

Vergennes Township

Regular Meeting Minutes

December 15, 2008

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

Members Present: Tim Wittenbach - Supervisor
Mari Stone - Clerk
Jean Hoffman - Treasurer
Vern Nauta - Trustee
Al Baird - Trustee

The agenda for the December 15, 2008 meeting was approved with one addition of the internet discussion by Nauta; seconded by Hoffman. **Motion Carried.** The minutes of the November 15, 2008 meeting were approved as presented. The treasurer's report was read. The bills were read and approved with the addition of Mark Fleet's payment by Baird; seconded by Nauta. **Motion Carried.**

Public Hearing - Fire Authority Services Agreement - The public hearing was opened at 7:05. Wittenbach summarized how and why we are at this point - In the past the city ran the fire department and Vergennes and Lowell Township paid for their runs as well as splitting the cost of equipment three ways. There were also quarterly meetings to discuss what has happened. Then two years ago, the City of Lowell wanted to have an even three way split on actual costs including clerical and maintenance. The townships felt that the changes deserved more oversight of the budget for them. With this new agreement, all decisions will be split three ways. All attorneys have looked at the agreement, and the City of Lowell and Lowell Township have passed it already. This agreement will cost the township an additional fifteen to twenty thousand dollars per year. The hearing was closed at 7:08 with no public comment.

Public Hearing - Advocate Community Wind Turbine Request - The public hearing was opened at 7:08. The Franciscan Sisters would like to attach a wind turbine to their barn that will power the barn. It is seven feet in diameter, quiet, and can't be seen from the road. A SEUP is needed because it will go over the 35 feet maximum. The public hearing was closed at 7:09 with no comment.

Unfinished Business:

1. Fire Authority Services Agreement - Some of the board met with Dave last week and went over the formula for the agreement. Wittenbach commented that compared to running our own fire department, this is still a more affordable option. The Englehardt fund has also helped cover costs such as equipment. There was a motion to accept the Fire Authority Services Agreement by Nauta; seconded by Stone. **Motion Carried.**

New Business:

1. Advocate Community Wind Turbine Request - Jessica Lehti spoke on behalf of Cascade Energy Engineering. She said the turbine height won't exceed fifty feet. It will produce 2000 kilowatt hours of energy per year and produce twenty to forty percent of an average person's house electricity. It takes wind speed of eight miles per hour for the turbine to begin generating electricity. There was a motion to approve the SEUP by Baird; seconded by Hoffman. **Motion Carried.**

2. Proposed Indoor Recreation Facility - Betsy Devon - SEUP Discussion - Shane Beach introduced his proposed indoor recreation facility to the Board. It will be located on Three Mile west of Parnell. He said it will be very unique, includes everyone, and will have a turf field, rooms for chiropractic work, spiritual healing needs, a cardio training, and a coffee bar. This is his life work and he will do everything to make sure it succeeds. He hopes this facility will bring happiness to people. The board questioned the location of the facility. It seemed to be in a random place, not close to town or any other major traffic areas. Some questions posed were: How will this facility affect the traffic? Will it have a swimming pool? What will Beach do with the gravel road? What kind of impact will it have on the neighbors? Why is the location here? How is this facility sustainable? Other comments by the Board were: The intersection of Three Mile and Parnell is sub-standard for this use and already very dangerous. The facility would be very close to Ada Township and Vergennes Township would have to work very closely with them. The field area will be built of material called Sprung, which is made of polyurethane. This part of the facility can be easily added to or taken away from. Beach stated an area has been found where a septic tank could be located. He also said he was looking into paving part of Three Mile due to the amount of traffic anticipated. Beach needs a preliminary meeting with the Road Commission. There was a motion by Stone to direct the planning commission to perform a Site Plan Review; seconded by Wittenbach. Nauta opposed the motion. **Motion Carried.**

3. Appointments

Planning Commission

Wittenbach nominated Medendorp, Makuski, and Post to continuing terms ending December 2011, Stone seconded, and the **motion carried.**

Zoning Board of Appeals

Zoning Board of Appeals – Because of Odell's schedule, Wittenbach suggested appointing Doug Wester as the full time member and Roger O'Dell as the alternate. Motion by Stone as outlined below; seconded by Nauta. **Motion Carried.**

Roger Odell, Until 12-11, to fill alternate term vacated by Doug Wester
Doug Wester, until 12-09, to fill regular term vacated by Roger Odell

Board of Review

Motion by Hoffman, seconded by Nauta, to re-appoint Jim Herb, Ken Ford, and Dan Faulkner to two year terms ending in January 2012. **Motion Carried.**

Construction Board of Appeals

Motion by Nauta, seconded by Baird, to reappoint Tom Medendorp for a term ending in December of 2011. **Motion carried.**

LCTV Fund Advisory Board

The Board would like to forego Board representation for a resident instead. Motion by Nauta, seconded by Stone, to appoint Peggy Covert to represent the Vergennes Township Board. **Motion carried.** We will see if the City accepts this.

LACF Advisory Board

Betsy Davidson has represented Vergennes very well, and Stone motioned to keep her as our representative for as long as her term on the Board is effective. Wittenbach seconded, and the **motion carried.**

LARA Board

Mari Stone is willing to continue as the Board Rep; Dan Edwards as Citizen Rep; and Betsy Davidson, Community-at-large. Motion by Hoffman to retain all three, seconded by Nauta. **Motion carried.**

Airport Board

There are several current members of the Airport Board who are residents of Vergennes. Hoffman nominated Kevin Vezino to serve as our official representative if he is willing. Baird seconded, and the **motion carried.**

Grattan and Vergennes Sewer Board

Terry Conley was appointed in 2007, and Stone motioned to retain him, Nauta seconded, and the **motion carried.**

4. Meeting Dates 2009 - The meeting dates for 2009 will be January 19, February 9, March 9, April 20, May 18, June 15, July 20, August 17, September 21, October 19, November 16, and December 21. There was a motion to set the meeting dates as noted by Wittenbach; seconded by Stone. **Motion Carried.**

5. Holiday Hours for 2009 - There was a motion to approve the holiday hours as presented by Baird; seconded by Nauta. **Motion Carried.**

6. Collection of Summer Taxes for LAS, GRCC and KISD - There was a motion to collect summer taxes from LAS, GRCC and KISD by Stone; seconded by Hoffman. **Motion Carried.**

7. Internet Letter Discussion - Mark Weber wrote a letter that he would like the Board to support. In the letter he states that Vergennes is being shortchanged in the distribution of high speed internet because there is only one provider. Verizon won't go into AT&T area and vice versa. He believes that the internet is a community service and that this monopoly violates the public good. This letter will be sent to state representatives, the governor and many other prominent political figures and government offices. The board had no issues with the letter and endorsed it.

In other Board discussion, Zoning Administrator Vandersloot noted that the Henschke case is still not resolved, and because of the prior court ruling it will need to be carried out in the district or circuit courts. There was a motion to turn the Henschke case over to attorney Doezema by Baird; seconded by Nauta. **Motion Carried.**

Victory Woods is still a problem. The road was not build to standards or the plan. Vandersloot is still dealing with several issues.

Mr. Langlois' road is finished, but the engineer needs to look at it as well as the road commission. Then it will be ready for a final from the Board in January.

Public Comment -

Rick Gillett stated the Board should have the Township Attorney look at the proposed recreation facility on 3-Mile to see if its' location is within the intent of the ordinance. There was a motion to have the issue reviewed by the township attorney for ordinance justification by Stone; seconded by Wittenbach. **Motion Carried.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mari Stone