

VERGENNES TOWNSHIP
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 19, 2005

The regular meeting of the Vergennes Township Board was called to order by Tim Wittenbach at 7:05 p.m. in the Vergennes Township Hall.

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

Minutes of the November 21, 2005 Regular Board Meeting approved as presented. Motion by Hoffman, second by Nauta, to approve bills as presented after request for interpretation of Williams & Works \$463.74 payment. **Motion approved.** Motion by Nauta, second by Stone, to approve Agenda with addition of No. 12 - Report and Request from Open Space Citizen's Committee and No. 13 - MTA request for support. **Motion carried.**

Public Hearing: Heather Strejc Daycare Request.

Open: 7:10 p.m. - No Public Comment

Closed: 7:12 p.m.

Unfinished Business:

1. **Heather Strejc Daycare Request.** Motion by Baird, second by Stone, to grant Special Use Permit for a daycare facility to Heather Strejc. Township must grant its permission, and now Strejc will apply to State of Michigan for her license. **Motion approved unanimously.**

New Business:

1. **Lowell Ambulance Request - Addition to Look Fire Station.** Matt McConnell of Rockford/Lowell Ambulance was present to answer questions from the Board. Need more space - separate living space (female/male) - 2/3 of space for ambulance and 1/3 of space for Fire Department. Asking \$16,000 from each of the three municipalities in a lump sum or payment over three years. (City of Lowell, Lowell Township, Vergennes Township). Total Cost: \$240-\$245,000. They are hoping to receive \$125,000 from Englehardt Foundation. Hoffman voiced approval of request as long as all three municipalities are on board. Motion by Stone, second by Baird, to approve \$16,000 request to Lowell Ambulance contingent on approval by all three municipalities for the same amount and the ability to use a three year schedule of payment. If Englehardt Foundation does not approve of the \$125,000 payout then Rockford Ambulance will need to revisit the issue with Vergennes. **Motion carried.**
2. **Discussion Regarding State Funding Requirements for PDR.** Stone and Nauta attended meeting regarding State Funding Requirements for PDR this fall. Vergennes is

eligible for federal and local funding but does not qualify under State qualifications for funding. Vergennes master plan does not specify that the agricultural areas are designated properly. Another round of PDR applications due June 2006. Motion by Stone, second by Nauta, to request Planning Commission to create an amendment to the Master Plan in order to qualify it for state funding and make it compliant with State requirements for PDR. **Motion approved.**

3. **Policy Adoption - Social Security Privacy Act.** Although Vergennes Township has no benefits or pension plan, adoption of the Social Security Privacy Act is required of all municipalities. Motion by Wittenbach, second by Hoffman, to approve adoption of a policy regarding Social Security Privacy Act tonight so that Township will be in compliance, with a review of the actual policy at next month's regular meeting. **Motion carried.**
4. **Planning Commission Appointments.** Wittenbach made a motion, seconded and supported by Stone, to nominate Chris Kropf, Tom Medendorp and Bill Makuski to the Planning Commission for three year terms ending 12/08. **Motion approved.**
5. **Board of Review Appointment.** Wittenbach made a motion, second by Stone, to nominate Ken Ford to the Board of Review for a term ending 1/07. **Motion approved.**
6. **Zoning Board of Appeals Appointment.** Wittenbach made a motion, second by Stone, to nominate Doug Wester to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a three year term ending 12/08. **Motion approved.** Motion by Stone, second by Hoffman, to reappoint Tom Medendorp to the Construction Board of Appeals for a term ending 12/08. **Motion carried.**
7. **Collection of Summer Taxes for LAS, GRCC & KISD.** Motion by Baird, second by Nauta, to approve collection of Summer Taxes for LAS, GRCC and KISD. **Motion approved.**
8. **Poverty Exemption Standards for 2006.** Motion by Wittenbach, second by Nauta, to accept federal guidelines for poverty exemption standards for 2006. **Motion carried.**
9. **Approval of Meeting Schedule and Holiday Hours for 2006.** Budget preparation meeting to be held 1/18/06 beginning at 10:00 a.m. February regular township meeting changed to 2/13/06 instead of 2/20/06. Motion by Nauta, second by Baird, to approve meeting schedule and holiday hours for 2006 as presented. **Motion approved.**
10. **Building Inspector Suggestions - Compensation Discussion.** Mark Fleet led discussion regarding state construction fee schedule noting that Vergennes fees are different from that of Alpine and Cascade Townships who have adopted state construction fee schedules. Wittenbach asked Fleet to work up a comparison of Alpine and Cascade Townships and Vergennes Township and the Board will review that comparison. Fleet listed options for building inspector compensation. Stone to collect information regarding costs associated with Vergennes permits for Board to review compensation package for Building Inspector at January regular board meeting. Motion by Stone, second by Hoffman, to request Cascade Township perform plumbing inspections after receiving permits issued at Vergennes first. **Motion carried.**
11. **Vendor Contract Approvals - Hope Network/Senior Neighbors.** The two contracts are for CDBG funds approved in January 2005 for the 05-06 fiscal year. Motion by Stone, second by Nauta, to approve contract with North Kent Transit for 2005-2006 fiscal year in the amount of \$3000.00. **Motion approved.** Motion by Nauta, second by Hoffman, to approve \$5,000.00 contract with Lowell Senior Neighbors and request a periodic report regarding how money was spent. The amount listed in the contract was \$3000.00, but the Board desired to amend the amount to \$5000.00. **Motion carried.**

12. **Report and Request from Open Space Citizen's Committee.** The committee would like to hold an art exhibition depicting Michigan Rural Character, and an educational program with a focus on water at Vergennes Township Hall on April 26, 2006. The exhibition is open to all local Kent and Ionia County adult and children artists. Details of requirements, eligibility and selection process was outlined in a draft brochure the Board received. Proceeds from any sale of art to go to the Open Space Committee for use in future projects. Motion by Nauta, second by Hoffman, to allow Open Space Committee to use Vergennes Township Hall for art exhibition. **Motion approved.**
13. **MTA - Request for help with possible Annexation Litigation.** Request MTA assistance in a legal defense; if annexation is approved, MTA would enter into litigation on behalf of all Michigan Townships; criteria - benefits other townships. Stone noted that a formal resolution request is not needed at this point from the Board. She spoke with MTA Executive Director who assured that if the Boundary Commission decision is overturned, MTA would become involved in litigation on Vergennes' behalf. Motion by Hoffman, second by Nauta, to designate Wittenbach to represent Vergennes in the Boundary Commission directed discussions with the City of Lowell and Lowell Township. **Motion carried.**

Citizen Comments:

Paula Livingston discussed receipt of letter from J. Vandersloot noting that she was in conflict with the ordinance as the mobile home she owns on an acre of property at 853 Montcalm was unoccupied for a year and according to the ordinance, she has lost her grandfather clause to keep it there. Untrue according to resident – her son who lives in Alpena has spent nights there - there is electricity. The Township has received a petition from neighbors regarding the property noting that they have not observed a resident for over a year - uninhabitable condition - health hazard – junk strewn about the property. Two years since anyone has lived on the property. It was sold once but repossessed last summer. Long term plan is to sell property – Livingston mentioned a \$50,000 price. Discussion of Township options: confer with attorney; actively market property. J. Vandersloot to contact Township Attorney to check legal options of the Township and then contact owner with decision.

Baird wants building permit report monthly regarding new permits issued/location/owner with running tally of number year to date.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mari Stone, Clerk