

VERGENNES TOWNSHIP
Regular and Special Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2001

A Special Meeting of the Vergennes Township Board was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Vergennes Township Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss proposed ordinance amendments and additions to the Commercial District. No actions were taken. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Vergennes Township Board was called to order by Tim Wittenbach at 7:00 p.m. in the Vergennes Township Hall.

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

The minutes of the October 15, 2001 regular meeting were approved, with amendment to item No. 4 (Remaining Gravel Projects), second sentence to read . . . “South part of Biggs Road including Downes has 10,600 feet left to gravel”. Treasurer’s Report accepted as read. Hoffman, seconded by Nauta, made a motion to approve bills as read. Motion approved.

New Business:

1. Consideration of General and Community Commercial District Amendments. Motion by Stone, seconded by Nauta, to return Amendment to Planning Commission for further review. Motion carried.
2. ITM Request to Amend Special Use Permit. Need for new air compressor room. Two letters from residents in file in favor of amendment to special use permit. Planning Commission recommended approval. Motion by Baird, seconded by Nauta, grant ITM request to amend their special use permit. Motion approved.
3. Federal Poverty Income Standards for 2002 Assessments. Motion by Hoffman, seconded by Stone, to adopt Federal Poverty Income Standards for 2002 Assessments. Motion carried.
4. Website Policy. Issue reviewed by Township Attorney Doezema. Proposed policy would give Township control as to any website links – according to Doezema, would stand First Amendment challenge. Policy attached. Motion by Wittenbach, seconded by Stone to adopt Website Policy. Motion approved.
5. Election Precinct Discussion. One precinct is allowed 2,999 voters. Precinct One-Vergennes Township has 2,451 voters. Due to the new districting, all new voter

cards with new numbers will need to be mailed. Stone would like division of Township into two precincts to coincide with this mailing. Divisions must follow physical dimension, i.e. road, river. Options: East of Lincoln Lake Avenue (819)-West (1600); Bailey Drive, south to Burroughs, Flat River Drive (1021)-North; or perhaps Alden Nash Avenue-East/West. Dilemma is in determining location of most growth in township. Deadline for submission to state is April 8, 2002. Vergennes Methodist Church would allow voting at their facility for Precinct 2. Stone believes she will be ready in February. Second precinct would entail purchase of additional voting machine (\$5,000) and other items to outfit the precinct. Hoffman made a motion, seconded by Nauta, to adopt Resolution No. 4-2001 approving split of one precinct into two precincts for voting within Vergennes Township. Motion carried.

6. Approval of Meeting Schedule for 2001. Motion by Stone, seconded by Nauta, to approve meeting schedule for 2002. Motion approved.
7. Request for Support, Joint Grant Application – Natural Features Inventory. Joint grant application to Englehardt Fund by Vergennes Township, Lowell Township and City of Lowell. Representatives from all three municipalities working together on application. No resident forced to participate in inventory. Wittenbach expressed discomfort about unintended misuse of this information at some future date and Baird felt most likely a great amount of the information now available through Kent County or other sources. Stone said the purpose of the Open Space District Ordinance currently being discussed is to set aside and permanently preserve land and allowing for clustered home sites, as another option for development. Knowing what the township would like to preserve before a developer approaches the Planning Commission will be an important piece of that. Motion by Hoffman, seconded by Nauta, to support a joint application to the Lowell Area Community Fund for a natural features inventory of Vergennes Township, the City of Lowell and Lowell Township. Motion carried, with Baird and Wittenbach dissenting.
8. PTAS Agreement. Motion by Wittenbach, seconded by Baird, to approve PTAS Agreement as written, contingent on attorney review and approval of agreement. Motion approved.
9. First Congregational Church Request. Church has purchased land for new church off Lincoln Lake Avenue, south of Lowell Airport, behind duplexes. Would like to begin construction within 12-24 months. Construction to include 85' steeple which height is not currently allowed in ordinance. Motion by Wittenbach, seconded by Baird, to request Planning Commission to develop ordinance amendment to ultimately allow for this type of height provision in ordinance. Motion carried.
10. Franciscan Sisters considering a new sign. Ordinance states front setbacks for signs to be 17 1/2'. This requirement has proven problematic in the past, placing the desired sign completely out of sight at the Franciscan location. Motion by

Wittenbach, seconded by Stone, to request Planning Commission to review ordinance regarding the front setback requirement in the matter of signs. Motion approved.

11. Holiday Hours. Closed December 24-27, 2001; Open December 28, 2001 (9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.) and December 31, 2001 (9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.). Hours as usual beginning January 2, 2002.

No Citizens Comments.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mari Stone, Clerk