeting of February 28, 2011

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, Treasurer S. Freeman, Clerk J. Fues, Trustee D. Heffron and Trustee P. Knoerl. Members absent: none. Steve Williams, Williams and Works, also attended the meeting.

4. Approval of the Agenda

J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to approve the agenda as presented. 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 February 14, 2011 regular Board meeting as presented. All ayes. The motion carried.

Budget Amendments

There no amendments.

Accounts Payable

J. Fues moved and S. Freeman seconded to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$3818.73 (checks 35386-35397 inclusive). All ayes. The motion carried.

6. Working Agenda

Hearing of Public

There were no public comments.

Unfinished Business

Budget Issues

There were none.

Terry Conley for Sewer Advisory Committee- 3 Year Term 2011-2013

F. Force nominated Terry Conley for a 3 year term (2011-2013) on the Sewer Advisory Committee. J. Fues seconded the nomination. Roll call: Ayes: F.

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Force, S. Freeman, D. Heffron, J. Fues and P. Knoerl. Nays: none. The motion carried 5-0.

New Business

Pictures in Senior Room

F. Force said a resident would like to display some of their artwork in the senior room. Office staff did not think that was a good idea, but suggested that donated artwork with contact information might be okay if this proposal is approved by the Board. Board members discussed the matter and agreed to allow residents only to donate artwork. They discussed displaying historical pictures or artwork of the Township or current pictures of natural beauty within Grattan Township. Board members agreed to let F. Force make the final decision on this matter.

Salary Resolution

P. Knoerl moved and S. Freeman seconded to adopt resolution 2011-11 to set the Township Clerk's salary at \$20,000 (the same as the last fiscal year) for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. Roll call: Ayes: F. Force, S. Freeman, D. Heffron and P. Knoerl. Nays: none. Abstain: J. Fues. The motion carried 4-0-1.

J. Fues moved and S. Freeman seconded to adopt resolution 2011-004 to set the Township Supervisor's salary at \$20,000 (the same as the last fiscal year) for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. Roll call: Ayes: S. Freeman, P. Knoerl, J. Fues and D. Heffron. Nays: none. Abstain: F. Force. The motion carried 4-0-1.

J. Fues moved and S. Freeman seconded to adopt resolution 2011-007 to set Township Trustee's salary at \$5000 for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. Roll call: Ayes: J. Fues, S. Freeman and F. Force. Nays: none. Abstain: D. Heffron and P. Knoerl. The motion carried 3-0-2.

J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to adopt resolution 2011-005 to set the Treasurer's salary at \$20,000 (the same as the last fiscal year) for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. Roll call: Ayes: J. Fues, P. Knoerl, D. Heffron and F. Force. Nays: none. Abstain: S. Freeman. The motion carried 4-0-1.

Robert's Rules of Order Resolution

J. Fues moved and S. Freeman seconded to adopt resolution 2001-008 to adopt Roberts Rules of Order for the fiscal year 2011-2012. Roll call: Ayes: J. Fues, F. Force, P. Knoerl, D. Heffron and S. Freeman. The motion carried 5-0.

Property Development Grant Resolution

J. Fues moved and S. Freeman seconded to adopt resolution 2011-11 to support the efforts of the Grattan Township Parks & Recreation Committee for the development of Seeley Creek Park and further agrees to fund development with matching funds, per grant requirements, of 25%, not to exceed \$10,000, with the balance to be funded by a MNRTF Grant.

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Roll call: Ayes. J. Fues, P. Knoerl, D. Heffron, S. Freeman and F. Force. Nays: none. The motion carried 5-0.

Grattan/Vergennes Irrigation Upgrade Update

Williams & Works Engineering Fees

Steve Williams, Williams & Works, said they have exceeded their \$20,000 bid by \$10,200 and asked the Board to consider approving an addition of \$8000 to pay for remaining work on the project and an additional \$2,200 to cover expenses incurred during the design phase. He said the discharge management plan required several iterations, some background information provided was inaccurate and need to be redone and the bidding process took longer than anticipated. He said Williams & Works is willing to take a note from the township in the amount of \$10,200 for these costs and be paid over time from the sewer fund.

He estimated remaining work on this project will take one month.

Board members discussed the matter. J. Fues asked Steve Williams to submit documentation of the overages. He said he would then have to go back and see what was bid. He was concerned that the bid did not include a hydro geological study. Steve Williams will provide that information to all Board members.

D. Heffron said that would be a 50% increase and he would have a hard time justifying that increase.

S. Freeman said she was not in favor of paying any additional money, but will consider any information provided by Williams & Works.

P. Knoerl said he also would have a hard time justifying the approval of additional funds to sewer customers, but will consider any information provided by Williams & Works.

F. Force agreed with P. Knoerl.

It was agreed to review the information Steve Williams provides and consider the matter at the March 14, 2011 meeting.

Steve Williams informed Board members that the MDNRE has extended the deadline to meet compliance for the Grattan/Vergennes upgrade until November 30, 2011.

Additional Parcels at Irrigation Site

F. Force said a Board member asked the Board to consider the addition of a parcel to the NE and another parcel to the SW for additional irrigation ground at the Grattan/Vergennes site. The total additional irrigation ground would be approximately 37 acres. F. Force provided a \$55,000 estimate, submitted by Elvan Rush, for clearing the two parcels and installing under drains for informational purposes to help the Board make a decision. F. Force said an

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additional section to the irrigation mechanism and an end gun may also be required and the township would have to seek approval from the MDNRE for the change in the construction plan and would have to amend the discharge management plan. Steve Williams said those changes should not be a big deal to the MDNRE. The permit needs to be amended anyway and these proposed changes could just be added.

Board members discussed the matter. P. Knoerl said the addition of the proposed irrigation land would also have to be justified. He said there does not appear to be a need for additional irrigation land at this time. F. Force said he would not be opposed to the addition of an end gun with a booster to irrigate the corners of existing irrigation land. Steve Williams said the end gun may be able to achieve that, but the addition of a booster would significantly increase the cost. J. Fues was in favor of the addition of an end gun. Steve Williams said the addition of an end gun could always be added in the future.

S. Freeman asked how many more acres of irrigation would be added with the addition of an end gun. Steve Williams estimated the end gun would add 3 to 4 acres.

D. Heffron asked how many gallons of water are allowed for irrigation at this time. Steve Williams said 44 million gallons a year (2 inches per week for 26 weeks annually). D. Heffron said we currently only irrigate 25 million annually per year. He said 44 million gallons per year was not a realistic number and the cushion is not as large as perceived. He said applying 2" of effluent per week is okay without significant rain. He said you can't have too much irrigation land. Steve Williams agreed that when there is a lot of precipitation, irrigation land will be wet during the crop cycle. D. Heffron said now is the time to add irrigation land. He was not in favor of just adding an end gun. He suggested getting the land ready now and put in irrigation equipment when needed.

F. Force was not sure he could support spending \$55,000 for this proposal. He said the Sewer Advisory Committee was not in favor of this proposal.

P. Knoerl said he had nothing to justify this proposal. He was not opposed to the addition of an additional gun.

J. Fues was in favor of adding the end gun, but could not justify the additional irrigation land.

S. Freeman said some residents are having a hard time paying for sewer. She was concerned about adding more costs to the irrigation upgrade.

P. Knoerl said he was not opposed to getting a quote as an addendum for this proposal. P. Knoerl said bids could then be reviewed to see how revenue generated by leasing the land would offset the cost. J. Fues said if the land is

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leased at the current rate, that revenue might pay for the under drains. P. Knoerl asked if the land could be leased without irrigation. He said it would probably be cheaper to do this project with the original contractor added as an engineering addendum. Board members agreed to pursue this matter. Steve Williams said if the Board desires he would handle this matter after the township has secured financing and contracts are awarded.

D. Heffron said clearing of the existing irrigation fixtures was not part of the bid. Bidding for the farm lease should take place soon. The clearing should begin before the construction begins. Steve Williams said as soon as the ground is dried out and financing is secured they would like to begin construction. He estimated construction would start at the beginning of May. He would like to review wording of the lease before it is offered to make sure it is clear that this clearing of irrigation fixtures will be the farmer's responsibility.

Bid Selection

F. Force provided a list of bids on the irrigation upgrade project. F. Force said an additional \$41,000 for Consumers Energy's site inspection should be added to the Township's irrigation upgrade budget. Steve Williams said when awarded, the contract should be contingent upon the contractor providing valid insurance and bonds, and the township being able to secure financing.

S. Freeman asked if all bids were to specification. Steve Williams said all bids were to plans and specifications. One bidder offered additional items if the township wanted. She asked if there were copies of the bid documents. Steve Williams said all the bids were lump sum bids. Steve Williams has prepared a contract for the project.

D. Heffron said for the record that he was not opposed to the bid, but opposed to the irrigation we are doing. He said he shares concerns about spending more money, but there needs to be a cushion for irrigating. He said the irrigation numbers are too tight.

F. Force moved and P. Knoerl seconded to approve a contract to C & L Trucking & Excavating for the Grattan/Vergennes irrigation upgrade not to exceed \$221,407.00, contingent upon receipt of required bonds and insurance from C & L Trucking & Excavating and approval of financing acceptable to the township. Roll call: Ayes: J. Fues, F. Force, S. Freeman and P. Knoerl. Nays: D. Heffron. The motion carried 4-1.

Board members discussed 2 proposed options submitted by Mark Nettleton, Mika Meyers Beckett for securing financing for sewer upgrades.

P. Knoerl moved and J. Fues seconded to request Mika Meyers Beckett & Jones to seek financing for bids for the Grattan/Vergennes irrigation upgrade and

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Infrastructure Alternatives recommended electrical and mechanical upgrade work not to exceed \$500,000.

Roll call: Ayes: P. Knoerl, J. Fues, D. Heffron, S. Freeman and F. Force. Nays: none. The motion carried 5-0.

Grandtech Invoices

F. Force said 2 dollar amounts approved by the Board for repairs to the sewer system by Grandtech were billed at a higher amount. D. Heffron said before approving work by Grandtech, the township should clarify whether the amount submitted is an estimate or a bid. Board members said all bids should be dated, submitted in writing and sent to the township via e-mail, fax or U. S. mail. F. Force will address the Board's concern with Grandtech. F. Force said Grandtech is a good company that does quality work and provides good service. He said he would not support using a different contractor.

2011/2012 Budget Discussion

Board members reviewed and made changes to the proposed 2011/2012 budget. There was a discussion regarding paid time off. A pay raise for the Fire Chief was also recommended. There will be a public hearing prior to approval of the final 2011/2012 budget at the March 14, 2011 meeting.

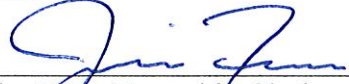
7. Board Member Communications

Meeting Dates

The next regular Board meeting date is March 14, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. The next Sewer Advisory meeting is March 8, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. A Kent County Land Bank Forum will be held March 23, 2011 from 3:30-5:30 at the Dominican Center at Marywood, Grand Rapids.


8. Adjournment

There being no further business, F. Force declared the meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.



Jim Fues, Township Clerk

3-16-11
Date



Franklin J. Force, Township Supervisor

3-14-11
Date

Diane Timmons
Recording Secretary