

VERGENNES TOWNSHIP
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 17, 2000
as amended

The regular meeting of the Vergennes Township Board was called to order by Tim Wittenbach at 7:03 p.m. in the Vergennes Township Hall.

Members Present:	Tim Wittenbach	-	Supervisor
	Mari Stone	-	Clerk
	Jean Hoffman	-	Treasurer
	Susan Geiger-Hessler	-	Trustee
	Mark Weber	-	Trustee

Weber noted that March minutes should be amended to in regard to Kent County Road Commission's Special Use Permit including agreement to angle entryway for screening purposes at the Helmus gravel site on Cumberland. The minutes were also amended to note that funds remaining from this year's gypsy moth spray will be carried over to the following year within a special fund set up specifically for the gypsy moth program. Wittenbach and Brian Kroll, gypsy moth surveyor, followed up on requests from residents to review their property for possible spraying. It was noted that the majority of residents requesting spraying of their property were in the spray area. There can be no more changes at this date. Weber, seconded by Geiger-Hessler, made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2000 regular meeting as amended. Motion carried. Motion by Weber, seconded by Geiger-Hessler, to accept minutes of Budget Hearing held March 25, 2000. Motion approved. Treasurer's Report accepted as read. Motion by Hoffman, seconded by Weber, to approve invoices. Motion approved. Drafts 3800 through 3835 were issued.

Mac McPherson presented the clock fashioned out of the large oak tree cut down from in front of the Township Hall. Mac will have a plaque manufactured for the face of the clock explaining the background.

Old Business:

1. Land Preservation Committee. The idea of a land preservation committee was presented to the Board in March and the Planning Commission in April. No member is appointed and any individual who is interested may be a part of the committee. Motion by Stone, seconded by Hoffman, to sanction creation of a Land Preservation Committee to study issues of land preservation within Vergennes Township for presentation to the Planning Commission. Motion approved.

New Business:

1. Special Use Permit – Lowell Area Schools Agriscience Building. Agriscience Building to be constructed in the corner to the east of the property. This is a donated project with limited funds. Bids out at the moment and groundbreaking to be May 6, 2000. Building to be ready for use this fall. Construction inspected by the state not local inspectors. Building to have its own well and septic system – small volume and too costly to hook up to the high school. When an elementary school building is constructed on the site (possibly within two years) sewer and water would be readily available for this building as well. Williams & Works reviewed the proposed project, and had a list of questions

addressing some concerns regarding the construction. Initial plan calls for a gravel parking lot but after bids are in and the money available, the parking lot would be paved. Ordinance only indicates a parking lot must have a dust-free surface resistant to erosion – paving not specifically noted. No elementary children walking to the building or crossing Vergennes Road. They will be bussed. However, ninth-twelfth grade children *may walk on occasion*. If an elementary school should be constructed, a pedestrian crossing either over or under the road will become necessary. The Board expressed need for a designated crossing on highway to be addressed with the Kent County Road Commission. School representatives indicated it would designate a crosswalk even if the Road Commission did not. Geiger-Hessler questioned a conflict of interest for Mark Weber as an employee of Lowell Area Schools. Geiger-Hessler made a motion not to approve the Special Use Permit until a safety plan addressing Vergennes Road crossing concerns was received from Lowell Area Schools. Stone indicated she could approve of the plan contingent upon receipt of a safety plan from the school. No support for motion. Geiger-Hessler withdrew her motion. School representative indicated a safety plan was to be completed this summer, but that he could have one to the Board within a week. Stone made a motion, seconded by Geiger-Hessler, to approve special use permit as presented contingent upon 1.) receipt of a safety plan which addresses crossing of students on Vergennes Road, 2.) dust-free surface resistant to erosion on parking lot at this time with a three year time limit on paving the lot, and allowing a Township Board variance to allow a parking configuration in the front yard between the building and the abutting street. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Request to Establish Industrial District. Brought before the Board as information only – no action at this time. La Boite Company purchased Unit 4 in Lincoln Lake Industrial Park. Owners live in Alto. Will be requesting a PA 198 tax abatement on personal and real property. Public Hearing on this matter in May.
3. Designation of Township Attorney, Auditor, Engineer, Planner. Board content with all at this time. In meeting with Stone and Wittenbach, engineer Jim Hegarty indicated he would keep a daily log and will address the issue of a more detailed billing. Weber made motion, seconded by Stone, to continue with Township Attorney Jim Doezema of Tolley VandenBosch Walton Korolewicz & Brengle; Township Auditor Phil Saurman of Hungerford Aldren Nichols & Carter; Township Engineer Jim Hegarty of Prein & Newhof; and Township Planner, Jay Kilpatrick of Williams & Works. Motion approved.
4. Approval of Designated Depository Institutions. This is an annual formality. At present there are no Township accounts at Old Kent Bank or Ionia County Bank. Motion by Hoffman, seconded by Geiger-Hessler, to approve designation of depository institutions: Old Kent Bank, Huntington Bank, Kent County Money Max and Ionia County Bank. Motion approved.
5. Proposed Amendment to Cemetery Ordinance. Ordinance currently allows only one burial per burial space. Other municipalities allow two. Conserves space. Motion by Stone, seconded by Weber, to amend Cemetery Ordinance to allow one vault plus one cremation or two cremations. Approved unanimously.
6. Kent County Chapter MTA Request. Yearly convention which promotes commerce in that county. This year convention to be held in Grand Rapids. Kent County to be the featured county. MTA requesting a donation of \$100 for a set up fund for Kent County

booth. Also looking for a representative from Vergennes Township. Hoffman volunteered. Hoffman made a motion, seconded by Geiger-Hessler, to donate \$100 to the Kent County Chapter of MTA for set up fund for Kent County booth at annual convention to be held in Grand Rapids. Motion approved.

Citizens' Comments:

Art Warning inquired as to the location of Bieri Industrial Park. Park abuts up to Lincoln Lake Industrial Park. Art also requested some consideration for dust problem on Biggs Road. Discussion continued regarding graveling/paving policy. Kent County Road Commission recommends road they feel most in need of paving. Township increased road budget from \$60,000 to \$80,00 this year. Township graveled 3 miles last year. Will gravel one mile on McPherson and one mile on Grindle this year. Wittenbach indicated there were 30 miles of gravel within the Township and he wished to upgrade those before anymore paving of roads. Costs \$300,000 for one mile of blacktop – Township's share \$170,000. Costs \$11,000 for one mile of gravel.

Gay Nauta expressed an interest in being Township representative on the Community Recreation Committee. There has been a need to fill the seat for several months. Jerry Gauger is the other representative.

Vern Nauta expressed thanks to Larry Nix and Jay Kilpatrick for their time spent at the planning and zoning workshop in March.

Stone noted she would like to amend the approval of bills to add \$350 cost of the clock under new equipment.

Motion by Geiger-Hessler, seconded by Hoffman, to end the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mari Stone, Clerk