

PROPOSED MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
ANNUAL MEETING
4338 BEELINE ROAD
HOLLAND, MI 49423

ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 10, 2010

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

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

ARTICLE II. INVOCATION & PLEDGE

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

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Gary Dewey

STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
K a t h y S t o i k e – O f f i c e
Manager
Mary Geurink – Deputy Clerk/Administrative Assistant
Charlene Fields – Deputy Treasurer
Paul Smith – Township Assessor
Bob Curnick – Township Deputy
Cal Haverdink – Fire Chief
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF 2009 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Clerk Wendy Van Huis reviewed the minutes of the March 11, 2009 annual meeting. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Udelis Kuipers and seconded by Don Van Huis to approve the minutes as submitted.**

Supervisor Terry Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion.

UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

ARTICLE IV. OPENING COMMENTS – SUPERVISOR TERRY HOFMEYER

Supervisor Hofmeyer commented that this past year has been difficult for all residents. He stated that the Board of Review was successfully completed yesterday. He thanked the Township staff for their excellent performance and service. He asked that they stand and be recognized.

ARTICLE V. REPORT OF OFFICERS

a. State Representative – Bob Genetski

Bob Genetski stated that he recently attended the Revenue Estimating Conference. There is an estimated \$1.6 billion deficit in revenue this year. All stimulus monies have been exhausted. The DEQ and DNR were merged and many other programs were cut such as education, health and human services. It is anticipated that unemployment will remain at or around 15% in 2010. Michigan has dropped to 11th from the bottom in revenue earning in the country. As we look at the budget this year, the governor will not sign a budget that cuts education or revenue sharing. It sounds great but it will be very difficult to manage with a \$1.6 deficit. Bob serves on the Appropriations Committee and all budget decisions go through this committee. One of the things to be proposed is early release of prisoners from correctional facilities. It is also suggested that medical expenses be taxed and the tax would be matched by the federal government for Medicaid. Governor Granholm also proposes reducing the sales tax to 5.6%. Her budget is very difficult to look at. There are numerous plans being considered. One plan is for every public official statewide to pay 20% of their own health insurance plus a 5% pay cut. It would unlikely make it to a vote. Also, state employees and public school employees will receive an incentive to retire and if they choose to do so by October 1st they would not lose their vision and dental post retirement benefit. The Governor proposed a \$2 mil cut to the state police budget which would affect Allegan County. Statewide we would lose between 39-44 deputies. The state employees have received approximately 23% in pay increases under this governor. Bob asked that everyone vote for transparencies in the state budget expenditures. Currently in Michigan it is not available. On the books we pay 55,000 employees but on any given day, we can only find 51,000 employees. With transparency the taxpayers will have visibility to every penny spent.

b. Allegan County Commissioner – Terry Burns

Terry Burns stated the animal shelter has been replaced and a new facility has been opened. There is a real good pet adoption program at the shelter. Through the stimulus package there has been increased transportation for ACT (Allegan County Transportation) to transport residents unable to drive themselves. The new jail will be located at the former Haworth Seating Plant in Allegan. It has 22 acres and a total of three buildings currently on the site. The architect cost was bid at \$250,000 more than the lower bid. I have not been able to find out why the extra money has been spent. The RFP (Request for Proposal) was changed to award this higher bid. The Meth Diversion Program has a zero recidivism rate. Fortunately, the program has now been funded by Lakeshore Coordinating Council. There were three jobs saved and the program continues to run. The Allegan County Health Department is offering a prescription discount card available to anyone who does not have insurance. The county budget will be a little short this year by about \$31 million compared to last year. There are monies in the reserve but there will also be some cutbacks made. A new County Mental Health Director has been hired. She comes out of the Dearborn area and comes to us with a lot of good experience. The smoking ban will take effect May 1st and is an unfunded mandate to be enforced by the Health Department. The Health Department will also enforce the licensing of the massage therapy practitioners. In 2007 the state passed a law that the legislature has to report to the state an update of the unfunded mandates but this has not happened. In general the County is in good shape financially, as is the Township.

c. Planning Commission – Bob Cook

Bob Cook reported that Al Dogger passed away a few short weeks ago. He was a very valuable member of the Commission who will be greatly missed. In general, it has been a slow year as was 2008. We have spent much time working on updating the Zoning Ordinances. We hope to get it done soon.

d. Zoning Board of Appeals – Bob Scanlan

Bob Scanlan reported that there has been an increase in the number of variance requests. About one

third of them will not move forward and are withdrawn, one third is approved and one third is denied. It is amazing how many people we can convince to change their plan to avoid having to have a variance.

e. Parks Commission – Linda Howell

Linda Howell reported the Commission tries to find resources to recycle. The remnants of the last prison building was recycled and used at Huyser Farm for the new driveway. The other major project was the partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Holland Board of Public Works wherein free soil was offered and trucked in for the Township Hall grounds. There is a master plan for an active recreation complex and there was approximately \$100,000 of free soil that was donated toward this plan. There are several grants being sought to bring the site up to the condition for moving forward. Linda Howell thanked Al Meshkin for the efforts he put forth on this project as well as the Parks Commissioners. We are also working with Michigan State on the blueberry fields at the Huyser Farm. The fields are considered organic because they have not been sprayed in so many years. We are also working with a bee keeper in the Township on this site. Watch the newsletter for programming with the Outdoor Discovery Center. There are some outrageously fun programs for children and adults of all ages. The schedule will be on the Township and ODC websites. Linda invited the residents to attend their monthly Parks Commission meetings on the third Wednesdays.

f. Deputies – Bob Curnick

Deputy Curnick reported that there were 736 calls in 2009, down from 1024 in 2008. The calls range from domestic violence to car crashes to barking dogs. The car deer accidents were at 21 for the season and they continue to occur every month. There was one fatal car accident in the Township last year. The personal injury accidents were at 9, down from 14 last year. The breaking and entering crimes are down and malicious destruction of property and assault are all down. Embezzlement and fraud claims have increased, such as identity fraud. A number of crimes continue to occur at the Laketown Beach. Deputy Curnick reminded residents to lock valuables in the trunk of their cars, use caution and leave personal valuables at home. Other activities supported this year were the Dunes Triathlon with a run through the dunes and a bike through the township. We also passed out the famous glow sticks at Halloween albeit fewer than last year but the kids just really love this. He thanked the Board members for allowing the township to cover the expense of this.

g. Felt Mansion Project Manager – Pat Meyer

Pat Meyer reported that the Mansion rentals continue to increase. There is always at least one time a year that the Felt Mansion is open to the public for a free event. This past year was the December 12 winter event.

h. Fire Board – Bill Sikkel

Bill Sikkel reported that sins of omission and commission occur. He reported that former chairman of the Fire Board, John Kleinheksel served for almost 20 years and is now on the Allegan County Road Commission. The Board structure has now changed to Gary Dewey, Mark Hop, Bob Jonker and Bill Sikkel. Bill explained the structure of the Board advises to Laketown and Fillmore Townships on the necessity of staff, budget, equipment and facilities. About 80% of the cost is bore by Laketown Township based on equalized value. Fillmore Township has three fire services, Hamilton, Overisel and Graafschap. Police and fire are two of the heaviest hitters in the county budget. The most recent purchase was over \$400,000 for a tanker. Bill recognized the fire fighters for their excellent performance and loyalty to service. Meetings are held on an as needed basis for budget and decisions for purchase of major equipment. Bill commented on the efficiency and maintenance of the facility. He also noted that a generator was purchased as a back up in the case of a power outage to avoid interruption in service.

i. Graafschap Fire Department – Cal Haverdink

Chief Cal Haverdink reported the total number of fire calls in 2009 was 77 and 209 rescue calls. The estimated fire loss for Laketown Township was \$101,800 and \$10,150 for Fillmore Township. The calls were down from 2008. There are interviews underway for new volunteer fire fighters. Cal invited interested residents to submit an application. It continues to be a challenge to have daytime availability of volunteers. The ranger that was put together is working out well and was recently used at the plane crash incident. It will carry four people and a stretcher. Training continues twice a month throughout the year. We are now doing training to respond to a nuclear catastrophe should something occur at the Palisades Facility. This is de-contamination training and the results of the training were covered by the Palisades Nuclear Facility. Bob Scanlan asked Cal to comment on the use of the new foam tanker. Cal stated that having this new equipment saved one of the houses during the dunes fire incident that occurred in 2008.

j. Downtown Development Authority – Al Meshkin

Al Meshkin reported that the DDA was active the first part of the year. A revenue sharing proposal will be presented to Allegan County within the next few months. The last few months the DDA has been rather dormant waiting for the Planning Commission to finalize the ordinances.

k. Library Representative – Terry Hofmeyer

Terry Hofmeyer reported that the library is seeing some challenges due to a reduction in state financial support.

l. Hospital Representative – No report.

m. Pool Authority – Terry Hofmeyer

Terry reported that all is going well at the pool. Sarah Giesler had reported to Terry that work is underway to search for a replacement for Tom Bos.

ARTICLE VI. DE MULL AWARD PRESENTATION

Bob Scanlan presented the De Mull Award to Dean Meyer and his sons Andy, Jared and Noah for the extensive volunteer work that they have done at the mansion in the last year.

ARTICLE VII. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

George Smeenge of 3977 Beeline Road stated that in 2006 a millage was passed to set up a senior citizens agency in the county. This expires this year and will be on the ballot in August. It has been a tough start up but we have a terrific new director running the show now and the program is going great. George encouraged the residents to vote in favor of this millage to continue this service for the seniors. Most of the people that are sick bring it on themselves. You either grow or decay. Beware of what anyone tries to give or sell you and take care of yourself.

Terry Hofmeyer expressed gratitude for George's service on the Commission of the Aging.

Bill Sikkel stated that he chaired the Law Committee in the Allegan County for many years. He noted that the money spent on consultants was excessive and frustrating. Terry Burns stated that the Law Committee has not met since he has been on it.

ARTICLE VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Udelis Kuipers and seconded by Randy Becksvoort to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 P.M. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

