

MINUTES OF VERGENNES TOWNSHIP BOARD April 21, 1997

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

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

A motion was made by Weber and seconded by Hoffman to approve the minutes of the March 31, 1997 regular meeting as amended. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report read by Hoffman. Motion to approve bills made by Hoffman and seconded by Cook. Motion carried. Drafts 2253 through 2282 were issued.

Old Business:

1. Discussion on Waste Water Feasibility Study - Randy Wilcox was present to explain the study in brief, and answer questions. Since the board had not had a chance to read the final copy of the study, it was decided to continue discussion at the May meeting.
2. Planning Commission Recommendations - Concerning the Farm Business issue, discussion centered around the following items:

Gillette: Planning Commission feels they have taken this issue as far as they can and would like the board to give some direction.

Weber: No problem with having business taking place in RA, but questioned where the line between commercial enterprises and small family business is drawn. Stated that we need to give definition to these names we are using.

Roger O'Dell: thought that the discussion at the December Planning Commission was valuable, and that it was quite thought provoking for the Ag community members who attended.

Wise: We may need to redefine what a farm is. Also need to find a way to accommodate the transition from farming to residential.

Stone: The material from MTA defines the off-farm operations as Special Exception Uses. Cascade has recently gone the same route with their landscaping businesses that have become quite prolific. Feels that SEUP's are a good method to keep things legal.

Howard: Thinks the term "farm-based" is a bad one. It was generally agreed that the problem is more "business that are illegal". He feels this matter has the potential for a lot of liability issues, and is not as cut and dried as most of our ordinances are, because the emotional level is higher.

Gillett and Howard suggested that we have a professional planner do the work on the final product, using the Special Exception Use Permit as a tool.

Weber motioned to direct the Planning Commission to proceed to develop an ordinance that enables the township to deal with family businesses within the township, and to hire a professional planner to assist them in the work. Stone seconded, and the motion carried.

Howard reported that at the Joint Planning Commission Meeting held in April, it was announced that Burroughs has the distinction of having the most building permits taken out along a single stretch of road in the four township area. Also, that the four townships are making a concerted effort to contact our County and State Representatives concerning the safety of M-21 and the lack of a bridge over the Grand between Ada and Lowell.

Boogard Bond - In light of the fact that they have renewed their bond, Hoffman motioned to allow Brian and Mary Boogard on Lincoln Lake Ave. to remain in their mobile home until one month after occupancy of their new home, not to exceed December 31, 1997. Weber seconded, and the motion carried.

New Business:

1. Steve Koning would like to enter into a PA 451 agreement with the State to buy his development rights, which would keep the land in farming on a permanent basis. The parcels in question were 41-16-03-100-002 and 300-002. There was discussion on various acts and preservation issues. It was the feeling of the board that the parcels in question were well suited to this program. Motion by Weber, seconded by Hoffman to sign resolution 1-97, also affirming the Townships position in the matter of future requests for support of this program. Roll call vote:

Stone, Weber, Hoffman, Cook, Yea.
Geiger-Hessler, Nay.

2. Historical Budget Amendment - Tabled until May.
3. Possibility of sharing Sheriff Patrol car with Grattan - We have been asked to participate in a grant request with Grattan Township for a shared patrol car. There will be an informational meeting on May 14 with Grattan officials and Sheriff Dougan. Cook and Stone will attend.

4. An Engineering Study for Burroughs was presented by the Road Commission for our approval. Discussion concerned the priority of Burroughs versus 4-Mile. According to our records, 4-Mile was listed as the top priority for study during the annual meeting in January. Stone will call the Road Commission to find out how this happened. Geiger-Hessler commented to the negative concerning the Burroughs study. Weber would like to see an independent estimate done as well as the one by the Road Commission. Cook motioned to authorize the Engineering Study on Burroughs Road, Stone seconded, and the motion carried by a vote of 3 to 2.

Citizens Comments: There were none.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mari Stone, Clerk