

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

REGULAR MEETING
December 9, 2015

HELD AT THE FELT MANSION

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

Township Supervisor Terry Hofmeyer called the regular monthly Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Hofmeyer, Wendy Van Huis, Linda Howell,
Ed Stielstra
MEMBERS ABSENT: Gary Dewey
STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary
Doug Den Bleyker – Fire Chief

ARTICLE II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

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

ARTICLE III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board members reviewed the minutes of the November 11, 2015 meeting. **A motion was made by Van Huis and seconded by Howell to approve the minutes as submitted. Supervisor Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE IV. FINANCIAL REPORT / REVIEW & APPROVE THE BILLS

Supervisor Terry Hofmeyer reviewed the bills for the month of November 2015. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Howell and seconded by Stielstra to approve and pay the bills as submitted. Supervisor Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE V. CORRESPONDENCE - None

ARTICLE VI. REPORT OF OFFICERS

- A. STATE REPRESENTATIVE – No report
- B. COUNTY COMMISSIONER KAPENGA – DEAN KAPENGA

Commissioner Kapenga reported that the county budget has been passed. A meeting is scheduled for tomorrow to review the RFP for the new radio system noting that all stakeholders have made an extra effort to ensure that the requirements of all users will be met. A vote will also be taken on awarding the vendor for the senior home delivered meals. The lowest bid was received from Canteen, they also supply food for the county jail and have done well. Kapenga reported that he is involved in the

Community Corrections Advisory Board noting that there are a lot of great things going on including the recent approval by Judge Bakker allow the 70 x 7 Program to begin working with inmates in an effort to support their re-entry into society. The program has been very successful in other counties realizing a much reduced rate of recidivism. In addition, there are 176 inmates enrolled in the GED program and two recent college applications. Kapenga noted that the county parks are officially closed for the season but the gates remain open for those wanting to walk the trails and walkways. The gazebo at West Side County Park is almost finished. Lastly, the Community Action Board has funds available for those in the county unable to pay heating bills this season. Kapenga wished the board and residents a Merry Christmas.

C. PLANNING COMMISSION – LINDA HOWELL

Linda Howell reported that the Planning Commission met on November 2 and the following items were discussed: Copperleaf Development P.U.D. was tabled pending an updated plan to address density; approved Novak Special Use Request for a new home construction and an accessory building; Zoning Ordinance Amendment was tabled until the next meeting.

D. ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – AL MESHKIN

Al Meshkin reported that the ZBA met on November 30 and the following items were discussed: approved Timberstone Variance request to add a covered porch to an existing cottage; move the meeting day from the last Monday of the month to the fourth Wednesday of the month.

E. PARKS COMMISSION

Al Meshkin reported that the Parks Commission did not meet in November.

F. FIRE CHIEF AND FIRE BOARD – CHIEF DOUG DEN BLEYKER

Chief Den Bleyer reported the response calls for the month of November were as follows: 39 calls total, 25 calls from Laketown, consisting of 15 rescue and 10 fire, 12 calls from Fillmore, consisting of 9 rescue calls and 3 fire calls. There were 2 fire assists to other departments, one each to Holland and Saugatuck.

ARTICLE VII. PRESENTATION BY JUSTIN BURCHETT,
ALLEGAN CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Justin Burchett, Executive Director of the Allegan Conservation District provided an annual report and brochure for all board members reviewing the work that has been done in Allegan County. The agency just celebrated its 75th anniversary having been established on October 26, 1940. The Conservation District does a lot of projects directed at soil erosion but have broadened into invasive species programs. Burchett provided an overview of the projects in process or accomplished in 2015 along with objectives for the upcoming year. The organization provides services to private landowners at no charge funded by grants through the State of Michigan. Invasive species research is available to all townships in the county funded by a grant through October 2016. Support is also available to the agricultural district to support environmentally safe practices through review of current testing of soil, ground water, etc. There is also a Forester Assistance Program underway in Barry, Ottawa and Allegan Counties. Michigan Green Schools is an initiative geared toward working on sustainability and environmental practices in the schools. Benthlem Elementary, Douglas Elementary and Allegan High School all achieved the Michigan Green Schools status last year. The annual spring seedling sale will take place on April 23 at the Allegan VOTEC Center. Specific details on times and offerings will be available in the upcoming newsletter or on-line. This is the largest fundraiser for the agency and grew from \$9,000 to \$12,000 last year. Burchett stated that government funding has decreased and in order to sustain current programming, the agency is asking each township to consider making a \$500 donation to support these efforts.

Howell asked if there is a cut-off for placing orders for the spring seedling sale. Burchett responded March 25 or 27 but will be noted in the newsletter. Howell asked about the beech bark issue asking

if any had been found in Laketown Township. Burchett said not yet but likely it will make its way here. He added that oak wilt has been found in Grand Haven so residents should be watching for that as well because it can kill an oak tree within one week. Stielstra said he appreciates what the agency is doing to address invasive species but disappointed that a very low number of areas have been treated. Burchett responded that the grant was not received early enough to address a larger area and property owner permission is necessary before treatment. Stielstra asked if there are treatments that landowners can do themselves and Burchett responded that it must be done by a licensed technician. Stielstra suggested putting information in the township newsletter to alert residents. Hofmeyer said as a closing note we would like very much to work with you and thank you for coming.

ARTICLE VIII. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS ON OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Randy Becksvoort of 3930 Beeline Road thanked Al Meshkin and Patty Meyer for opening up the mansion for the meeting this evening adding that it is very beautiful.

ARTICLE IX. OLD BUSINESS – None

ARTICLE X. NEW BUSINESS

A. YATES ENGINEERING SERVICES PROPOSAL AND AGREEMENT

Meshkin explained that this is the first step in “Fiber to the Home” (FTTH) in Laketown Township. The agreement is with a new company YES Michigan (Yates Engineering Services) to be registered in Michigan. The estimated cost for this first step of the project is about \$9500 to help us focus in on costs if we decide to build fiber optic, what type we should consider and what kind of options would residents want on their network. It would give us a variety of cost estimates for various options and the report would be available by the end of January. If we decided to do it in 2016, we would have to put it before residents for a bond vote in May so a decision from the board would be needed in February. The price of this first step is very reasonable, including about 120 hours in engineering service. They have done many communities in southern Indiana. Most communities have some kind of anchor but we don't and probably never will. The anchor here is about 2400 residents that would really like to increase their access. No one else is really doing it; Zeeland is doing it for just the downtown area. The fiber to home concept is a little unique in Michigan and Yates sees a lot of potential for growth.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Howell and seconded by Van Huis to approve the Yates Engineering Services Proposal and Agreement conditioned upon formation of YES to be registered and approved to do business in the state of Michigan.**

Hofmeyer said there was a survey done in the township that was very encouraging as residents were excited about the opportunity to gain such access. Meshkin said he has only received one negative comment. Stielstra asked how Yates would be involved with the actual contractor that would do the work. Meshkin said we would do an additional contract with them to oversee the construction. Van Huis asked once it is approved how long it would take to be up and running and Meshkin responded approximately 6 months. Meshkin said it would require 85 miles of road to build with fiber either in the ground or hanging from existing poles. In the ground would be cheaper as it would cost \$20 per year per pole to rent pole space. Underground would be the better way; two small pipes underground not a hard build, some boring necessary but not that hard to build. The cost of materials is not much but the installation is labor intensive. Stielstra asked if the lines to the residents would be in the ground or air. Meshkin said it may be up to the residents but it would be available to every household if they want it. He added that lightning strikes have no effect on fiber optic. Stielstra asked if squirrels could damage it. Meshkin responded that it could be an issue but the pedestals will be in the ground and not visible on the surface except a small plate. Stielstra said it would be worth the contract fee to find out. Howell asked if the study will give info on the ultimate cost on the service once it is running. Meshkin said we would certainly be competitive but hard to nail down; ideally, we would license price control for what you charge for each service provided.

Supervisor Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION - MOTION APPROVED.

B. BROWNFIELD GRANT SUPPORT RESOLUTION

Hofmeyer explained that Allegan County is applying for an Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield Assessment Grant to identify areas in need of clean up.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Stielstra and seconded by Howell to approve the Brownfield Assessment Grant Support Resolution 2015-15.**

Meshkin added that the grant is not specific to certain sites but is intended to help property owners identify if there is a need present. An assessment had been done in Wolters Woods approximately five years ago and the grant saved the township \$2800.

Supervisor Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

C. COMMUNITY GREEN ENERGY REVISED AGREEMENT

Meshkin said last year at this time we approved the solar array and now this year it is up and running. As previously discussed this is a partnership between Community Green Energy, LLC and Laketown Township wherein we pay a monthly fee for 14 years. The revised agreement amends the verbiage to easement agreement instead of lease using terms customer and provider. The only other change is in year 15 years there was a mandatory buyout for \$75,000 and now in year 15 we have the Option to buy at market value not to exceed \$75,000. Stielstra asked who proposed the change of \$75,000 and Meshkin said they did and it is in line with IRS rules for the tax credits.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Howell and seconded by Van Huis to approve the Community Green Energy Revised Agreement. Supervisor Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED.**

D. BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Supervisor Hofmeyer proposed the reappointment of Bob Cook as Chairman of the Planning Commission.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Howell and seconded by Stielstra to approve Board Appointment as noted. Supervisor Hofmeyer called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE XI. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

Jerry Wyse of 6514 Creekwood stated that he and his wife moved into the township about a month ago and are very supportive of the fiber optic project, a very innovative initiative.

Randy Becksvoort of 3930 Beeline Road stated that he is also in favor of the fiber optic project but asked if it goes out for bond, will it get turned over to an ISP? Meshkin said we would be building the physical aspect of the infrastructure so we would give an ISP up to 2400 customers; there would be strict price controls in any agreement and high levels of quality service expected.

Jerry Wyse of 6514 Creekwood asked if the project would be open for commercial use such as lease for cable companies or only private use. Meshkin said potentially but not sure. The other fiber networks are not that far away from us but it could mean great potential for the Blue Star Corridor.

Stielstra said if we would ever consider anything there it would probably require such Internet and system access.

Becksvoot asked if there is any access on Blue Star Highway now. Meshkin said it runs down Graafschap Road to Blue Star Highway and then to Saugatuck Schools, but not available for public use. All OAISD schools are connected to fiber optic.

Hofmeyer thanked Meshkin for arranging for the meeting at the Felt Mansion as it is a beautiful venue to enjoy.

ARTICLE XII. ADJOURN

**A motion was made by Stielstra and seconded by Van Huis to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 P.M.
UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**