

Regular Meeting Minutes April 19, 1999

The regular meeting of the Vergennes Township Board was called to order by Tim Wittenbach at 7:00 p.m. in the Vergennes Township Hall.

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

A motion was made by Hoffman, seconded by Geiger-Hessler, to approve the minutes of a Special Board Meeting held March 11, 1999 and the March 15, 1999 regular meeting. Treasurer's Report was given by Hoffman and accepted as read. A motion was made by Geiger-Hessler and seconded by Weber to approve the bills. Motion carried. Drafts 3224 through 3268 were issued.

Permit Activity was reviewed. 14 new home permits year to date.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

- Carolyn Way Private Road Approval.** Kevin Grifhorst, of Nederveld & Associates, representing the MacKay's was present seeking approval by Board for road and then will begin process of splits. Jim Hegerty, Prein & Newhof, spoke to Stone by telephone and faxed a list (attached) of items to be addressed before construction. Planning Commission recommended approval. Approval by the Health Department has been secured. Kent County Road Commission has issued approval. Motion by Weber to grant approval of Carolyn Way Private Road provided all points listed by Prein & Newhof be resolved. Motion seconded by Geiger-Hessler. Motion carried unanimously.
- Special Use Permits - Bill Schreur, Jr., Patrick Flanagan.** Resident, Gary Dietzel, raised objection to granting of special use permit to Bill Schreur, Jr. Dietzel expressed concern over setting a precedence, as there are only two businesses along the river (Double R Ranch and Atwood) and Dietzel would like to keep the river in its most natural state. Schreur asking for special use permit for 1 1/2 acres of homestead, 435' from road, involving accessory building and shed; all of which are approximately 1000' from river bank. A motion made by Stone to grant approval of special use permit to Bill Schreur, Jr. for home-based business, seconded by Geiger-Hessler, passed unanimously. Comment by Weber that the granting of a special use permit to Bill Schreur, Jr. is acting in accordance with the Vergennes Township Ordinance and its regulations concerning special use permits for a home-based business.

Patrick Flanagan, Progressive Heating, Cooling & Refrigeration requested special use permit for home-based business. One resident objection to issuance of permit. Business involves two vehicles; one vehicle parked at an employee's home. No trailers. Involves commercial work at job sites away from property. Hoffman made a motion, seconded by Weber, to grant special use permit to Patrick Flanagan. Motion carried.

- Designation of Township Attorney, Auditor, Engineer.** During March 11, 1999 meeting, Board decided that Stone and Wittenbach would meet with several law firms and make a

recommendation to rest of the Board at tonight's meeting. Stone and Wittenbach had met with representatives from Mika, Meyers, Beckett & Jones, who represent a number of area townships. Wittenbach met informally with R. Annis, who represents Plainfield and Tyrone Townships. Also considered J. Doezema, current attorney for past 10 years. Wittenbach preferred Annis. Stone had not met Annis. Motion made by Geiger-Hessler to show support for Supervisor's choice of Township attorney and choose R. Annis for Township Attorney. Weber seconded motion. Discussion: Stone uncomfortable voting never having met Annis. She stated that she works with the attorney on a regular basis, and felt she should have some input. Justin Michael suggested all Board members need to meet and interview various firms. Weber expressed desire to withdraw his second of motion.

Vote: Yes - 1: Geiger-Hessler. No - 4: Wittenbach, Stone, Hoffman, Weber. Motion defeated.

Motion made by Weber, seconded by Hoffman, to table the issue until next month's meeting, and have entire Board interview all candidates. Motion carried.

Motion by Hoffman, seconded by Weber, to retain Phil Saurman, of Hungerford, Aldrin, Nichols and Carter as Township Auditor. Motion carried. Motion by Stone, seconded by Geiger-Hessler, to retain Jim Hegarty of Prein & Newhof as Township Engineer. Motion carried.

4. **Supervisor Report Concerning Road Commission Recommendations.** Wittenbach conducted annual drive of township roads with Kent County Road Commission approximately two weeks ago. KCRC suggested Township institute an annual graveling program. 30 miles total gravel roads in Vergennes Township. Costs total of \$20,000 @ mile; covers 4"-6" gravel, ditching, etc. Township's portion of that at 55% is \$11,000. Weber suggested continue paving program plus graveling. Stone noted some residents may want to keep the rural character of township with gravel roads, adding that it also can help discourage development. It was suggested that we may want to consider requiring future developers to pave roads and they can pass on cost to individual sites accessed by that road. Cook asked about seal coat for Vergennes Road. Wittenbach to check. KCRC had recommended several miles that could use graveling. Road Advisory Board recommendations from 1997 and 1998 included most of the same. The Board agreed to the following as top priorities:

McPherson: 1 mile East of Parnell and 1 mile Alden Nash to Lincoln Lake
4 Mile: One mile: Ashley to Montcalm.

Motion made by Hoffman, seconded by Stone, to approve work orders on 3 miles of roads as listed above, as previously recommended by Road Advisory Board. Motion passed unanimously.

5. **Pool & Recreational Authority Presentation - Gil Wise & Pinky McPherson.** Community/Citizen Survey results not tabulated as of yet. Unofficially, Wise reported that Vergennes 80% in favor - mailed in questionnaires - 79%; City of Lowell 86% in favor and Lowell Township 89% in favor of second question: Support a recreational authority board to operate and maintain a pool. Also in favor of type B pool recommended by Committee. Another question: Will additional property taxes for pool effect any later millage votes regarding school? 64% of all residents of township receiving questionnaires stated no effect; 73% Lowell Area Schools' parents voted no effect. Lowell Area Community Fund approval for a thirty year commitment of \$100,000 per year toward maintenance and operation if entire community votes in favor of pool. Pool Committee requesting signature and approval from Vergennes Township on ten page contract by May 26, 1999 (also City of Lowell and Lowell Township) which basically sets up the legal basis of the Pool and Recreational Authority Board. This is not agreement to the actual bond issue for a community pool which will go before the citizens for a vote, but a contract to outline enabling procedures of taking the next steps toward a Recreational Authority Board and which states the legal basis for the Recreational Authority Board.

6. **Discussion Concerning Complaint Form.** Several resident inquiries into the complaint process. Complaint Form adopted last year. Wittenbach would like to adopt an official process for receiving complaints. Motion by Weber, seconded by Hoffman, to adopt the following procedure for handling complaints. A complaint will be investigated if resident (or his/her representative) signs their name to a complaint form and receive correspondence from the Township regarding disposition of the complaint. If no signature, the complaint may or may not be investigated at the discretion of the Zoning Administrator. Motion carried unanimously.

7. **Approval of Designated Depository Institutions.**
 - *Standard Federal
 - *Huntington Bank
 - *Kent County Money Max
 - *Ionia County Bank

Motion made by Hoffman, seconded by Stone, to approve the above designated depository institutions for this fiscal year.

8. **Planner Agreement.** Clarification of "client's representative" to denote Wittenbach. Motion by Hoffman to adopt Planner Agreement with designated change of client's representative from Stone to Wittenbach. Weber seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

9. **Recommendation by Zoning Administrator Concerning Front Yard Definition.** Ordinance vague regarding a corner lot as to what is front, side and/or rear. Motion made by Stone, seconded by Hoffman, for Planning Commission to define front yard with clearer language and amend ordinance to reflect same. Motion approved.

10. **Lowell Area Community Fund Board Representative Nomination.** Township Board has been asked to nominate three individuals for representatives on the Lowell Area Community Fund Board by May 3, 1999. Hoffman nominated Kate Dernocoeur. Stone nominated Terry VanderWarf. No third individual nominated at this time.

Citizen's Comments:

Representative from Tolley VandenBosch noted Jim Doezema's interest in remaining Vergennes Township Attorney and advised Board to take a second look at his ten year history and relationship with the township and that the total Board needs to interview the various law firms interested in the appointment.

Al Baird turned in petition requesting return of the annual meeting.

Justin Michael suggested disposing of the issue of the ten page agreement regarding the Recreational Authority Board at next month's Township regular meeting after having discussed it with the Township Attorney and possibly having a group meeting with Vergennes Township, City of Lowell and Lowell Township to discuss same. Ken Ewing suggested the Board hold a public meeting regarding the agreement before signing the contract.

Regarding Walt Vanderwulp, Affordable Towing, it was noted that the Zoning Administrator needs to review and make a determination concerning his complaint which was received earlier that day. No timetable has been set to date.

Roger Kropf indicated that residents need to allow the elected supervisor to learn his job, end altercations among Board members, and cease audience heckling of the Board; all of which minimize the Board's effectiveness.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
