

**ADA TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES  
MARCH 12, 2007**

**DRAFT**

Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Haga at 7:30 p.m. Members present: Supervisor Haga, Treasurer Pratt, Clerk Ensing Millhuff, Trustees: Proos, Sytsma and Westra. Also present: Planning Director Ferro, Parks Director Tatar, Fire/Rescue Chief DuVall, Recording Secretary Smith and 19 community members. Members absent: Trustee Damstra.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Moved by Proos, supported by Westra, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**1000' UPGRADE - 3 MILE ROAD AT PETTIS AVE.**

**Moved by Proos, supported by Sytsma, to proceed into public hearing. Motion carried.**

Jon Rice, managing director of the Kent County Road Commission, explained this project had been looked at for a number of years due to the struggle with an erosion problem. After looking at several options, it was determined by the KCRC the best solution was to pave a 24' wide 900-1000 ft section from the intersection to the top of the hill, along with drainage to channel water down both sides of the road. While this would be a minor improvement in accordance with the Natural Beauty Act, it was decided to conduct a public hearing because there would be township funds involved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Karen Holt, 5701 Three Mile Road, read a statement expressing her opposition to the Road Commission's plan and urging the board to reject the plan and decline to participate financially. Her opposition was based on the natural beauty road designation from 1975, preservation of wildlife habitat, trees, other vegetation and preservation of Ada Township in every way possible. She contended it would be more costly to pave and maintain a paved road than to maintain the gravel road, and she believes there are other alternatives to paving. Adding, a wider paved road would invite more dangerous driving. She stated the purpose of the natural beauty road designation was to maintain the beauty of the road and the resident's quality of life.

Wayne Arnold, stated he had lived there for 12 years and never had a problem driving on Three Mile Road and was concerned the Norway Pines along the embankments would be in jeopardy.

Nevin Zolenski, 6151 Three Mile Road, (east of the steepest hill) agreed with the previous speakers and stating the natural beauty road should be protected. She had spoken with the Road Commission and was informed there was no intention in proceeding if the board did not go along with the project and was also told no engineering studies had been done. She stated the natural beauty is gorgeous and questioned the number of trees that would be taken down. Adding, she believed this project would go against the township's Master Plan noting the proposed paving comes to where the new development entrance is. Stating the developers should have realized Three Mile was a natural beauty road at the time they chose to build. She urged the board to protect the natural beauty and stated the county officials had indicated there were other options.

Jennifer Marsh, 6169 Three Mile Road, stated she and her husband were saddened because they moved to the area for the natural beauty and had purposely picked a natural beauty road so it would be safe for their family to walk and enjoy nature.

Chris Barlow, owner of the Mela-Via development on Three Mile Road, stated it was a coincidence as far as the distance for paving and his interest was simply from a safety standpoint. He built his development with as little impact as possible. He referred to the website for the natural beauty roads and he distributed pictures of the exposed root balls and washouts. Stating his interest was from a safety standpoint, and he stated it was a blind hill. He wanted something to be done, but wasn't sure of the best solution. He did believe other areas of Three Mile not paved were more dangerous and safety was more important than cost.

Jackie Ripley, 6016 Three Mile Road, was in favor of paving the road. Stating it was a dangerous hill and had needed to be paved for a long time; stating paving the section would improve the natural beauty road.

Steve Hamilton, 3145 Pettis, was not opposed to paving the road, but hoped tree removal would be selective and a compromise could be met.

Robert Ripley, 6016 Three Mile, stated the Road Commission had done just about everything they could to improve the hill. The washouts are occurring farther down than they had been, and it's now "puddling" onto Pettis, stating there is no way for the water to disburse into drainage ditches. The Road Commission had been there three or four times the past winter putting new asphalt, and each time it requires a bigger chunk. He and his wife (Jacqueline)

stated they were in favor of paving the road but any alternative that would fix the problem was acceptable.

Jeff Carpenter, 6150 Three Mille, Ada Township, stated he would like to leave the road gravel.

Jim Johnson, 5702 Three Mile, stated it is a very beautiful stretch of natural beauty road and they didn't want to lose any of the trees. Adding, the tree roots had always been exposed, and the trees had always leaned towards the road. He read a statement from his wife (who could not attend) stating she too was opposed to the paving and encouraged the board to protect the natural beauty roads.

**Moved by Sytsma, supported by Pratt, to close public hearing. Motion carried.**

Trustee Proos stated he lived down the road and he had been watching the problem. Stating didn't have a preference either way adding, the center of the road is in good shape, but there was a problem with run-off. He asked if research had been done on storm sewer ideas.

Jon Rice, Kent County Road Commission, stated they were looking at some type of collection system, but the erosion issues would still need to be dealt with. He believed maintaining a grade differential would be extremely difficult.

Trustee Proos thought it would not be difficult to create some drainage solution and thought it needed to be researched. He expressed safety was the most important reason.

Clerk Ensing Millhuff asked if there were any accident statistics (none were available). Stating the safety of the road was very important, however, the protection of wildlife habitat and the natural beauty designation also needed to be considered; adding if an alternative to paving was available it needed to be seriously considered.

Trustee Westra stated the guidelines for natural beauty roads specify the road can be dirt, gravel or a hard surface. He suggested there could be a solution or compromise where everyone acknowledges natural beauty is important to the citizens of Ada.

Supervisor Haga stated based on the comments heard and the Road Commission and the board, and because of the way the statute was written, he thought action was required on the work order. He suggested the Public Works Committee along with some residents follow up on the issue.

**Moved by Westra, supported by Sytsma, to refer the matter of Pettis/Three Mile Road to the Public Works committee with the additional participation of at least two other residents of the area. Motion carried.**

**Moved by Westra, supported by Proos, to disapprove the work order for the maintenance items on Three Mile/Pettis, the total work order in the amount of \$125,000 with the township's share of \$55,000. Motion carried.**

**2007/2008 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING**

**Moved by Pratt, supported by Sytsma, to proceed into public hearing regarding the township budgets for 2007/2008. Motion carried.**

Supervisor Haga presented the proposed budget, based on anticipated taxable value of \$887 million. He noted this proposed budget was a result of a work session with the township board and the fiscal year is from April 1 through March 31.

General fund - revenues \$1,907, 000; expenditures \$1,928,617; millage rate .8759.

Public safety - revenues \$910,014; expenditures \$776,000; millage .9600.

Ada Park and arboretum \$565,000; expenditures \$763,000; millage .2380.

Township trail fund - revenue \$5,134,000; expenditures \$1,512,000; millage .4800; anticipated bond sale of \$4.6 million of which \$1.4 million for trail construction in 2007.

Park and Open Space - revenue \$365,000; expenditures \$193,000; millage .3765. (This is a new fund set up at the recommendation of the auditor.)

Building Department Fund - revenue \$42,000; expenditures \$25,000.

Gypsy Moth Fund - no activity as the funds were used to pay for the inspection authorized last year.

Sewer System - revenue \$861,000; expenditures \$898,000.

Water System - revenue \$1,611,000; expenditures \$1,662,000.

Grand Valley Estates Water - revenue \$73,000; expenditures \$86,000.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Elsie Jocz, 2450 East Fulton, stated Ada Park is one of the nicest parks she'd seen and the park personnel were hardworking and took a real interest in keeping the park in top shape. Adding, she had read about improvements at Ada Park, Leonard Field, and Roselle Park and hoped the township would continue to care for the parks as they had in the past.

Robert Ripley, 6016 Three Mile, asked about construction of the ladder going into the silo at Roselle Park, particularly in regard to safety and maintenance.

**Moved by Proos, supported by Pratt, to close public hearing. Motion carried.**

There was no board comment.

**GENERAL TOWNSHIP BUSINESS**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Approval of Minutes**

February 26, 2007, Regular Board Meeting

**Receive and File Various Reports/Communications**

1. Fire Call Reports - 2/07; 2. REGIS Agency Board Minutes - 1/17/07; 3. Utility Advisory Board Minutes - 1/18/07; 4. Comcast - Lineup update - 2/15/07 & 2/22/07; 5. State of Michigan - Worksite inspection - 2/20/07; 6. MTA Legislative Update Fax - 2/16/07 & 2/23/07.

**Moved by Westra, supported by Proos, to approve items on the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.**

**APPROVAL OF WARRANTS AND RECEIPTS**

Treasurer Pratt presented Warrants and Receipts in the following amounts: Hand Checks: #101 \$19,951.73; #205 \$1,174.00; #208 \$1,598.06; #274 \$7,950.00; #590 \$101.48; #591 \$101.48; #592 \$223.06. Total Hand Checks \$31,099.81. Warrants: #101 \$8,986.71; #205 \$575.67; #208 \$371.26; #249 \$; #274 \$; #590 \$; #591 \$; #592 \$. Total Warrants \$. Total Checks and Warrants \$.

**Moved by Westra, supported by Proos, to approve the Warrant Report of March 12, 2007, in the amount of \$200,320.81.** Trustee Proos asked for clarification regarding Lee's Trenching and American Communities Partnership. **Roll Call: Yes - Ensing Millhuff, Proos, Pratt, Haga, Westra, Sytsma. No - 0. Absent - Damstra. Motion carried.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**BOARD COMMENT**

Trustee Westra asked Supervisor Haga if he had attended a workshop regarding cable revenues. Supervisor Haga responded he had attended the workshop but didn't learn anything additional.

Clerk Ensing Millhuff distributed copies of the new Kent County directories to board members stating additional copies were available for the public. She also noted in addition to revenue sharing to communities has been cut by the State, local governments were being assessed additional charges for State services (i.e. vehicle license plates).

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no Old Business.

## NEW BUSINESS

### BS&A EQUALIZER INTERNET SERVICES

Supervisor Haga explained this request was a result of involving various departments in the BS&A services, and the idea was to wait until the beginning of the new fiscal year to sign up for the service. **Moved by Proos, supported by Sytsma, to approve the BS&A equalizer internet services, with Option B, in the amount of \$4,000 annually.** Trustee Westra was interested in the position of staff on charging businesses, not citizens, profit from the information to offset some of the costs. He also asked when the next meeting of the Information/Technology Committee would be held. Supervisor Haga responded he was in the midst of trying to schedule a date for the meeting. He also stated the matter of service charges had been discussed but numbers had not been decided. Clerk Ensing Millhuff added since the assessing information had been available on-line, phone calls requesting assessment information had substantially decreased. **Motion carried.**

### REPLACEMENT OF TOWNSHIP VEHICLES

Fire/Rescue Chief DuVall explained the request for replacement of three township vehicles and the quotes had been received. **Moved by Proos, supported by Pratt, to approve the recommendation as proposed for the purchase of three township vehicles: Truck 5 replacement - fire vehicle including lights \$21,365.77; Park Truck - as shown with lights and some lettering at \$22,540; and the fire command vehicle at \$23,807.32 plus \$400, for a total of \$24,207.32.** There were questions/comments from board members regarding funding (from Parks and Fire Departments), value and potential uses for the vehicles being replaced, warranties, possibility of purchasing used vehicles, and repainting. **Motion carried.**

### PERSONNEL COMMITTEE'S STAFF SALARIES RECOMMENDATION

Supervisor Haga noted the recommendation was for staff wages and two policy changes; adding the staff salary recommendation comes from the Personnel Committee but the Administrative Committee also provided invaluable input in developing the recommendations. **Moved by Westra, supported by Ensing Millhuff, to approve the Personnel Committee recommendations regarding staff salaries and policy changes.** Clerk Ensing Millhuff clarified the Personnel Committee consists of board members Supervisor Haga, Treasurer Pratt, Trustee Damstra, and resident Norm Rhoades. Explaining the discussion was based on a recent personnel/wage study done by another township within Kent County. Trustee Proos stated he would like to see the rewards based on merit rather than just longevity. Supervisor Haga stated the increases were not automatic and the individual department supervisor had flexibility. There was general agreement by board members that Ada should continue to look for and attract good staff and compensate them accordingly. **Motion carried.**

### OPPORTUNITY FOR ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no additional public comment.

### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Deborah Ensing Millhuff, CMC  
Ada Township Clerk

**RS: JS**