

MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
4338 BEELINE ROAD
ALLEGAN COUNTY
HOLLAND, MI 49423

ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 12, 2008

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

Supervisor Terry Hofmeyer called the Annual Meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

ARTICLE II. INVOCATION & PLEDGE

Treasurer Gary Dewey opened the meeting with prayer and Supervisor Terry Hofmeyer led the pledge of allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Hofmeyer, Wendy Van Huis, Gary Dewey, Ed Stielstra, Bob Scanlan

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Paul Smith - Assessor
Kathy Stoike – Office Administrative
Mary Geurink – Deputy Clerk/Administrative Assistant
Charlene Fields – Deputy Treasurer
Bob Curnick – Township Deputy
Todd Vander Hulst – Township Deputy
Cal Haverdink – Fire Chief
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board members reviewed the minutes of the March 14, 2007 meeting. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Udellis Kuipers and seconded by Keith Becksvoort to approve the minutes as submitted. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE IV. OPENING COMMENTS

Supervisor Terry Hofmeyer stated that over the last year we have made some enormous strides in the Township. We hope to settle the water agreement that is pending with the City of Holland in the very near future. Terry thanked the volunteers and Board members that donate their time and efforts to the Township.

ARTICLE V. REPORT OF OFFICERS

A. PLANNING COMMISSION – BOB COOK

Terry Hofmeyer stated that the Planning Commission has had a very challenging year and he commended them on their fine performance.

Bob Cook reported that it has been a challenging year but toward the end of the year things began to settle down. The issue of the Flying J officially came off the table in January of this year. The other major project of last year was the Calvary Baptist School application, which will be a fine addition to the Township. The current projects underway are the review of the Township Master Plan and we are also working on the development of the Blue Star Highway Corridor. We are working on that project in conjunction with the Downtown Development Authority.

B. ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – HERB JOHNSON

Herb Johnson reported that the Zoning Board of Appeals has experienced a slow year, which was probably due to the economic down turn throughout this township and the state in general.

C. PARKS COMMISSION – LINDA HOWELL

Terry introduced the incoming Parks Commission Chair, Linda Howell and thanked the outgoing Chair, Michelle Sall for her service.

Linda Howell acknowledged the presence and hard work of Commissioners Michelle Sall, Karen Simmons and Chuck Strabbing. She also recognized the efforts of Kelly DeWitt, Laura Canaan and Ray Buursma, all of who will not be seeking re-election. Anyone interested in a seat on the Parks Commission should see Al Meshkin about opportunities for running on the August ballot.

During the last fiscal year the Commission has finalized and received State approval for the 5-Year Parks Plan that will take the Township through 2012. By having this plan in place it allows us to apply for a number of State grants. There has also been a considerable amount of planning done with M.C. Smith & Associates for improvements at the Huyser Farm.

A major project for fiscal year 2008-09 will be the expansion of the bike paths adding almost six miles to the Township. This was made possible through a grant from MDOT with construction to begin this summer.

Linda Howell also noted that the Parks Commission meets each third Wednesday of the month and invited all interested residents to attend.

D. ALLEGAN COUNTY COMMISSIONER – TERRY BURNS

Terry Burns thanked the Laketown Township Board and citizens for supporting him and stated that he will run for re-election in August. Terry distributed several documents of reference to the audience. One of the documents outlines the responsibilities of the 11 County Commissioners and the committees on which they serve both internal and external to the County. Mr. Burns stated that he would be happy to answer any questions. The County Commission oversees the activities of the County. The other document was in reference to the current jail conditions in Allegan County. Terry announced that a location at Dumont Lake has been selected for the new jailhouse. He also noted that the Commission passed the Phosphorous Ordinance that will take effect in 2009. We have many problems with Macatawa watershed and ground water so this ordinance should help that problem. The major project ahead of this year is the new jail that is so badly needed.

E. ALLEGAN COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING – GEORGE SMEENGE

George Smeenge represents Laketown Township on the Allegan County Commission on Aging. George thanked Terry Burns for bringing awareness to the Allegan County Commission on Aging for which he has been appointed to a one year term. In the last four months he has enjoyed the geography and the people and the county. The Commission was organized in 2004 to address the needs of the elderly. It worked with the County to get a millage passed to provide funding for a program and was successful in raising \$867,000 to address the needs of the aged. The commission is made up of 11 people of various backgrounds and the group meets monthly. George stated that there is information available at the Township Office listing the services provided and the providers that the Commission on Aging is involved with. The biggest problem is that there is little

awareness of the programs available. Many people are in need of these services but they are unaware of them. The Commission researches the needs of the aging. The seniors in Allegan County have a good program. Governor Granholm just said that the State has saved \$32 million dollars by keeping seniors in their own homes living independently with quality of life.

F. DEPUTIES – BOB CURNICK, TODD VANDER HULST

Bob Curnick reported 1903 calls ranging from barking dogs to fatal car accidents to identity thefts. One thing we found interesting was that the car deer accidents went down by 24. Personal property damage accidents went up by 21 due to the harder winter. This did not include reports of cars in ditches or sliding off the road. The annual bicycle rodeo was a great success serving 60 children through bicycle safety lessons and the distribution of helmets. Almost 600 glow sticks were given away in neighborhoods on Halloween night. The kids love the glow sticks and are anxious to see the patrol cars. Deputy Curnick thanked the Board for providing them. One reminder as the weather gets better and parks get more use, please leave valuables at home or lock them in the trunk where they are not visible. The best thing to do is leave all valuables at home. Be sure to keep vehicle doors locked and windows up.

Supervisor Hofmeyer thanked Deputies Curnick and Vander Hulst for their service in protecting the residents of Laketown Township and maintaining the general welfare of the Township. He also hopes to see funding in the near future for more than a part-time department in the Township.

G. FELT MANSION PROJECT – PAT MEYER

Pat Meyer reported on the many large projects that have been accomplished in the last year. The mansion is also becoming LEED certified implementing green technologies. When Dorr Felt built the mansion, he had implemented many practices himself in the construction of the facility. It has been selected as a case study at a State level for the combination of historic preservation and green initiatives. The rental aspect has really taken off with over \$40,000 in rentals booked for this coming year and also into 2009. Pat has thanked all of the residents for their support. She also noted that Laketown Township is a great supportive municipality.

H. FIRE BOARD – BILL SIKKEL

Bill Sikkel stated that a lot of people don't realize that the Fire Board is comprised of Fillmore and Laketown Townships and he explained the breakdown of that. The Board makes recommendations to each township board for major decisions made such as a half million dollar fire truck. The Board is proud of the staff, command and fire fighters stating that they are a high efficiency and professional group. The Board does wage reviews understanding the equity and best interest of the Townships. The more efficient we become the better your home insurance policy rates will be. In the mid 1990's the insurance rating was at a 10 but is now rated 6, which reduces premiums. Bill Sikkel asked that Al Meshkin explain what that means, the savings far exceeds the bond expenditure. Money returned to the residents by better premiums is good for all of us. Mr. Sikkel also expressed how important it is for property owners to have very clear identification on their homes and be sure that driveways and roads to properties are easily accessible for emergency response vehicles.

I. GRAAFSCHAP FIRE DEPARTMENT – CAL HAVERDINK

Chief Cal Haverdink gave a review of the calls responded to in fiscal year 2007-08. There were 371 total fire and rescue calls dispatched consisting of 109 fire and 262 rescue responses. Cal also discussed the new fire truck and how it saved the fourth house that was part of the major fire in the dunes. The foam application that is used with this truck protects the materials of the structure. The department is working with the truck builder to finalize some minor issues with the truck that should be resolved very soon. Chief Haverdink has been issued a new/used Ford Expedition which is Deputy Curnick's former patrol vehicle. Through donations to the Department, the vehicle has been renovated and equipped to be used as a first responder vehicle. The Township now has three such vehicles. Chief Haverdink has also asked that the ISO rating be reviewed now that the new fire truck is in place as it has vastly improved the Department's capacity to respond to emergency

situations. With these improvements, he feels that the rating might be upgraded to a 5 or possibly a 4 rating. Chief Haverdink also noted that the Department is looking for new staff and those interested must have a good driving record. A meeting was held with MDOT concerning the emergency exit allowing access at 144th Avenue west of the 60th Street ramp and it appears there is a good possibility that we may try a pilot project with a gated entrance at that location. It would be the first such emergency access gate in Michigan.

J. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY – AL MESHKIN

Al Meshkin reported that the DDA was formed mid-fiscal year to address the Blue Star Highway Corridor. The first meetings have been primarily to educate the Authority on what a DDA is and how one works. Several professionals with expertise in the DDA process have presented to the group and we will now move forward with focus on the noted area.

K. LIBRARY REPRESENTATIVE – JANNELLE KAPPEL

Jannelle Kappel reported on the contribution of Laketown Township being just under 10% of the library's budget however we rank in the top five in regards to usage. Jannelle encourages residents to log onto the www.hdl.org website to review the many wonderful programs and activities that the Herrick Library has to offer. Jannelle is currently working on the Budget Committee for the Library Board and has found the experience to be very rewarding. Jannelle Kappel can be reached through the library's website.

L. HOSPITAL REPRESENTATIVE – No report.

M. POOL AUTHORITY – No report.

ARTICLE VI. PRESENTATION BY ALLEGAN COUNTY SHERIFF KOOPS

Sheriff Blaine Koops provided a PowerPoint presentation on the relationship between Allegan County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division and Laketown Township. The presentation identified the cost of crimes and crashes. This is the first township that he researched data to that level and Allegan County is the first county in the state to do this. Lt. Frank Baker gave an overview of services provided by general patrol and how they are allocated throughout the county.

Sheriff Blaine Koops reviewed a report on the Societal Costs of Crime and Crashes. He also noted that the Allegan County staff is one of the highest trained staffs in the State of Michigan. Sheriff Koops gave a detailed review of the costs of crime and crashes for a 3-year period with comparisons on state, county and township levels. Sheriff Koops also reviewed the rate of incidences compared to other counties stating that Allegan ranks higher than most neighboring counties. He also noted that there are 1500 fewer police officers in the State of Michigan today than in 2001 before the 9/11 incident.

ARTICLE VII. DE MULL AWARD PRESENTATION

Pat Meyer made the presentation of the De Mull Award however the recipient was unable to be present. The recipient of the award this year is Diane Geese who has given an enormous amount of time and effort to the Felt Mansion Project. She and her husband Don have donated countless hours to the project and continue to do so.

ARTICLE VIII. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

Supervisor Hofmeyer asked that Board members and staff make themselves known through the raising of their hands and thanked them for their efforts.

Cal De Maagd of 3719 64th Street asked if in the future Sheriff Koops could come back with greater

detail of the breakdown of the information that was presented tonight.

George Smeenge of Beeline Road stated that problems on the highways are in hearts and based on getting what we give. You are in control, I am in control, we are in control and I have learned that we are the biggest reasons that we have what we have. Wellness and the Evergreen Commons and other wonderful places are available for us. What we do with our lives makes a difference with what we get out of life. We get what we give. Health is nutrition, exercise, being social, intimacy and everything that nurtures your body keep in a calm chemical state of relaxation.

Bill Sikkel stated one of the assets of Laketown Township is its wonderful parks and this is the time of the year to see many deer while you enjoy them.

ARTICLE IX. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Udellis Kuipers and seconded by Keith Beckvoort to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 P.M. UNANIMOUS DECISION

Wendy Van Huis, Township Clerk

Diane Ybarra, Recording Secretary