

Vergennes Township

Regular Board Meeting

June 15, 2015

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
 Duane Rasch -Trustee
 Rick Gillett -Trustee
 Jean Hoffman -Treasurer
 Mari Stone –Clerk

The agenda for the June 15, 2015 meeting was approved as presented. A motion was made by Wittenbach, seconded by Stone. **Motion carried.** The minutes from the May 18, 2015 meeting were accepted with one correction by Tim Wittenbach. The Treasurer’s report was read and bills were approved for payment. The motion for approval was made by Hoffman, seconded by Rasch. **Motion carried.**

Guests: KDL – Lance Werner, Library Director; Charles Myers, KDL Board of Trustee Chair; Josh Bernstein, KDL Englehardt Branch Manager.

Chuck Myers reviewed the annual report for KDL. They are now a 501(c)(3) organization. This enables them to solicit donations from public for different programs at the library. Their focus is on creativity, seniors and young readers.

Josh Bernstein said the Englehardt Branch has focused on outreach, partnering with the Senior Center, FROM and preschools. 60% of Vergennes residents are library cardholders.

Lance Werner went over circulation, indicating E-circulation is very popular and is on track to hit one million this year. There is also a county initiative to reach 3rd graders. A study funded by Steelcase Foundation is being done to measure impact on children’s ability to learn and familial impact.

Unfinished Business:

1. Building Fee Schedule: Mark Fleet, Building Official of Vergennes Township - There was some discussion about the fees charged to Enwork for the building addition on Christopher Drive.

Mark handed out packets including a comparison sheet showing Vergennes, Cascade and State fees for an industrial/commercial building as well as a residential new house project. On Commercial/Industrial, Vergennes was highest. They were lowest on residential.

Per Mark, commercial permit fees are there to help cover running the building department. The residential permits are lower to benefit the residents. The Township does not currently charge for, or require, roofing or siding permits. Cascade recently started requiring permits for them. Not requiring a permit does not negate the need to be up to code on the work, however.

Wittenbach would be in favor of changing Vergennes Fee Schedule to mirror either Cascade or State schedule for commercial/industrial permits.

Fleet also provided a suggested fee schedule for things like stop work order, repair/demolish orders, etc. He has not been compensated for these things in the past unless they could be worked into an actual permit being issued. Fleet feels the quality of the buildings in the Township is reflected in how well the Building Code is enforced.

Gillett suggested Vergennes follow Cascade Township's fee schedule for both commercial and residential. Since Cascade handles permits for Lowell Township, City of Lowell, Ada, Cascade, East Grand Rapids, and Grand Rapids Township, doing so would put us on par with most of the surrounding communities.

A motion to utilize the same fee schedule that Cascade Township uses and to adopt the Code Enforcement Fee Schedule as suggested by Mark Fleet was made by Stone. Gillett supported. **Motion carried.**

2. Fairchild Drain - Hoffman had researched a history of drain maintenance. Fairchild was previously done in 2001 and the Township paid the entire portion then. However, in 2010 the Township only paid a portion of the Howard Drain repair. The balance was divided among landowners in the Drainage District and added to their tax bills. The Board agreed that the Howard drain allocation method should be applied to drains going forward. A motion was made by Stone, seconded by Wittenbach, to pay 20% of the Fairchild Drain repair, and have the remainder assessed to the district property owners. **Motion carried.** It was agreed that a policy following this formula be adopted with regard to future requests for drain repair/maintenance.

New Business:

1. Township Millage rate for 2015 - It was motioned by Hoffman to keep the Township Millage rate at .8672 for 2015; Supported by Wittenbach. **Motion carried.**

2. FOIA Policy - The State of Michigan has adopted a revision to the FOIA Act, which takes effect July 1, 2015. We are required to adopt a Statement of inspection of records, procedures and guidelines, and official request for public records form. Stone recommended adopting the

forms suggested by MTA and use as needed. The entire packet will be put on our website. Gillett motioned to approve, Hoffman supported, and the **Motion Carried**.

3. Miscellaneous Zoning Issues - Alder Meadow Court - It has been determined there is not an auto repair business being run on the street. The issue is being dropped. Jeanne Vandersloot submitted a report via email outlining the problems there. She was not at the meeting.

Red Barn Market sign request - They have not come to the Township with any further information about sign size or design. In checking with Kent County, they do not provide the green directional signs for farm markets, etc. Nothing further will be done until more information is received from the applicant.

Citizens Comments

Wittenbach reminded board members of the annual legislative picnic is July 15 at Townsend Park at 5pm. RSVP is required. The Farm Act of 2014 is the topic.

Gillett asked about a manure pile on the property line of Meadowview Farms and Mr. Dykstra. Dykstra has mentioned it to Gillett several times now. Wittenbach will go and talk to Les Johnson of Meadowview.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45. The next meeting is scheduled for July 20, 2015.

Mari Stone, Vergennes Township Clerk