

Vergennes Township
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 17, 2010

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
Al Baird - Trustee
Rick Gillett - Trustee

The agenda for the May 17, 2010 meeting was approved by Gillett; seconded by Hoffman.

Motion Carried. The minutes for the April 19 meeting were approved. Treasurer's report and bills were read and approved with a motion by Baird; seconded by Gillett. **Motion Carried.** Stone informed the board that she had followed up on the 2010 County Fire Commission Assessment, and verified that the assessment is for the calendar year of 2009. Vergennes Twp. will be paying for the whole year and the Fire Authority will reimburse Vergennes Twp. half for the period of July to December that we were members of the authority. In future years, the full amount will be the responsibility of the authority.

Public Hearings -

1.Robin Engle, Group Childcare-The public hearing was opened and closed at 7:03 P.M. There were no public comments.

2.Jacque Almassian – Accessory Building on Vacant Lot - The public hearing was opened and closed at 7:04. There was only one brief comment by Dave Steinbrecher who said that the accessory building would be an improvement on the lot. After the public hearing was closed, Hoffman asked about the placement of the building. Specifically she asked why they did not choose to place the building toward the center of the property. Matt from Nugent Builders answered her that it was being placed to utilize the position of Almassian's driveway across the street in backing up to the building. Baird asked what type of landscaping they were planning to do around the building. Almassian replied that he would have a paved drive coming up to the front of the building and grass would surround it otherwise.

Unfinished Business:

1.Cemetery Ordinance/Policies - Stone drafted some options for an amendment to the Cemetery Ordinance to define who could purchase cemetery lots. The ordinance currently states that burial spaces can be purchased for an heir by law or next of kin. Next of kin is not defined in the ordinance, and Stone offered two versions of a definition. The board also wanted language that would lay the burden of who has burial rights of owned lots on the families rather than the township. Discussion was held regarding the proposed language (attached). Stone motioned to approve the Unused Family Burial Spaces language; seconded by Gillett. **Motion Carried.** The

board proceeded to discuss the definition of next of kin, and decided that the definition should be “the nearest blood relative, including the surviving spouse, children, and grandchildren. Gillett motioned to approve the definition of next of kin as stated above; seconded by Hoffman.

Motion Carried.

2.Vern Nauta – Accessory Building Request - The board received information that stated that it will cost \$2500 to demolish and remove a building Nauta would like to build on his property prior to a residence. This is the amount that should be deposited into an escrow account, or provide a letter of credit/bond so that the township is covered in the event the township requires removal. There was no motion because this was simply an update.

New Business:

1.Robin Engle, Group Childcare - The board asked Engle what fire safety requirements the state inspectors made – she said the fire requirements are CO detectors, fire extinguishers, and smoke detectors. The only issue that the board needs to approve for her application is the zoning approval. Stone motioned to approve the zoning for Robin Engle; seconded by Gillett. **Motion Carried.**

2.Jacque Almassian – Accessory Building on Vacant Lot-Hoffman stated that she would like to see the building be moved more to the center of the property. Almassian’s builder went over the driveway issues on both sides of the road, explained the tight turn around situation, and noted that a move to the center would make backing up vehicles difficult. The old building’s size was 20x30 and the new proposed building is 30x36. The building will have metal or vinyl siding and they will asphalt in front of the building. Baird motioned to approve the accessory building as presented; seconded by Gillett. **Motion Carried.**

3.Clerk’s Request – Minutes on Demand for Website - Stone was proposing the service for Vergennes, after talking to the Cannon Clerk about how much she likes it. Minutes on Demand allows direct postings by the clerk and/or other approved staff of the all township minutes, agendas, and public notices. They are fully searchable by the public. This would also help to better facilitate the Freedom Of Information Act. Betsy Davidson currently charges \$500 per year to upload these documents, but they are not in a searchable format. This new service has a \$495 setup fee and costs \$750 per year. No decisions were made at this time, but there were no objections to the proposal.

After this topic was discussed the board talked briefly about high-speed internet. Some key points were that Ada, Vergennes, and Lowell townships came together and created a package that helped to attract new vendors to the area. There are currently several possibilities that may lead to high-speed internet coming to the township.

Citizen’s Comments:

Ken Skinner, who lives on Bieri Dr., Purchased a house and 3 acres on the Flat River in October of 2009. He was unaware of the Flat River Ordinance which requires the retention of a 25 foot natural vegetation strip along the river, and has cleared his riverfront and planted grass. A neighbor on the river, Ron Dawson, had called Skinner and informed him that what he had done was illegal. Skinner said he would work with the Zoning Administrator to remedy the situation.

It was noted that Dawson owns the only boat launch on this section of the river, charging \$25 for upkeep. The Board discussed several alternatives, and Gillett motioned to write a letter of inquiry to the County requesting a seasonal in and out access day(s); seconded by Hoffman.

Motion Carried.

Hoffman asked what updates the board had received about the Henschke's property. The owner is reported to be on his deathbed and so no progress is going on.

Josh Moore will apply for the MTA Robinson Scholarship. The board approved a resolution of support so that he can proceed with the application process.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
