

**ADA TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
AUGUST 10, 2009**

Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Haga at 7:30 p.m. Members present: Supervisor Haga, Clerk Burton, Treasurer Rhoades, Trustees: Westra, Smith, and Sytsma. Also present: Fire Chief DuVall, Park Director Mark Fitzpatrick, Recording Secretary Johnson and eleven community members. Members absent: Trustee Proos (arrived after roll call, at 7:50 pm).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Supervisor Haga noted two changes to the agenda. Under "III.B. - Receive and File Various Communications" one item had been added: Item #11 – Township Supervisor's Report for August. Under "VIII. - New Business", Item E – Bailey Drive Easements had also been added. **Moved by Sytsma, supported by Rhoades, to approve the revised agenda. Yes – 6, No – 0; Motion carried.**

GENERAL TOWNSHIP BUSINESS

CONSENT AGENDA:

Approval of Minutes

July 27, 2009, Regular Board Meeting

Receive and File Various Reports/Communications

1. Kent County Board of Commissioners - 63rd District Court - 7/13/2009; 2. AT&T Second Annual Video Report - 7/20/2009; 3. Utility Advisory Board Minutes - 7/18/2009; 4. Pettis Recycling Facility Berm Revegetation - 7/17/2009; 5. MTA Legislative Update Fax - 7/24/2009; 6. REGIS Minutes – 7/24/2009; 7. Ada Historical Society Minutes – 7/13/2009; 8. Building Permit Trends Report – 7/24/2009; 9. Zoning Enforcement Activity Report – 7/23/2009; 10. Foreclosure Response Report – 7/24/2009; 11. Township Supervisor's Report for August. **Moved by Smith, supported by Sytsma, to approve the Minutes and accept the reports and communications under the Consent Agenda. Yes – 6, No – 0; Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF WARRANTS AND RECEIPTS

Treasurer Rhoades presented Warrants and Receipts in the following amounts: Hand Checks: #101 \$4,158.36; #205 \$2,821.26; #208 \$1,853.58; #590 \$403.48; #591 \$403.48; #592 \$33.04; Total All Hand Checks \$9,673.20. Warrants: #101 \$17,839.34; #205 \$31,347.05; #208 \$6,560.61; #211 \$3,500.00; #248 \$616.93; #590 \$6,001.09; #591 \$4,362.92; #592 \$877.05; Total Warrants \$71,104.99. Total All Checks and Warrants \$80,778.19. **Moved by Sytsma, supported by Westra to approve the Warrant Report for August 10, 2009, in the amount of \$80,778.19.** Supervisor Haga noted a correction on page 2 for check #32159, which should cite the "National Notary Association". He also explained that Item #28 on page 4 covers Joe Lepard's mileage; he opens and closes Roselle Park, amongst other things. **Roll Call: Yes – Sytsma, Smith, Burton, Rhoades, Westra, Haga. No - 0. Absent – Proos. Motion carried.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Deb Emery, 7534 Fase Street, inquired as to what had been learned regarding the current availability of the Wi-Fi offer that had been extended to the township several years earlier. Supervisor Haga stated he had spoken with the Director of the Community Media Center, Laurie Cirivello, and the program no longer exists.

BOARD COMMENT

Trustee Sytsma thanked Supervisor Haga for submitting the Supervisor Reports to the Board; she noted the information was very helpful. She also commented briefly on the closure of the document alteration case. She said it was very unfortunate the early investigation caused unintended complications in establishing final findings and indicated it was regrettable no further conclusion can be reached. She commended the Administrative Committee for their hard work and noted it was now time to move forward.

Treasurer Rhoades reported to the Board Sgt. Patty Seif had requested the Board support the painting of the turn-around lanes on M-21 from the township line to east past Pettis. The lanes are all 1-lane turn-arounds, but vehicles have been using them as 2-lanes. The lanes should be painted to bring this to the drivers' attention. Sgt. Seif is considering ticketing vehicles in violation in this matter.

Trustee Westra addressed several issues pertaining to the document alteration investigation. He felt involving the state police at an earlier stage would have allowed the source to be traced. He questioned the choice of handling the early investigation through the township's attorneys. He stressed expenditures above policy limit must be presented for Board approval.

Trustee Westra asked for an update on his previous request that services the Community Media Center provides the township be evaluated to determine if there are more advanced and/or cost-effective alternatives, and the services which are determined to be useful and appropriate be put out to bid.

Trustee Westra stated a sign indicating the bike trail is closed has been placed at the top of the hill in the Forest Hills construction zone. He requested the sign be put at the bottom of the hill to reduce the risk people arrive at the top of the hill and decide to risk descending the embankment at a hazardous point to circumnavigate the construction zone.

Supervisor Haga reminded the Board there was a work session on the property maintenance codes scheduled for August 17th at 7:00 pm in the Township Hall. In addition, he noted on August 11th at 7pm, the DEQ will be holding a public hearing regarding the Township permit application for Phase III of the non-motorized trail. The hearing will be held in the Township Hall.

Supervisor Haga distributed pamphlets from REGIS (Regional Geographic Information System): Public Internet Map Services for the Grand Valley Region. Some of the information will be included in the next newsletter and eventually on the township website. REGIS has also put together a Map Catalog of various maps: surveys, cemetery, topographical, etc.

Trustee Proos arrived at 7:50 pm. He thanked Planning Director Ferro for his follow-up on the berm re-vegetation on Pettis Avenue. He expressed appreciation for the information provided in the Building Permit Trends Report and the Zoning Enforcement Activity Report.

Trustee Proos addressed the document alteration investigation. He stated he felt the issue was a black eye for the township and it was an unfortunate situation. Although it was expensive to investigate, it was the right thing to do. Although the investigation did not determine the origin of the alterations, it was still necessary. Safeguards have since been implemented to prevent a reoccurrence. He felt it was now time to press on to new township business.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business.

NEW BUSINESS

APPOINTMENT OF A PAID ON-CALL FIRE FIGHTER

Fire Chief Jim DuVall outlined the recommendation to appoint James Bir as a paid on-call fire fighter. Mr. Bir has 12 years of experience, and although he has not been in the fire service in recent years, minor updating in medical training will bring him current. **Moved by Proos, supported by Smith, to concur with the recommended appointment of James Bir as a paid on-call fire fighter. Yes – 7, No – 0; Motion carried.**

BAILEY DRIVE EASEMENTS FOR THE NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL

Steve Groenenboom, Moore & Bruggink, Township Engineers, outlined the progress made on obtaining easements for the non-motorized trail along Bailey Drive. It is necessary to obtain as many easements as possible along Bailey Drive. There are roughly 25 property owners; easements are being requested of 21 of them. Two of the owners have declined at this point. The 19 remaining owners cover about 85% of the frontage, and have come to tentative agreements. Assuming all easements are approved, the total cost would be \$52,497.92. The dollar offer for the easements will be based on the tax value of the land. Township Engineer Groenenboom also noted as the costs allocated to easements goes up, the total cost of the trail inversely drops by an even greater amount. **Moved by Proos, supported by Sytsma, to authorize the obtaining of the easements in an amount of \$52,497.92.**

Trustee Proos urged the Township send a persuasive and compelling letter to the property owners involved to suggest donation of the easement to the township. The letter would not only encourage the act from a philanthropic standpoint, but would also outline the potential tax benefits to the donation.

Moved by Proos to amend the motion to send a letter suggesting donation of the easement to the township, in addition to allocating the stipulated funds for purchase. Support by Sytsma. Trustee Westra suggested an example be included in the letter to demonstrate potential tax benefits vs. the taxable costs of the sale of the easement. Supervisor Haga stipulated the letter must be clear and easily understood. **Yes – 7, No – 0; Amendment to the motion carried.**

Yes - 7, No - 0. Motion as amended is carried.

ADA PARK FOUNTAIN

Park Director Mark Fitzpatrick presented the request to purchase a new fountain for the pond in Ada Park. The existing fountain failed earlier this summer due to electrical issues. The fountain provides not only aesthetic value, but also aerates the pond, which keeps the algae in check. Several proposals were gathered. The recommended bid will not only replace the motor, but will also upgrade the electrical system at the shore for improved safety. **Moved by Proos, supported by Sytsma, to approve the recommendation of the Park Director to accept the bid by Flier's Underground Sprinkler Systems, Inc. for the purchase and installation of an Otterbine Gemini fountain system in the amount of \$4,310.00.** The Board briefly discussed the warranty and pricing options presented as well as the challenges of managing invasive species and leaf drop in the pond. Trustee Sytsma commended Park Director Fitzpatrick on his impressive work with the township parks. **Yes–7, No – 0; Motion is carried.**

ADA TOWNSHIP RESOLUTION R-081009-1 TO PROVIDE FOR THE DESIGNATION OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2009 AS “PRISONER OF WAR / MISSING IN ACTION RECOGNITION DAY”

Supervisor Haga presented the resolution to designate September 18th as Prisoner of War / Missing in Action Recognition Day. He indicated he has attended the ceremonies in previous years and has been moved by this issue. He encouraged others to also participate in this event. **Moved by Westra, supported by Burton, to adopt Resolution R-081009-1 to provide for the designation of September 18, 2009 as “Prisoner of War / Missing in Action Recognition Day”. Yes – 7, No – 0; Resolution is adopted.**

ADA TOWNSHIP RESOLUTION R-081009-2 TO ESTABLISH A POLICY CONCERNING THE LENGTH OF TENURE OF MEMBERS OF THE ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Supervisor Haga reviewed the proposed policy, the adoption of which had been discussed at an earlier Board work session. He clarified the current limit was 9 years (three 3-year terms). However, to prevent multiple vacancies in the middle of the term, and to address the difficulty of securing qualified people to volunteer and serve, the term limit is proposed to be extended to fifteen years. **Moved by Proos, supported by Sytsma, to adopt Resolution R-081009-2 to revise the length of tenure of members of the Ada Township Planning Commission.** Trustee Westra noted he was opposed to term limits in principle, but also urged the Board to vigorously pursue finding individuals with key qualifications in order to ensure the Planning Commission has all the skill sets necessary within its members. He also underscored the importance of educating and mentoring the newer Planning Commission members. **Roll Call: Yes – Smith, Sytsma, Rhoades, Proos, Burton, Haga. No - Westra. Absent – 0. Resolution is adopted.**

Trustee Sytsma left at 8:30 pm.

OPPORTUNITY FOR ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Deb Emery, 7534 Fase Street, indicated that she was glad the document alteration investigation is concluded. She strongly felt it was a politically motivated action to eliminate the previous Township Clerk.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Burton
Ada Township Clerk

RS/kj