

**MINUTES  
ALPINE TOWNSHIP BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 20, 2009**

**09-51           REGULAR MEETING**

The Alpine Township Board met on Monday, April 20, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. at the Alpine Township Hall, 5255 Alpine Avenue, Comstock Park, Michigan. Board members present were Supervisor Alex Arends, Clerk Jean Wahlfield, Treasurer Jim Townsend, Trustees Ron Cordes, Jim May, Bill Schweitzer, and Ted Wallace.

Supervisor Arends called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**May offered a motion, supported by Wallace, to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried 7-0.**

**09-52           CONSENT AGENDA**

The following changes were proposed for the March 16, 2009 Minutes:

Page 3, Paragraph 4, Line 2, the word "to" should be deleted,  
Page 6, Paragraph 4, Line 4, the word "the" should be deleted.

The following changes were offered for the March 25, 2009 Minutes:

Page 2, Paragraph 4, Line 2, the word "required" should be "**require.**"  
Page 2, Paragraph 7, Line 2, the amount should be "**\$15,000.**"

The following changes were offered for the April 13, 2009 Minutes:

Page 1, Paragraph 8, Line 3, the percentage should be "**94.6%**"

Treasurer Townsend wished to include on Page 1, Paragraph 6, that three Board members agreed with Townsend to cut the Administration Fee and they were Cordes, May, and Wallace.

**Schweitzer offered a motion, supported by May, to approve the Minutes of the March 16, 2009 Regular Meeting, the Minutes of the March 25, 2009 Special Meeting and the April 13, 2009 Special Meeting as amended. Motion carried 7-0.**

Supervisor Arends noted that on Page 2 of the Treasurer's Report the amount listed in the General Fund has some monies earmarked for specific CIP projects/programs and reserved. Townsend stated beginning next month those allocations will be listed.

Clerk Wahlfield noted with regard to the Treasurer's Report that the total amount of taxes billed in 2009 should not be considered the total amount that will ultimately be collected

**May offered a motion, supported by Wallace, to approve the remaining items in the Consent Agenda consisting of the Consideration of Vouchers/Bills, Treasurer's Report – April 2009, and Receipt of Correspondence. Motion carried 7-0.**

**09-53 PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment was offered at this time.

Kent County Deputy Sheriff Nate Ertle presented the Board with a plaque recognizing Alpine Township for their contributions and continued support to the Kent County Sheriff's Department's Shop with a Sheriff Program for 2008. The program began in 2000 and has experience support from the Wal-Mart located on Alpine Avenue.

**09-54 COMMISSION REPORTS**

**Planning Commission-Cordes:** April 16, 2009: The Commission is working on terminology for the Zoning Ordinance Review of Special Controlled Use Provisions and an update to the Accessory Building Zoning Ordinance.

**Zoning Board of Appeals – May:** No March meeting. There will be an April meeting for several variance requests from the Sonic Restaurant.

**Historical – Schweitzer:** March 23, 2009: Building Official Gary Campbell repaired the door and installed a new latch set, weather stripping, and hinges at the Historical Museum. The Open House on April 19, 2009 featured Ernest Ostuno's presentation "Paths of Destruction." The DVD and presentation highlighted the devastation of the 1956 tornado and on the 1965 tornado which affected Alpine Township.

**Sewer/Water – Arends:** On behalf of Alpine and Plainfield Township, Prein and Newhof has been preparing the application for the stimulus loans with the State of Michigan for water and sewer improvements. If the water loan is approved the water project in Westgate will take place in 2010.

**Parks & Recreation – Wallace:** The necessary repairs needed on the fields at the Sports Complex are being discussed. The committee noted that repairs to the walking track are needed and they would like to know if budget funds are available. The committee is looking into the feasibility of using the Concession Stand for games this year. Arends noted that Contract Electric will repair the light at Westgate Park and add a light at the Sports Complex for security and safety. He added that revenue is coming in from the soccer teams and another person is interested in using the third softball field for games.

**09-55 CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 09-06: ANNUAL MEIJER/WENDY SERVICE DRIVE SAD**

Arends noted this is an annual resolution assessing the property owners in the district for maintenance and improvements to the Meijer/Wendy service drive. A correction was noted in the proposed resolution that the amount should read: \$2,535.72.

**Schweitzer offered a motion, supported by May, to approve Resolution 09-06: Annual Meijer/Wendy Service Drive SAD with the corrected amount of \$2,535.72. Motion carried 7-0.**

**09-56 SET PUBLIC HEARING DATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010 TOWNSHIP BUDGET**

**May offered a motion, supported by Cordes, to set Monday, May 18, 2009 as the public hearing date for Fiscal Year 2010 Township Budget. Motion carried 7-0.**

**09-57 CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 09-07 AND POLICY 09-01 - AUTOMATED CLEARING HOUSE (ACH) ELECTRONIC PAYMENT TO THE TOWNSHIP**

Treasurer Townsend presented the draft resolution document that includes minor language modifications from the Township Attorney to insure that the Township does not incur any costs or fees. Choice One Bank has agreed to waive any fees the Township may incur if a resident has insufficient funds or for any other processing fees. Schweitzer requested that Townsend obtain a written agreement from Choice One Bank.

Townsend informed the Board that the Township already utilized ACH for payments of electric bills and payroll direct deposit payments. Townsend is consolidating the former policy which allows the Clerk to use ACH with the proposed updated policy to allow residents to pay through ACH.

**May offered a motion, supported by Wallace to approve Resolution #09-07 and Policy #09-01 - ACH/Wire Agreement contingent upon language stating this will supersede Policy #03-02 and that a written agreement is obtained from Choice One Bank waiving any fees to the Township. Motion carried 7-0.**

**09-58 REVIEW UPDATED BUDGET DRAFT DOCUMENT**

Supervisor Arends stated that following Board discussions held in the budget workshop sessions that the draft budget was cut by approximately 7%. Arends stated by cutting the 1% tax administration fee, the Board is essentially cutting the budget by another 5.83%. The 1% fee is charged on all taxes collected in the Township.

Arends stated that he would generally love to cut taxes, but with the State economy in such poor condition it is not the time to cut the administration fee from the budget. By eliminating the administration fee, the two largest beneficiaries would be York Creek Apartments (\$14,000) and Wal-Mart (\$4,520). Arends commented residents living at York Creek Apartments and the mobile home parks would not benefit at all. He stressed the Township needs the money because of all the cuts from the federal and state governments. Arends stated there are no salary increases for employees and the Township is not spending money frivolously. He requested the Board go through the budget one more time. Another budget workshop meeting will be scheduled before the regular May 18, 2009 meeting.

## **09-59 FIRE DEPARTMENT REQUESTS**

### **SOG'S**

The Township has received a letter from Cindy White, Par Plan, complimenting the Fire Chief on completing the necessary SOG's and the update process.

Chief Christians presented additional SOG's which were reviewed by the Board. In response to questions from the Board, several items will be reviewed for clarification by the Township Attorney. Fire Chief Christians will bring the revised SOG's back to the Board for the May meeting.

### **Personnel Committee Meeting**

The Personnel Committee's recommendations for the following requests were presented at this time.

#### **(1) Fire Department Photographer**

The Personnel Committee's March 30, 2009 Minutes reflect three options discussed for Mr. Jenkins who would like to be the official Fire Department Photographer. Jenkins stated that he would not sign an indemnifying agreement because it was not in his best interest. Not only the ownership of photos, but the liability insurance issue was the cause for his contention.

#### **(2) Fire Department Tuition Reimbursement**

A request was received from a firefighter for tuition monies up front and prior to take an exam. The Personnel Committee denied the request.

Arends asked that a more specific tuition reimbursement policy be developed and included as an SOG. Any Board comments should be passed on to the Fire Chief or the Supervisor. More information will be forthcoming at next month's meeting.

A request has been received from Sharla VanHorn for EMT license tuition reimbursement. It was noted that VanHorn was reimbursed after completion of the First Responder. This request was referred back to the Personnel Committee. Arends advised the Committee that the Township has to be very clear about what can and can not be reimbursed. The Personnel Committee will review both requests and make a recommendation to the Board.

### **Fire Department Personnel Changes**

Erik Tilli submitted his resignation on 4-17-09. His equipment has been returned.

Mark Bierens and Veronica Smith are moving outside of Township boundaries. Chief Christians requested that these two firefighters be retained on Alpine's Fire Department. Christians stated that these individuals are active in responding and have done a wonderful job.

**May offered a motion, supported by Cordes, to retain Mark Bierens and Veronica Smith on the Alpine Township Fire Department as they resident outside of Alpine Township. Motion carried 7-0.**

The Fire Chief noted that Charlee Cordes and Fred Schweitzer will be available for fire calls beginning in May.

### **New Firefighter Candidates**

Chief Christians introduced the following candidates for firefighter positions:

1. Brian Stalsonburg, 4665 Aldun Ridge Avenue, has his medical license and works at Life EMS. Christians recommended he start as soon as possible.
2. Larry Cook, 4582 Westshire Avenue, works at J and H Oil. Cook has knowledge of trucks and has been present at fire trainings. Christians recommend that he start on July 1 and attend Fire School in October.
3. Mark Nawara, 5580 Stage Avenue, works with small engine repair and is a member of the USMC. Christians recommended that he begin on July 1 also and be stationed at Fire Station 2.

**Wallace offered a motion, supported by May, to approve Brian Stalsonburg, Larry Cook and Mark Nawara for firefighter positions contingent upon passing medical physicals. Motion carried 7-0.**

### **Update on Ford Expedition Purchase & Generator**

Discussions with the Airport Fire Chief indicate that the Ford Expedition should be ready in two to four weeks. The Onan generator will be set up by the end of the week at Fire Station 1. Engine 8 is out of service and is being repaired at Weller Auto.

## **09-60 SUPERVISOR'S REPORT**

Trustees May and Wallace commented that working on next year's budget is going well. Wallace remarked that after going over the proposed budget line by line he better understands the budget process.

Clerk Wahlfield reminded the Board that May 5 is Election Day for the schools and Grand Rapids Community College. The three school district and G.R. Community College reimburse the Township for the cost associated with the election.

Treasurer Townsend stated he knows of a potential summer volunteer for the Township, Tres Fuller. Arends expressed concern with having "friends" doing work for the Township due to past criticism of nepotism. Additional discussion will take place at a future meeting.

Supervisor Arends stated that the Harvester newsletter will be out by the end of April.

## **09-61 PUBLIC COMMENT AND ADJOURNMENT**

Jerry Shuker, 6783 Fruit Ridge Avenue, provided comments on the SOG's which were discussed earlier. Shuker cautioned the Park and Recreation Committee about opening the concession stand at the Sports Complex and commented on past experiences meeting Health Department regulations.

Shuker questioned the status of his Maintenance position as he heard rumors that his position was going to be eliminated to save money. He stated he makes approximately \$4,000 year in the position. His wife helps occasionally with special seasonal work. Shuker does "handy man" maintenance work and has never received complaints. Shuker stated that he is a Certified Safety Officer and the only Alpine Fire Department firefighter qualified to inspect fire trucks and SCBAs. Shuker requested the Board be up front with him about the future of his position.

Tom Antor, Kent County Commissioner, provided comments on the difficulties of the current County budget noting the impact of the decreased State revenues to the County. The County is doing a good job at being efficient as they can but cuts will have to implemented.

Wallace passed on a message from Phil Brunger that he is halfway through his chemo treatments and he sends his greetings to the Board.

**May offered a motion, supported by Wallace, to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Jean Wahlfield  
Clerk

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Alex Arends,  
Supervisor

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Beth Alt  
Recording Secretary