

**BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2014**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular monthly meeting of the Bridgewater Township Board of Trustees was called to order by Supervisor Smith at 7:08 p.m. followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag at Bridgewater Township Hall, 10990 Clinton Road, Manchester, MI.

Present: Supervisor Ronald Smith, Clerk Laurie Fromhart, Treasurer Michelle McQueer and Trustees David Faust and Wes Cowden.

Attendance: 28

II. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

A resident ~~Mark Wegner 13208 Abel Road~~ read a statement into the record on behalf of a group of residents regarding a recent petition circulating in the Township.

A resident ~~Grant Howard 13214 Wallace Road~~ stated he wanted to address the concerns about trails because of a previous statement made by the Board that a lot of concerns weren't raised by residents. The resident ~~Howard~~ listed the following concerns: invasion of Bridgewater from the outside, public use increases liability for both township and adjacent property owners, taxes could increase, increase in crime, litter and vandalism, invasion of privacy and trespassing, noise and sight pollution, destruction of natural areas, increased load on our Township infrastructure and roadways, and the use of trails can be changed later.

A resident ~~Ryan Shankland 12779 Hogan Road~~ stated he attended the last meeting when we opposed this but didn't personally speak then and felt the Board wasn't taking us seriously. The resident ~~Shankland~~ stated when we come here we come in unity and he wanted to make his voice heard tonight that no means no and this is not what we want here.

A resident ~~Dan Kofahl 12836 Allen Road~~ asked the Board to understand this is not what we want here and all of these are his concerns as well as his neighbors and he doesn't believe the Board took us seriously at the last meeting. The resident ~~Kofahl~~ also asked how the Dindoffer property came about for nomination.

A resident ~~Kris Melcher 13210 Logan Road~~ stated she doesn't think we can reiterate this enough and revisiting something that nobody wants is ridiculous and a waste of our time.

A resident ~~Linda Renner~~ asked why the County wasn't turned down and why is it still pending.

A resident ~~John Wheeler 10525 Kies Road~~ stated he came here in support of the petition and it was his understanding that a trail through Bridgewater to any extent is not what the people want.

A resident ~~John Dindoffer~~ asked how the Dindoffer parcel affects the greenway project.

Supervisor Smith stated he would address the public's questions under his report and this will be on the agenda in the future. Smith noted the Board has been discussing this issue in his reports to the Board.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Cowden moved to approve the January 2, 2014 meeting minutes as amended. Smith seconded the motion which was adopted unanimously.

IV. REVIEW AND APPROVE AGENDA

Fromhart moved to amend the agenda to add the Township's Response to the County's December 10, 2013 letter under the regular agenda and to move reports down after the regular agenda. Motion failed for lack of support. McQueer moved to approve the agenda as presented. Faust seconded the motion which was adopted unanimously.

Public Safety Report – No report.

V. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDANCE

A. Treasurer's Report

~~McQueer thanked the public for attending the meeting tonight and stated nothing has been brought before the Board to vote on. McQueer indicated she supports the consent judgment and she has always been in opposition to connecting trails but is not opposed to preserves because our Township supports preservation and she doesn't believe we have a right to tell property owners not to engage in this type of activity. McQueer also stated she has no intentions of voting to connect trails or to open up the consent agreement.~~ McQueer submitted a written report to the Board regarding banking, tax collection, WWTP billing, and investments.

B. Clerk's Report

Fromhart reported Manchester Schools has called for a special election on May 6, 2014 for an operating millage renewal and noted they have until February 25th to file the ballot language with the County Clerk. Fromhart reported Lucas finalized the easement language for H&H Farm LLC and the current easement of record only covers the initial parcel before the two parcels were combined. Fromhart reported on the application for sewer connection and that Dexter Township has offered the use of their webcam for a trial run at broadcasting the Board meetings. Fromhart reported she was unaware of the Supervisor's meeting with County Parks on January 22nd and that she met with the insurance agent regarding annual renewal of the Township's insurance policy on January 29th. Fromhart also reported the Board may need to find someone else to construct the railing for the hall and repair the public notice box.

C. Supervisor's Report

Smith reported the plant operator and Tetra Tech ran some tests on the pumps at WWTP and they are making progress towards an understanding that Xela Pack is not part of the problem. Smith reported they are going to explore the down side of the plant to see if it is built according to the as built drawings and that Tetra Tech recognizes the plant has serious flow problems. Smith also reported they have reached an engineering solution for the dissolved oxygen failures which is about 4 failures per year. Smith reported he met with County Parks because they were not aware there was a residence adjacent to the Dindoffer property. Smith indicated the Board asked him last month to respond to the County's December 10th letter informing them they have to adhere to the consent judgment but he has not sent an official letter yet. Smith stated he did contact the Township attorney and when he writes the letter he will have the Township attorney review it. Smith indicated he responded to the County verbally that the Board would never allow a trail to be connected to the Dindoffer parcel. Smith noted the only way a trail could be connected to the Riverbend Preserve is if the Board agrees to negotiate an amendment to the consent judgment to add in the Dindoffer property. Smith also explained how the Dindoffer property was nominated for consideration by NAPP.

D. Trustees' Report

Faust asked for Board approval to purchase 3 insulation kits for the grinder pumps due to grinder pumps

freezing up in the cold weather. Faust explained the reason some of the grinder pumps are freezing up may be due to low usage. **McQueer moved to approve the purchase of 3 insulation kits as a trial run to see if they work at \$70 each. Smith seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Cowden yes, Faust yes, Fromhart yes, McQueer yes, Smith yes. Motion passed.**

E. Written Reports

Board packets included reports from the Assessor, Zoning Administrator, and Planning Commission. Rider reported on the Audit of Minimum Assessing Requirements (AMAR) by the State of Michigan and noted the two areas that do not meet the requirements are the ECF study for commercial and industrial properties and reasons for land value adjustments. Rider noted the Township plans to have both of these deficiencies rectified by June 1, 2014. Rider also updated the Board on the status of the Steinbach and Rustic Glen tax tribunal cases and Board of Review training.

VI. PRIORITY BUSINESS

A. Approve Disbursements from January 3, 2014 – February 6, 2014

McQueer reported she met with the accountant to work on a couple of line items on the balance sheet and adjustments may need to be made by the auditor for this fiscal year to correct some discrepancies. Smith inquired about the possibility of having a credit card for the sewer plant for emergency equipment repairs. **Smith moved to approve the monthly disbursements from the general and sewer funds in the amount of \$24352.45. Cowden seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Cowden yes, Faust yes, Fromhart yes, McQueer yes, Smith yes. Motion passed.**

B. AMAR, Mary Rider

Smith noted this item was already addressed under the Assessor's report.

C. Poverty Guidelines Resolution

Fromhart moved to approve the resolution 02-06-14A Board of Review Guidelines for Poverty/Hardship Exemptions. McQueer seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Cowden yes, Faust yes, Fromhart yes, McQueer yes, Smith yes. Motion passed.

D. 2014-2015 Meeting Dates

Fromhart moved to approve resolution 02-06-14 to Adopt Regular Board of Trustees Meeting Dates for fiscal year 2014-2015. Faust seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Cowden yes, Faust yes, Fromhart yes, McQueer yes, Smith yes. Motion passed.

E. Ecology Commissioner

Smith explained he brought up the existence of this position because it is not statutory and he doesn't think the Township needs one and would like to eliminate the position. Smith noted those serving on the Planning Commission and agencies like the MDEQ give us plenty of advice on these issues. Smith moved to remove the Ecology Commissioner position from the Township organization. Cowden asked Howard to explain his job description before the Board voted. Howard explained the history of his position and his job description and that he serves as technician and responds at the request of the Township. Cowden stated he can't vote on this because this is new to him and he didn't know what the Ecology Commissioner did before tonight. ~~McQueer stated the position of Ecology Commissioner doesn't hold any kind of authority and although she supports what Howard does she can't support him in that position because she doesn't feel they have an inclusive relationship.~~ The motion failed for lack of support.

F. 2014-2015 Budget Presentation

The Board reviewed and discussed the proposed general and sewer funds budgets for fiscal year 2014-2015. The Board adjusted line item amounts for mineral extraction license fees, election reimbursement, deputy clerk, election expense, and connection fees. Smith agreed to make the adjustments and send out updated draft budgets for the March meeting. The Board also discussed the proposed system for reserve funds and possibly adding them to the balance sheet. Fromhart noted the draft budgets will be posted on the Township's website and the budget public hearing notice for the March meeting will be published in Manchester Enterprise.

VII. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

A resident ~~Diek Wegner~~ thanked the Board for hearing us tonight. The resident ~~Wegner~~ stated we don't want that trail to go through but he believes the Board feels the same way so maybe they won't have to come here again.

A resident ~~Grant Howard~~ commented he attended the January meeting and didn't hear that the Board was going to respond to the County and as far as he knows there is an open letter from December 10th that the Board hasn't answered. The resident ~~Howard~~ questioned if the Board corresponds with the County shouldn't there be a policy or procedure requiring that it be documented.

A resident ~~Char Stewart~~ asked if anyone from the Board would like to sign the petition.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Smith moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 p.m. Cowden seconded the motion which was adopted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Fromhart
Bridgewater Township Clerk