

**Regular Board Meeting
Vergennes Township
May 16, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 7pm by Tim Wittenbach, Supervisor.

Roll Call – Rasch, Hoffman, Wittenbach, Stone, and Gillett were present. There were none absent. Jeanne Vandersloot, Zoning Administrator, was also present.

Approval of the Agenda – Wittenbach added Matt VanderWerff, candidate for 86th District Representative, to the agenda. Wittenbach motioned to approve the agenda with the addition, supported by Hoffman. **The motion carried.**

Approval of the April 18, 2016 minutes – the minutes were approved as presented. The treasurer’s report was read. The Bills were reviewed. Hoffman asked to add \$8.42 for our portion of a tax tribunal decision. A motion was made by Hoffman to approve the bills with the addition, Gillett supported. **Motion carried.**

Public Hearing – Roger Kropf, SEUP for sign placement on Lincoln Lake.

Aaron Roth gave quick overview of sign request. He showed a picture of the proposed sign. There are three businesses on the sign already, Murray Lake Marina, Arrowhead Golf Course, and Red Barn Market, with one space left if anyone else was interested.

The public hearing was opened at 7:07 pm.

Dave Thompson – 14100 Thompson Drive, Lowell – He and his wife found Red Barn by accident. Go there frequently. It is a good idea to put a sign on Lincoln Lake Avenue.

Steve Koning – Lincoln Lake Avenue – Who is going to take care of the sign and keep the area cleaned up around it? What if more businesses want on the sign? Is it going to get bigger? The Vergennes Township signs are in disrepair and look terrible.

Public Hearing closed at 7:09 pm.

Unfinished Business

1. Roger Kropf, SDUP for Sign Placement on Lincoln Lake. The sign will be on Thuston’s property, not in road right of way. Thustons have signed a letter of agreement as such. Additional businesses on the sign would need to be approved. The sign is 96” wide by 60” tall with four spaces evenly divided. The sign will be bermed, mowed and may have some plantings around it. The entire corner will be cleaned up. It is on private property so there will not be any

other signs. Kropf noted that it is his responsibility to keep it looking nice. Gillett motioned to approve the sign as presented. Wittenbach supports. **Motion carried.**

Stone commented that the Township signs should be removed if they are that bad. The Township did not authorize installation of those signs and cannot remember who did, it's been so long ago.

2. Alden Nash Trail Connection – Request for Support

Stone – this was tabled from last month due to not having a full board present. She would like Township support for this project. Lowell City and Township are supporting the project with donations of \$10,000 each. The money would go to LARA and they would build the trail. This trail would join the current trail on Alden Nash to the Park being developed behind Walgreens on Fulton and Bowes Road. It is a \$200,000 project. It is important for grant committees to see there is community backing for the project. They are requesting money from Frye Foundation, Steelcase and Lowell Area Community Fund.

Discussion by Board members: Rasch – will the current budget need to be amended for this? Yes it will. There is a line item for recreation. Gillett – sees it as getting a lot of use, especially with the development going in on Alden Nash, SE. Rasch – if we can afford to do it, we should, especially with the development of that area. Gillett – his only question is how the trails are maintained? Stone said it is LARA's responsibility. The Township donates \$2000 each year which mostly covers administration costs, insurance, etc. Hoffman motioned to allocate \$10,000 for the trail as presented. Stone supported. **Motion carried.**

New Business:

- 1. Request to build Pole Building Prior to Residence – Franklin Holwerda** – Their current residence will be up for sale in mid-June. They want to start with pole barn to move equipment into it for site prep, etc. Richard Anderson is contractor for both house and pole barn. They expect to get barn up in next 60 days. Once it is up and closed in and their current home is sold, they will start on new house.

Stone – The Township requires a financial guarantee so that if the house is not built, the accessory building can be removed. The ordinance states no accessory buildings can be erected before the house. There have been several instances where this has happened and we have no recourse. The amount is based on an estimate of how much it would cost to remove the building or some other amount agreeable to both parties. The money can be put in escrow at the Township or he can get a letter of credit for the amount needed.

Mr. Holwerda was not anticipating this requirement, and wanted to take it under advisement. He will talk with wife and get counsel on monetary matter before committing to anything.

Wittenbach asked that the Board agree on terms tonight. Holwerda can choose to follow through or not. The Board agreed that \$2500 in Escrow at Township is sufficient. Holwerda asked if a letter of credit from Fifth Third Bank would suffice, and was told it would.

Stone made a motion to grant Mr. Holwerda's request to build a pole barn before construction of his house with bank letter of credit or escrow in amount of \$2500 as outlined in zoning ordinance. Gillett supports. **Motion carried.** Mr. Holwerda will keep us updated on his plans.

2. Heffron – PA 116 Application

Stone – our records still show property in previous owner's name. We have the recorded deed. We just need the paperwork to go through our system to get things caught up. The request will take effect for 2017. Paperwork needs to be turned in to the State by November 1 to get property tax credit. Stone made a motion to approve Mr. Heffron's application for PA 116. Gillett supports. **Motion carried.**

3. Update – Fire Chief Hiring

Ron Vanoverbeek is new Fire Chief. There were some very qualified candidates. The hiring board received a letter of support from 18 volunteer firefighters for Vanoverbeek.

4. Matt VanderWerff – Candidate for 86th district Representative

Mr. VanderWerff introduced himself. He farms on McPherson, 6th generation. He has a degree in accounting and business administration. He would like to see an end to the tax breaks and grants corporate industry gets. Money received under the guise of job creation just takes it away from other projects and adds to the burden of other businesses. He is pro-life, pro-family, is a member at St Mary's Church in Lowell. His email is vanderwerff486@gmail.com.

Citizens Comments

Bill Makuski commented on the proposed hall addition. Since this is a public building, he feels the proper process is to get a design from an architect. The approved design should then be sent out for construction bids. He does not think getting a design/build bid is right. Any qualified contractor should be able to bid on building the addition.

Stone – Diane Jones, our County Commissioner, called and gave some updates. There is a proposal going on the November ballot to increase the 911 surcharge from .45 per line to 1.15 per line. Approval would allow them to do \$25 million in technology upgrades.

There is also a proposed county-wide millage for the John Ball Zoo and the Public Museum. They would split the money evenly.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm. The next regular meeting is June 20, 2016.

Mari Stone, Vergennes Township Clerk