

**MINUTES  
ALPINE TOWNSHIP BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 15, 2008**

**08-145           REGULAR MEETING**

The Alpine Township Board met on Monday, September 15, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. at the Alpine Township Hall, 5255 Alpine Avenue, Comstock Park, Michigan. Board members present were Supervisor Marta Brechting, Clerk Jean Wahlfield, Treasurer Janice Brechting, Trustees Ron Cordes, Jim May, Sharon Steffens, and Ted Wallace.

Supervisor Brechting 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.**

**08-146           APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Supervisor Brechting noted two corrections to the August 18, 2008 Minutes, page 4, No: 08-137 the title line, the word "INTERNATION" should be "INTERNATIONAL" and No. 08-138, at the end of the last sentence one period should be deleted.

**May offered a motion, supported by ~~May~~ Cordes, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of the Approval of Minutes of the August 16, 2008 Meeting as amended, Consideration of Vouchers/Bills, and Receipt of Correspondence. Motion carried 7-0.**

There was no public comment at this time.

**08-147           COMMISSION REPORTS**

**Planning Commission – May:** August 21, 2008 – The Commission is presently working on the Mixed PUD ordinance and on the topics of wind generators and multi-fuel burners. The next meeting will be September 18, 2008.

**Zoning Board of Appeals – Wallace:** There was no August meeting.

**Historical Commission – Cordes:** There was no August meeting.

**Park and Recreation Committee – Wallace:** No meeting.

**Sewer & Water – M. Brechting:** September 4, 2008. J. Brechting reported that Director Larry Campbell was present and gave an update. A proposed 2008/2009 budget was submitted. The Open House scheduled for October 24, 2008 was postponed until a later date. Currently NKSA is 2.5 million dollars under budget and the five communities have saved ten million dollars by not signing with the City of Grand Rapids.

**08-148 KENT DISTRICT LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT**

Martha Smart, Director of the Kent District Library, gave a brief presentation of the 2007 Annual KDL Report. The co-operative surpassed over five million checkouts in 2007 and the revamped website had over two million people using the internet service. The KDL Foundation was developed to accept annual donations and/or endowments. Staff training increased along with new staff services that have become available. With the help of the community, the KDL occupies a new building in Sand Lake.

Marcia DeMeester, Alpine Branch Manager, stated that both visitors and circulation materials increased 12 percent and program attendance increased by ten percent. It was noted that 61% of Alpine Township residents have library cards. The Alpine's Branch collection of books was weeded out and wireless internet was installed. The Friends of the Library participated in two fund-raisers this year.

In response to Steffens' question on how to determine whether a library facility becomes too small, two programs used by KDL evaluate and analyze information from data input relating to the branch. The Township Board would have to approach the KDL if interested. Steffens commented that Alpine has experienced tremendous growth and it takes a lot of planning and time to plan for a new facility.

Technology, new programs, schools and the economy have all had an impact on increased library usage. Smart noted that 90% of the KDL budget is from taxes.

Wahlfield complimented the staff for doing a wonderful job; but questioned policy decisions such as opting out of DDA's, sharing a branch manager and the Alpine branch remaining closed on Thursdays.

Smart could not comment on the DDA decisions as they are made on an individual basis, however Smart stated that the Board feels that the KDL millage was passed to support library services. Smart indicated that KDL would be reducing the number of branch managers as staff is reaching retirement age. KDL is trying to find the best way to provides services in a fiscally responsible manner. While it is true that Alpine/Kent City are the only branch libraries to share a manager, it will become a trend in the future.

J. Brechting added that she feels the Alpine branch is being short-changed. Smart felt the relationship is good and that it would be difficult to run an independent library. Smart indicated that additional staff has been added to the Alpine branch. Supervisor Brechting commended the growth and efforts to start the programs with the young.

Sandy Wisniewski was introduced as the Alpine/Plainfield/Walker representative for the Library Board. Wisniewski stated that she would like to see the lines of communication remain open.

**08-149 FIRE DEPARTMENT – CANDIDATE FOR FIREFIGHTER**

Fire Chief Christians introduced Allen Mayo, 5000 Fruit Ridge Avenue NW, as a candidate for a firefighter position working at Station II. Mayo is a licensed truck mechanic and recently

graduated from GVSU with a Criminal Justice degree. He has been observing several fire trainings and is eager to begin formal training at Plainfield Fire Department.

**Wallace offered a motion, supported by Cordes to approve Allen Mayo as a Firefighter and approve the \$350 tuition for the Plainfield Fire Academy. Motion carried 7-0.**

It was noted that Mayo will be assigned to Fire Station II.

**08-150 FIRE DEPARTMENT – LEAVE OF ABSENCE: CHARLEE CORDES**

Chief Christians referred to his letter of September 3, 2008 regarding Firefighter Charlee Cordes' leave of absence from the Fire Department as she attends college. Cordes plans on becoming a certified Fire Inspector.

It was noted that Charlee Cordes' request for a leave of absence, noted as Phase I, began on September 1, 2008 through December 19, 2008. Supervisor Brechting noted that Risk Management prohibits firefighters attending fire calls during a leave of absence.

**May offered a motion, supported by Wallace, to approve Phase I Leave of Absence for Firefighter Charlee Cordes beginning September 1, 2008 through December 19, 2008. Motion carried 7-0.**

**08-151 FEMA FIRE PREVENTION GRANT/KENT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Chief Christians reported to the Board that Kent County Health Department would like to participate in a FEMA Fire Prevention Grant allowing township firefighters to install new smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors in the residences. The grant's target population is children less than 14 years of age and senior citizens 65 or older. The period for the agreement is from July 15, 2008 through March 27, 2009.

Chief Christians plans on a public relations program to inform residents who meet the criteria, such as through the news media, schools, a township newsletter, and having firefighters going door to door in the targeted neighborhoods.

*It was Board consensus that the Township Attorney will review the agreement and to table this topic.*

**08-152 MML UPDATE – RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Board's packet contained a letter from Chief Christians to Cindy White, Risk Control Management, detailing the progress of the Fire Department in reaching the suggested guidelines and timelines.

Supervisor Brechting indicated that there still are significant unanswered questions that should be addressed with the entire Board. The major stipulation was the verification from the

Secretary of State and that program is now in place. She will supply more information later to the Board.

#### **08-153 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF MPUD ORDINANCE**

Planner Sue Thomas gave a brief presentation on the Planning Commission's development of a MPUD Ordinance. There are four locations within the Township that are designated for a MPUD in the Master Plan. Board members were complimentary to the Planning Commission for their work and bringing this concept to fruition.

Jim Townsend, Planning Commission Chairman, explained why he felt the MPUD concept would be advantageous to the Township. In response to Cordes' question, Engineer Cheryl Scales stated that MPUD is a future development trend. More discussion will take place at the October meeting.

#### **08-154 UPDATE AND DISCUSSION ON THE TOWNSHIP REAPPRAISAL PROJECT**

Township Assessor Betty Keeling gave a presentation on the Reappraisal Project. The residential portion is has been completed and will start over. Keeling plans to reappraise the Agricultural with the obliques which will be available through the County by mid October. Keeling is hoping to complete the Agricultural reappraisal by the end of the year.

The Commercial (293) and Industrial (91) parcels are left. Keeling stated she would like an accurate inventory of what is out there and proposed that a contract between the Township and Kent County be approved to complete the project. The County's fee would be approximately \$48,000 to be paid in installments. If the County would complete the Commercial and Industrial parcels, the Township would have a strong base to keep the appraisals current. Keeling explained that the State Tax Commission has become diligent in "spot checking" municipalities as to accuracy of their records. They base their ratios on the appraisals that are complete.

Board members discussed different options as to how the appraisal project should be completed accurately.

**May offered a motion to table the discussion until the special meeting. Motion supported by Wallace and carried 7-0.**

#### **08-155 TOWNSHIP DRIVEWAY PROJECT**

Supervisor Brechting explained that when the Township purchased the 5255 Alpine Avenue property an option was to build a fire station west of the Township Center. There is concern for a drive crossing the creek and if a separate driveway for emergency vehicles would be feasible or should the current driveway be widened. The Kent County Road Commission has approved two driveways to align with the driveways on the south side of 6-Mile Road NW.

Another concern would be if the property west of the Township has any wetlands. Cheryl Scales from Progressive AE reviewed her memorandum dated 09/15/08. She explained that the current driveway goes over Strawberry Creek and the property may be included in the flood plain. A detailed survey is recommended for the potential of wetlands and to investigate the entire depth on what is on the property.

*It was Board consensus to further review driveway options at a special meeting. It was noted that a wetland survey for the property would cost approximately \$2,000 and CBDG funds could be applied for this purpose.*

**May offered a motion, supported by Wallace to set a special Township Board meeting for Monday, September 29, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. Motion carried.**

#### **08-156            TRANSITION OF ENGINEERING FIRMS AND DUTIES**

Supervisor Brechting indicated that the final transfer of duties with the new engineering firm should be complete by the end of September. Supervisor Brechting noted that with the new contract these issue of documents retention will not present a problem as the ownership of the documents is that of the Township and all information can be transferred in PDF format.

#### **08-157            COMSTOCK PARK DRIVE SAD**

A request from Ron Cordes was received to relocate the portion of the road on his property farther to the east as part of the Rusche Drive and Comstock Park Drive project. All costs associated with the proposed relocation would be apportioned to property owners Cordes and David Rusche. It was noted that the relocation may reduce some public utility costs. It was recommended by Township Attorney Jessica Wood to postpone further discussion on this topic until the special meeting and agreements for this change can be refined. -

#### **08-158            DISCUSSION ON GYPSY MOTH PROGRAM**

Supervisor Brechting received a letter from the office of the Kent County Administrator regarding a gypsy moth program coordinated by Kent County. The County is looking for interest and commitment to participation which would involve a survey of the area and spraying next year. There have been **no** estimated costs at this time.

Board members discussed that in the previous years the Township made available to residents gypsy moth traps and bands that would be placed around trees so the moths would not go any higher. It was noted that the Township offices still have some traps available. Supervisor Brechting will follow up for the October meeting. ~~and she noted that~~

Options included hosting an information meeting and/or educating the public in the newsletter.

Steffens stated that in addition to gypsy moth information that the following topics of interest to our residents could be included in a newsletter: Smoke/Carbon Monoxide detectors, the M-PUD, the Gypsy Moth program and the upcoming election.

**08-159 SUPERVISOR'S REPORT & BOARD COMMENTS**

Supervisor Brechting had no comments at this time.

Wahlfield noted there is a new record retention schedule in the receipt of correspondence and at the October meeting agenda will have a liquor license request from Thai Basil Restaurant.

J. Brechting stated that today was the last day for taxes and she will be preparing for winter taxes. Three drainage districts will be on the winter tax bills. Wahlfield questioned if the Township should pay for the cost of the smaller drainage work in the watershed and drains budget. Supervisor Brechting noted that the Drain Commission determines how it is done.

Cordes explained that the first section of the drain work done near Baumhoff Avenue was done correctly and the second portion was unsatisfactory. It was noted that this information should be forwarded to the Drain Commissioner.

**08-160 PUBLIC COMMENT**

Alex Arends, 5013 Wallingford, provided two comments:

In the newsletter, please add the opportunity for citizens to start thinking about applying for 2009 new Board appointments. Arends questioned the FY 2008/2009 budget the Treasurer's department has increased for a Deputy Treasurer. He asked for clarification for the line item. Supervisor Brechting stated that it was discussed during a budget meeting and a base rate was decided at that time.

J. Brechting confirmed that Liz Christensen is not Deputy Treasurer. Julie Bacheller has the title of Deputy Treasurer in name only in order to sign Township checks in the Treasurers absence. J. Brechting does not have a Deputy Treasurer per se. Christensen accepts taxes at the front counter. Supervisor Brechting stated that both the Clerk and Treasurer are required by law to have a deputy.

Phil Brunger, 4847 Fruit Ridge Avenue, provided his comments regarding the Deputy Treasurer position and the budget for the job.

**May offered a motion, supported by Wallace, to adjourn at 10:30 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Jean Wahlfield  
Clerk

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Marta Brechting  
Supervisor

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Beth Alt  
Recording Secretary