

GRATTAN TOWNSHIP BOARD
Regular Meeting of April 11, 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. Fire Chief Lou Kirkbride also attended the meeting.

4. Approval of the Agenda

J. Fues moved and D. Heffron seconded to approve the amended agenda. All ayes. The motion carried.

5. Officers Report (Clerk's Report)

Approval of Minutes

P. Knoerl moved and S. Freeman seconded to approve the minutes of the March 14, 2011 regular meeting as amended. All ayes. The motion carried.

Budget Amendments

There were no amendments.

Accounts Payable

J. Fues moved and S. Freeman seconded to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$51,907.29 (checks 35431-35470 inclusive). All ayes. The motion carried.

Budget Performance 2010-2011

J. Fues reviewed budget performance for the 2010-2011 fiscal year. He said two billing items (Mika, Meyer and Infrastructure Alternatives) for that fiscal year have not yet been received. Overall the spending for the fiscal year was within budget.

6. Consent Agenda

Payroll

Treasurer's Report (all funds)

Correspondence

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J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl 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

Fire Chief Lou Kirkbride said there was 1 brush fire, 1 structure fire, 1 personal injury accident without extraction, 9 medical calls 1 non fire, 3 mutual aid given, 2 trainings and 2 training meetings for a total of 20 in the month of March.

He said the new fire engine is in full service.

Fire Administration and Safety Committee

There was no meeting.

Zoning Officer Report

F. Force said there are no new complaints.

Safety Board of Appeals

There was no meeting.

Sewer Report

J. Rydbeck reviewed Infrastructure Alternative's March 2011 monthly report. J. Fues asked J. Rydbeck if he had information about using a basket at the intake to prevent rags and other debris from entering pump stations. J. Rydbeck said Infrastructure Alternatives has previously used this equipment. He said that equipment is labor intensive and he would not recommend using it. He said customer education is the best preventative measure. J. Fues asked and J. Rydbeck agreed to identify all costs for removing rags from pump stations and to identify each pump station involved.

Irrigation Plan

D. Heffron said irrigation at the Grattan/Vergennes site will require a different level of management when the center pivots are installed. He asked J. Rydbeck if he has used a center pivot before. J. Rydbeck said he has not. He said Infrastructure will use the allowed application rate. D. Heffron was concerned about how rainfall will impact irrigation. He recommended using the allowed application less rainfall for the week to get a starting point and then see how the land drains. J. Rydbeck said Infrastructure will ease into irrigation at the site and keep an eye on ponding and lagoon levels.

D. Heffron asked when the Grattan/Vergennes upgrade project will begin. F. Force estimated the project will start the middle of May. D. Heffron asked why it

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was starting so late. F. Force said bids for the project have just been received. Financing for the project will be completed May 10, 2011. Board members discussed timing of the upgrade and irrigation at that site. F. Force said an extension to November 2011 to complete the irrigation upgrade was granted by the State. Board members agreed to begin irrigation as soon as the upgrade is complete. P. Knoerl said a tipping bucket will be installed at the Grattan irrigation site to monitor rainfall and asked if a tipping bucket could also be installed at the Grattan/Vergennes site. F. Force agreed to get a quote for installation of a tipping bucket for the Grattan/Vergennes site.

F. Force said the amended Grattan discharge permit has been received. It allows flexibility to add the old orchard without further approval, other than the submission of an amended discharge plan. Board members discussed clearing trees from the orchard. J. Fues said according to the township's insurance carrier, the township could allow residents to cut and remove wood from the site if they sign a waiver. F. Force said he had a \$1500 quote from an excavator to clear the old orchard. He will get an updated quote. D. Heffron asked if the outlets have been checked at that site. F. Force said he called a contractor, but has not received a quote. F. Force said he will call the contractor again. D. Heffron said subsurface drains should also be checked.

Planning Commission

F. Force said the Planning Commission reviewed Brian Heethius' request for a private road on Lessiter Avenue near Woodland Park Drive. A public hearing regarding this request will be held in May.

The Planning Commission also reviewed Jody Hall's request for a rezoning. To date, the Halls have not submitted required documents for a public hearing.

Commission members also discussed a proposed remodel of a home located on a non conforming lot owned by Dave and Dawn Emelander.

Zoning Board of Appeals

There was no meeting.

Building Department

There was no Building Department report.

Unfinished Business

PDR Update

D. Heffron said applications can be submitted until the end of April.

D. Heffron said Michael Wittenbach made application to the Farmland and Open Space Preservation program (PA 116). He noted that this type of application requires township approval. Board members discussed the application request.

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D. Heffron moved and J. Fues seconded to approve Michael Wittenbach's PA 116 application. Roll call: Ayes: D. Heffron, J. Fues, F. Force, S. Freeman and P. Knoerl. Nays: none. The motion carried 5-0.

Excavator's Licensing/Registration and Letter of Credit-Sewer System

F. Force said the Board previously discussed amending requirements for excavators working on the sewer system. J. Fues said after review he determined that excavators doing residential work need to be State licensed; they do not have to be State licensed for commercial and municipal work.

J. Fues presented proposed amendments to Section 515 of the Sewer Connection, Use and Rate Ordinance. Board members reviewed the proposed changes. J. Fues said the proposed ordinance amendments will require a public hearing. J. Fues provided an amended application for sewer excavator/plumber registration form to include requirement of a State license for plumbers working on the sewer system and a \$10,000 performance bond or letter of credit per each active permit. D. Heffron was concerned that all excavators working in the township are not required to provide a State license. F. Force will find out exactly what the township requires for non sewer excavators working in the township.

J. Fues moved and D. Heffron seconded to move this matter to public hearing at the next Board meeting. Roll call: Ayes: F. Force, S. Freeman, J. Fues, P. Knoerl and D. Heffron. Nays: none. The motion carried 5-0.

Employee Handbook Revision 6

J. Fues reviewed amendments to the employee handbook (revision 6) and made a minor change. It was noted that all employees will receive a copy of the revised handbook. Each employee must sign their copy. Copies of employee's signatures will be kept on file in the Clerk's office.

J. Fues moved and D. Heffron seconded to approve employee handbook revision # 6 as amended on page 24. Roll call: Ayes: J. Fues, S. Freeman, F. Force, D. Heffron and P. Knoerl. Nays: none. The motion carried 5-0.

Loan for Sewer Upgrade/ Contractor Bids for Sewer Upgrade

F. Force said the township received only one bid for the two categories. Two bidders withdrew their bids saying they were too busy. Total cost of the 2 bids is \$156,840.71. Board members discussed the matter. P. Knoerl said this includes the replacement of 6 panels. F. Force said approximately 6 other panels will have replacement parts installed. P. Knoerl asked if there would be electrical permits and drawings for each panel. F. Force said drawings will be provided by Kennedy Industries. F. Force said each panel will include a schematic drawing inside and all permits will be obtained.

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Board members reviewed resolution 2011-012 authorizing financing of sewer improvement projects. F. Force said the proposed loan amount is \$457,000. P. Knoerl asked when the new sewer assessment bill will be mailed to customers. D. Timmons said the sewer assessment bill will be mailed at the end of June with quarterly sewer usage bills. Board members also discussed repayment of the loan.

J. Fues moved and P. Knoerl seconded to approve resolution 2011-012 as presented. Roll call: Ayes: J. Fues, P. Knoerl, S. Freeman, D. Heffron and F. Force. Nays: none. The motion carried 5-0.

Farmland Bids

D. Heffron said the farmland lease for Grattan/Vergennes should include the removal of plastic from the old irrigation system. F. Force said the lease should say the land may not be farmed this year, but a cover crop will be allowed. P. Knoerl said bids for the farmland lease should go out in May 2011. F. Force will prepare the farmland lease. P. Knoerl said the Board also discussed including additional farmland at the Grattan/Vergennes site for bid. It was agreed this should be a separate bid at a later date.

D. Heffron said the township should start lining up farmland for the application of sludge two years prior to the application. J. Fues said funds for that project will not be accumulated for another 5 years. P. Knoerl said the Sewer Advisory Committee could review sludge removal costs and consider an increase to allow the completion of this project earlier. D. Heffron said the township might get a better price if sludge removal is done in the off season.

New Business

Accident Fund- Rep. Firm

J. Fues said when the township changed insurance carriers there was a considerable cost savings. He asked Board members if they would like to move accident/workman's compensation coverage from Burnham & Flowers to Pinnacle Insurance. Board members discussed the matter. J. Fues agreed to check out premium costs from both insurance carriers. P. Knoerl said if costs are the same or better he would agree with the change. There was Board consensus to make the change if Pinnacle Insurance's costs are the same or better than Burnham & Flowers Insurance.

Annual Audit

J. Fues said the township's annual audit will be May 9, 2011. Cost for the audit is \$4,200.

8. Board Member Communications

Meeting Dates

The next regular Board meeting date is, May 9, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. The next Sewer Advisory Committee meeting date is April 19, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.

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9. 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