

Vergennes Township

Regular Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2006

The regular meeting of the Vergennes Township meeting 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
Vern Nauta - Trustee
Al Baird - Trustee

The agenda for the September 18, 2006 regular board meeting was approved. Motion by Nauta; seconded by Stone. **Motion approved.** The minutes for the August 21 and August 28 special meeting were accepted as presented. The Treasurers Report and bills were approved with a motion by Hoffman; seconded by Nauta. **Motion approved.**

Unfinished Business:

1. Lowell Airport Issues – Representative Hildenbrand was in attendance to share information his office had gathered. A number of concerned township residents were in attendance and shared their opinions and concerns about the Lowell Airport. The city of Lowell is in charge of the airport although it is in the township. The township is not involved in anything to do with the airport. Jim Sowle manager of the airport stated the airport operates on 88 acres and it will never get any larger. The airport is looking to put a rotating light beacon in, so the night flights can have a safer landing. They are also cutting down some trees that have grown too tall and are in the flight zone, making landing difficult for pilots. The Lowell Airport is not rated IFR and it never will be.
2. Historical Commission Ordinance Discussion – The board would like a stand-alone ordinance so the historical commission can operate separate from the zoning ordinance. There was a motion to direct the Planner to work on a stand-alone ordinance for the Historical Commission by Stone; seconded by Nauta. **Motion approved.**
3. Planning Commission Vacancy – Nathan Post, of Headwaters Drive, has applied for a position on the Planning Commission. He has lived in the township for a few years, is involved in the community, and has an excellent resume. Stone said that although he would make a good Planning Commissioner, she hoped to see a woman on the commission soon. Hoffman agreed. Motion by Wittenbach to appoint Nathan Post to the Planning commission to take the term of Chris Kropf thru 2008. The motion was seconded by Stone. Wittenbach, Stone, Nauta, and Baird said yes, and Hoffman was opposed. **Motion approved.**

New Business:

1. Review of Comprehensive Plan Update – There was a motion to approve a draft for public distribution. Motion by Stone; seconded by Hoffman. **Motion approved.**
2. Amendment to 06-07 Budget – Line Item for Public Service (Sewer) Projects – The approved project work by Gourdie-Fraser will be in the amount of \$30,000 - a grant is being applied for that will reimburse most of this amount. There was a motion to add line item 101-536-921 in the amount of \$30,000 to the budget by Stone; seconded by Wittenbach. **Motion carried.**
3. Discussion Items –
 - Fire Services Agreement – The fire agreement is up for review currently. It was proposed to split the expenses equally between the three municipalities, the city of Lowell, Lowell Township, and Vergennes Township. The current agreement was drawn up in the 80's and is in need of change. Stone commented that she learned at an educational conference that some of the agreement language may not be legal as written. It was agreed that Jim Doezema should look over the agreement to make sure any amendments are legal.
 - Cost Recovery Ordinance – Lowell Township was studying a cost recovery ordinance for fire and rescue services charges but never adopted one. We do have a sample from them to look at. The sample ordinance will be reviewed next month.
4. Resolution to Rescind Tax Abatement for Central States – Central States filed for bankruptcy in the summer of 2005. They currently have a total of four abatements. Motion to adopt Resolution 2-2006 rescinding Central States IFT abatements, and Resolution 3-2006 rescinding Divine Leasing IFT abatement by Stone; seconded by Hoffman. **Motion approved.**
5. Resolution Authorizing S2 Grant – There was a motion to authorize an application for an S2 grant for assistance from the State Revolving Fund and the Strategic Water Quality Initiatives Fund by Stone; seconded by Hoffman. **Motion approved.**
6. Escrow Policy Revision –Hoffman had reviewed escrow accounts over the past few years and determined that the required initial deposit of \$1,000 works for only the most basic application. She made a chart with her recommendations for the board, and it was discussed. Motion by Nauta; seconded by Stone to set amounts for projects with a private road up to 10 lots of \$2,000; for 11-20 lots of \$3,000; for 21-50 lots of \$4,000; and over 50 at the township board's discretion. **Motion carried.** The board would also like to require bonds for larger

developments, and will seek legal advice regarding this. There is also a need for more definitions/language for the escrow policy. It will be reviewed next month.

7. Civil Infraction Ticket – The property on Beckwith owned by Bruce Langlois has not been cleaned up despite five letters of request by the Zoning Administrator. The last two letters warned of an impending Civil Infraction. There was a motion to issue a civil infraction ticket to Bruce Langlois by Hoffman, seconded by Nauta. **Motion approved.**

Citizens Comments

Peggy Covert had questions pertaining to the Planning Commission opening.

Dale Fegal had questions concerning the airport and how much say the township had in the issue. He also is requesting a letter from Representative Hildenbrand stating that he can build on his property.

Jerry Hale and Jamie Frain were present to discuss an alternate piece of land on the Cook's property where a sewer system could go for the DuRay development. They feel that placement on this site would make it more in the center of the commercial district and development areas. The Board will continue to rely on Gourdie-Fraser for direction on this issue.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mari Stone