

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

ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 9, 2011

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

Supervisor Terry Hofmeyer called the annual Board of Trustees 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.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

ARTICLE III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF 2010 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES –
Clerk Wendy Van Huis

Clerk Wendy Van Huis reviewed the minutes of the March 10, 2010 annual meeting. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Udelis Kuipers and seconded by Randy Becksvoort 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 looking at the audience tonight there are individuals who I have known and worked with for many, many years. There is a long line of connections of the people who make up the population of the Township. We should receive the official census numbers next week and we are anticipating reaching 6,000 residents, slight growth in spite of the lack of new housing development. There has been little new revenue but we have made adjustments that have kept the Township on track. Terry reported that he will be involved with Model Community Initiative which is a group that will be meeting and includes representatives from education, municipalities, businesses and other key functional groups in the community. The meetings will be at the end of this month for three days. Terry added as governmental units we are

used to meeting with news media present but that will not be the case in this session as there will be no media present. Terry feels that things are going well and he expressed appreciation for the board and staff members.

ARTICLE V. REPORT OF OFFICERS

a. State Representative – Bob Genetski

Bob Genetski provided a written overview of Governor Snyder's budget. He gave a brief synopsis of the budget stating that the Governor seems to want to hit the ground running. The proposed budget is \$45.9 billion down from \$47.3 billion the year before (including stimulus money). He stated that by law the state is required to have a balanced budget. Today 4.7% of the budget is debt service, monies that is spent to pay down debt. From 2004 to 2009, total state appropriations increased from \$39.3 billion to \$47.3 billion in a shrinking economy. Mr. Genetski reviewed the highlights of the proposed reforms and reductions. Governor Snyder has committed to keeping the number of state police officers in place but will close a number of state police posts. The new governor has a goal of keeping the budget simple and transparent. Credits that have been given out to date will remain but many will not be approved in the future such as the battery credits, historical preservation credit and a number of others. Due to the census last year the lines may change and could affect Laketown Township in regards to representation.

George Smeenge expressed appreciation for Bob Genetski's good work.

Sy Sybesma asked for specific dollars tied to the percentages noted in the reforms and reductions highlights presented. Mr. Genetski responded that it represents approximately \$1.4 billion.

A resident asked if the state has gone through the entire tobacco monies. Mr. Genetski responded that those dollars have been mortgaged so many times for other fixes it is difficult to say.

John Mulac asked if Mr. Genetski approved of the governor's budget. How do you feel about a township that borrows money?

Keith Becksvoort asked if there is a state law that mandates that pensions cannot be taxed. Will only the private pensions be taxed if the law passes? Mr. Genetski stated that it will come up for vote in the next few weeks.

b. Allegan County Commissioner – Terry Burns

Terry Burns stated that Laketown is one of the four entities that he represents that has an annual meeting and he enjoys this. He spoke about the monies coming out of the state. There is a Sobriety Court that was started through the Lakeshore Coordinating Council. The Public Act 2 funds provide support for the Meth Diversion Program and started the sobriety or drug court. The 211 that is sponsored by United Way in Allegan County are magnets for human services or resources for food, clothing, shelter, etc. By calling this number an individual would be provided with direction to the right service agency. Veterans Services have Tammy Grieg as the full service representative in Allegan County. In the last four years over 750 of the 9,000 veterans in the county have received services and 2,800 have been contacted. Allegan County has received over \$20 million to support this important effort to provide service to our veterans. We also support other counties that do not have dedicated service support for its veterans. Tammy Grieg can be reached at 269-673-3333 and this is also the number for senior services. Terry stated that another area of concern is the jail. There is a schematic of the initially proposed structure in the foyer that was turned down by voters on the most recent ballot. We have purchased the building at a cost of \$9.00 per square foot and now we need to use it. There is a meeting tomorrow to get down to a design that can go out for bid and hopefully win voters' approval. We did get an award for having one of the finest medical facilities in the state over in Allegan County. There have been some changes made to the current facility and it is really nice now.

Ed Stielstra asked what medical facility Terry was referring to. Terry Burns responded that it is the county farm or the senior facility that was recognized.

c. Planning Commission – Bob Cook

Bob Cook reported that for the third straight year things have been fairly slow. The bulk of the work of the Commission has been requests for special use permits for oversized accessory buildings. We have spent much time working on updating the Zoning Ordinances. We hope to finish that process in the very near future.

d. Zoning Board of Appeals – David Weishaar

David Weishaar reported that it is a trickle down if Planning Commission is slow so is the Zoning Board of Appeals. In the past year there have been five meetings which entailed six variance requests. Three were denied and three were approved for a variety of variances on building sizes and setbacks.

e. Parks Commission – Linda Howell

Linda Howell reported the Commission has been focusing on Shore Acres Park. The West Michigan Bicycle Association has been working on some new trails. All of the work has been done by volunteers and at no charge to the Township. They have worked nicely with the group that put in the A grant was submitted and approved to purchase additional parcel adjacent to Wolters Woods. It is one of our larger parks with the playground equipment and a picnic shelter. We are also working on a grant for Township Hall recreation facility plan.

Sy Sybesma asked if there is anything in place to remove the sand from the stairs at Laketown Beach. There were debts crew there shoveling the sand into the wind. Linda Howell responded that we are working on grants to replace the stairs at a higher level to alleviate this problem. There is also a study being done by Hope College to monitor the movement of the sand to determine how to construct the new stairs.

John Mulac asked how much the grant is for the additional property at Wolters Woods. Linda Howell responded that it is \$100,000.

A resident commented that many people bypass the stairs at Laketown Beach and asked if anything can be done about that. Do we want to replace them with something else? Linda stated we have tried things to keep people on the stairs but due to the location, it is difficult to keep the barriers in place to deter people from going through the easy path.

Terry Hofmeyer stated that last year we had volunteers pulling invasive plants in various parks. Will that happen again? Linda responded that a non-resident who has a boat at Eldean Marina has organized a group for the last few years and will hopefully do so again. A resident stated there are a lot of invasive plants along 147th Street that are overtaking that portion of the township.

f. Deputy – Mark Lytle

Deputy Lytle reported that he recently spoke to Bob Curnick who sends his gratitude to the residents of the township. There were 721 calls in 2010 compared to 736 calls in 2009. Of those calls, 70 were crashes, about 25 breaking and entering reports and 25 domestic violence calls. The necklaces for Halloween were a big hit as 150 were distributed this year. The bike rodeo which has been typically been an annual event has been canceled for this year. The 211 responders we had a staff meeting recently out of which it encourages people to use this service.

g. Felt Mansion Project Manager – Pat Meyer

Pat Meyer reported that this year a report was presented to the Board that included history and calculated predictions for the future of the Felt Mansion. Copies of that report are available for public review. We had a record year in 2010 over \$90,000 in rentals. We have a new heating and cooling system that has just been installed. She thanked Al Meshkin as it is due to a grant that he applied for that was approved. We will also have air conditioning this summer on all floors which will be a great selling point for wedding and other event rentals. On May 18 the mansion will host a dinner for the Michigan Historical Preservation Conference. The rental outlook is good for 2011, on track for where we were last year at this time. There is always one free event open to the public each year. In 2010, it was the Winter Fest which was attended by approximately 500 people. Summer tours will start just before Memorial Day and will run Sunday through Tuesday from 2:00 to 5:00pm with Mondays free to senior citizens. Pat invited everyone to come out and visit the Felt

Mansion for a tour or any one of the events that can be found on the website calendar.

A resident asked about the Gibson Church. Pat responded that it will be moved to Shore Acres Park. It will add another component to the Felt Estate as it will enhance the wedding rentals. We are very pleased that we have raised enough money but we will also appreciate additional volunteer workers to get it in place. It will be between the parking lot and the basketball court also providing handicap accessibility.

Terry Hofmeyer stated that once the restoration starts things start coming in such as pews and other items. Pat stated that there will be a historical case in the church for those who may want to contribute items they may have. Terry encouraged people to go there and enjoy the estate.

h. Fire Board – Bill Sikkel

Bill Sikkel stated that most of those present have heard what he has said in the past so a different approach tonight would be to speak about the amount of budget that goes to the fire and police departments. We have a great group of employees and volunteers in the township. Last November he had a medical emergency at his home and he personally experienced the fine work of our agencies. He expressed great appreciation for Cal Haverdink and his department. He reviewed some of the types of calls that the police and fire have to respond to throughout the year. We should all appreciate the efforts of these responders.

i. Graafschap Fire Department – Cal Haverdink

Chief Cal Haverdink reported the total number of fire calls in 2010 was 85 and 218 rescue calls. The estimated fire loss for Laketown Township was \$267,750 and \$7,500 for Fillmore Township. Chief Haverdink reiterated that there is a great dedication from the volunteers and staff at the fire departments. He highlighted the support provided to the President Obama visit to Holland. It was a unique experience for the volunteers who worked that event. Chief Haverdink stated that they are still looking for daytime help in the townships as those volunteers are hard to get. We are in the process of buying a new cutter to be able to use on the new metals that vehicles are being made out of today. The FCC is requiring all VHS radio systems must be narrow band capable meaning that we will have to replace some equipment and reprogram everything. It might cost up to \$18-\$20,000 to make the changes. We may be able to get some fund from Allegan County. Al Meshkin is working on getting the MCT computer tools for the equipment vehicles. Chief Haverdink also touched on the 211 service stating that it is a good service but should not be confused with the emergency 911 line. Be sure you use the proper number. Chief Haverdink also explained that “Mutual Aid” is when departments work together to provide assistance to areas to ensure that no area is left unprotected.

j. Downtown Development Authority – Al Meshkin

Al Meshkin reported that the DDA and the Township created a special assessment district to purchase additional capacity in the KLSWA wastewater treatment plant and will be paid by the property owners in the exit 41 / Blue Star area. Efforts are also underway with Allegan County to enter into a revenue sharing agreement for the DDA area.

k. Library Representative – Gary Dewey

Gary Dewey reported that the library is doing well with about 1.5 million in circulation. The library has been closed on Sundays since last year and that saved considerable amount in overhead. He stated that 85% of the library budget is salaries. He encouraged residents to continue reading and take advantage of the many great resources and opportunities the library has to offer.

A resident asked why they shut down the library on the second busiest day of the week. Gary Dewey responded that it truly was a day of highest volume but it was only three hours.

l. Hospital Representative – No report.

m. Pool Authority – Sara Geisler

Sara Geisler was not present but provided a written report submitted to Terry Hofmeyer which is attached to these minutes.

n. Commission on Aging

Paul Visscher reported on the Commission on Aging. He stated that the Commission is responsible for distributing the funds to support of the county's seniors. Last year there were 42,405 meals delivered to seniors; 5,285 trips to provide transportation to 354 clients; in home support hours were 2,394 to 251 residents; 2,394 hours of adult day care provided to 180 seniors and 11,752 hours of general senior assistance. He noted that the millage is being put to good use.

Bob Sikkel asked about connecting Allegan County Transportation with the City of Holland and Ottawa County for interconnect transportation. Terry Burns responded that a total service would be a full millage so funding is part of the problem. Some of the transportation is provided by volunteers and we have always tried to improve on the transportation but it is difficult to cover this Township. It is better than it was but not as good as we want. Bob Sikkel addressed Terry Hofmeyer and asked if there is something with the Max Bus service tying employees to get rides to and from employment and suggested pursuing that as an option.

ARTICLE VI. DE MULL AWARD PRESENTATION

Patty Meyer reported that this is the 12th Annual De Mull Award in Laketown Township. Many of the things in the Township could not function without the support of volunteers. One of the things about volunteers is that you are seeing people at their best. The person receiving the award is so joyful that it is contagious. Every Thursday this person would spend time to prepare the mansion for the weekend's events making sure everything is clean and in place. Rachel Geurink is that person and we are proud to present her with the 12th Annual De Mull Award.

ARTICLE VII. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

George Smeenge of Beeline Road stated that he was on the Commission on Aging for a number of years and he is now involved in other areas. There was a \$10,000 grant awarded in the State of Michigan to address elder abuse. Elder abuse is a specific subject that the state has six new laws waiting to be voted on to address various abuses to adults whether it is financial, mental or physical. Sheri Torres has a coalition in Allegan to educate seniors and their families on what to watch for with abuse. There will be a public announcement on this in May. The veteran and senior services in Allegan continue to be great and there is group working on improving the transportation needs in the county.

Terry Hofmeyer reiterated that George Smeenge reminded everyone to stay in good health and well-being.

ARTICLE VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Udelis Kuipers and seconded by Bill Sikkel to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 P.M. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED