

**Vergennes Township
Regular Board Meeting
January 18, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Tim Wittenbach, Supervisor. Roll call was taken. Gillett, Rasch, Hoffman, Stone, and Wittenbach were present. None absent.

A motion to accept the agenda with the addition of Katherine Henry and Tom Alberts, both running for State Representative, was made by Gillett, Stone supported. The motion passed. The minutes from the December 21, 2015 meeting were accepted as presented.

The Treasurer's report was read. A motion to approve the bills as presented with the addition of AT&T and Consumer's Energy was made by Hoffman, supported by Gillett. Motion passed.

Guest Speaker – Lisa Plank, Executive Director, Lowell Area Historical Museum - Lisa Plank gave an overview of the activities that occurred during 2015 at the Museum. 26,000 guests were served through the various programs and open hours of the Museum in 2015. Coming in 2016, Luann Kaeb will be doing a tour of the Alton Cemetery. The museum will also take part in a collaborative internship with Calvin College to document artifacts, etc... There will be a new exhibit in September detailing the fur trade in Vergennes Township and the surrounding areas. They also hope to have a summer camp at Fallasburg Village in July or August.

Public Hearing – CDBG Funds - The Township is required to have a public hearing each year to allocate CDBG funding for the year. Senior Neighbors is asking for funding again, as well as North Kent Transit. Public hearing was open at 7:18pm. There was no public comment. The hearing closed at 7:18pm.

Unfinished Business

1. **Allocation of 2016-17 CDBG Funds** - There is \$9379 available. Senior neighbors is asking for \$6000. Stone said there was concern North Kent Transport would go over the \$3379 left. She would be comfortable with \$5500 for Senior Neighbors, giving NK Transport a bigger cushion. Stone made a motion to grant \$5500 to Senior Neighbors with the balance of \$3879 to North Kent Transport (Hope Network). Hoffman supports. Motion passed.

New Business

1. **Request for Special Exception Use Permit – Dave Buckius** - Dave Buckius was granted a SEUP to build a garage in October, 2014. The permit was good for one year. He has been working out of town a lot and did not have time to get the building started. He is asking for an extension to do so. A motion was made to allow the extension by Stone, supported by Gillett. Motion passed.
2. **Request for Special Exception Use Permit Amendment – River's Edge Bed and Breakfast**
Bill Schreur is asking to enclose the west side of their pavilion. He wishes he would have done it initially when the pavilion was first built. The wind comes from the west and it would also block

the embankment there. He spoke to the building official and was told he would have to wrap the wall around the North and South sides about 10 feet as a brace. Bill needs to get more information from a structural engineer to see if it is even feasible. Would this require an amendment to the original permit? Jeanne Vandersloot, Zoning Administrator, felt it would need a Board decision as it was more than a minor amendment. Per the Township Ordinance, a Public Hearing would need to be held.

Wittenbach – prior to the pavilion being built, it was noted in the Plan Review letter by Mark Fleet, Building Official, that side enclosures of any type are prohibited. Bill doesn't feel tent walls are enclosures. He keeps the exit ways clear of obstructions and they are clearly marked. He does not think there would be any issue in exiting the pavilion in case of fire. Wittenbach noted that any structure with a capacity over 100 people had to be fire suppressed. Bill questioned why two venues, Post Family Farm in Hudsonville and Riverside Receptions in Kalamazoo, don't need fire suppression.

A public hearing needs to be set to consider the SEUP Amendment. He will get more information and clarification of what is allowed, meet with Mark Fleet, and possibly an engineer, to determine if it is feasible to go forward with the request.

3. Katherine Henry – Republican Candidate for State Representative of the 86th District.

Katherine has held no government office before. She is an attorney and homeschool mom. She wants to know what issues are important to the residents now. She wants the communication lines to be open and accessible. Less regulation, simple is better.

Tom Alberts – Republican Candidate for State Representative of the 86th District

Tom works for the State of Michigan with the pension fund. He lives in Grattan. He received a degree in political science from University of Michigan, was in Marines 4 years, obtained his MBA in Finance from Michigan State. He is a leader and can make tough choices when needed. He knows which side to fight for. His website is Votealbert.com.

Other Business

There was a Fire Board meeting last Monday. They met with Bowne Township Chief, Ada Township Fire Chief and the Grand Rapids Township Supervisor to determine the best way to go about finding and hiring a new Fire chief. They also opened up the Fire Authority Agreement between the City and Townships for some housekeeping changes. Wittenbach would especially like to review the funding formula. He will meet with Carlton Blough of Lowell Township, and the City of Lowell Mayor, Jeff Altoft, on Wednesday, January 20.

Township Building Addition – Scott Jernberg of Triangle & Associates indicated he would have some initial plans by Wednesday, January 20.

There were no citizen comments. The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 pm.

Mari Stone, Vergennes Township Clerk