

**MINUTES
ALPINE TOWNSHIP BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 17, 2010**

10-50 REGULAR MEETING

The Alpine Township Board held a regular meeting on Monday, May 17, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. at the Alpine Township Hall, 5255 Alpine Avenue, Comstock Park, Michigan, 49321. 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 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by May, with support from Schweitzer to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

10-51 CONSENT AGENDA

The members of the Board reviewed the Consent Agenda.

Townsend offered several corrections to the minutes of the April 19, 2010 regular Township Board meeting. Under the heading Consent Agenda in the second paragraph, fourth line on the topic about the monies going into the CDARS program, Townsend stated it should be changed from **“Choice One Bank will choose the banks where the monies, in amounts less then \$250,000, would be invested”** to **“Choice One Bank puts the money into the CDARS Network and the network places the monies in the member banks excluding those banks we want excluded.”**

Second correction was on page two under the heading Public Hearing in the third paragraph, fourth line. The word **“to”** should be added after the word “new.”

Third correction was on the third page under the heading Consideration of Resolution #10-10 in the first paragraph, fourth line. The extra words **“within the”** should be stricken from the sentence.

The fourth correction was on the fifth page under the heading Commission Reports in the second line of the Planning Commission Report. The word **“of”** should be added after the word **“wording.”**

In the Special Budget Workshop Meeting of May 11, 2010, Townsend wanted to make clear that in the fifth paragraph, fifth and sixth line talking about the pension contributions that the desire is not to cut the pension contributions, but find a way to keep them where they are. He stated some people may interpret that sentence wrong based on the wording.

A motion was made by Schweitzer, with support from May, to approve the Minutes from the Regular Board Meeting of April 19, 2010 with the corrections, the Town Hall Meeting Minutes of April 26, 2010, the Special Meeting of April 26, 2010, and the Special Budget Meeting of May 11, 2010 with one correction. Motion carried 7-0.

Townsend reviewed his Treasurer's Report with the Board. He stated that he has invested about \$350,000 in the CDARS Program since last month. He explained that the Historical Commission would like to keep the interest that is earned from their contribution fund. He stated that currently it goes into General Fund, it is a small amount, and he thinks that the Commission should be able to keep it in their fund. He stated the same goes for the Fire Department and their contribution fund. He stated that it would not be hard to separate out the interest components.

Clerk Wahlfield stated that the Township provides money to the Historical Committee out of the general fund budget. Townsend explained that the amount of interest is not a lot of money and it would be a good gesture to let the committees keep their interest earned.

Wahlfield stated that she has not been able to verify that the numbers in the Treasurer's Report cash report match the Clerk's Department balances in the general ledger as required. She mentioned that it hasn't balanced for months and she typically doesn't see month end numbers until the night of the meetings and cannot verify that the report presented tonight in correct.

Cordes questioned why the sides don't balance.

Townsend stated that everything balances to the General Ledger. Wahlfield stated that she has not received the monthly report from the Treasurer's Department that provides the cash balances. The two departments need to come together and balance.

A motion was made by May, with support from Cordes, to accept and approve the items in the Consent Agenda. Motion carried 7-0.

**10-52 PUBLIC HEARING- 2010-2011 FISCAL YEAR TOWNSHIP
BUDGET-GENERAL FUND**

Supervisor Arends stated that the Board held a budget workshop meeting on May 11, 2010 to go over the proposed budget. He reviewed the proposed budget document and the expenses chart for 2010-2011. The current year budget information is shown for the period ended 03/31/10. He explained some slight changes from last year's budget and that State Shared Revenue has decreased since last year. The Building Department administrative assistant hours have been cut to 16 hours per week. Arends went over each section of the budget and pointed out the changes to each line item.

A motion was made by May, with support from Schweitzer, to open the Public Hearing for the 2010-2011 fiscal year township budget. Motion carried 7-0.

Leo Calabrese, 335 Dana St. commented on the property taxes that he has to pay and stated that he doesn't think it is fair because he was stuck with the extra piece of property.

A motion was made by Schweitzer, with support from May, to close the Public Hearing. Motion carried 7-0.

Arends stated that the final draft of the FY 2011 Budget will be ready for the Board to vote on at the next board meeting in June.

Trustee Cordes questioned whether the pay cut that Arends, Wahlfield, and Townsend took last year was for the four year term or just for last year.

Townsend stated that his understanding was that it was just for last year's budget.

Cordes stated that he doesn't think it's fair that Townsend is getting paid more money and Arends and Wahlfield are staying at the same amount.

Arends stated that in last year's budget he, Townsend, and Wahlfield decided that they would take a pay cut to help out the budget. He stated that Townsend has the right to go back to his higher salary, but that he and Wahlfield are staying at the cut salary.

10-53 PUBLIC COMMENT

Supervisor Arends introduced three representatives from the migrant league that play in the soccer league.

Jorge Jaimez, President of the Migrant Soccer League and Mauricio Vasquez, Jaimez's interpreter, expressed their thanks on behalf of the coaches, players, and fans for letting them use the fields for playing soccer. He stated that the league is about everyone having fun. He commented on the increase of the fees from last year to this year and questioned if there is any way for the fees to be lowered. A list was provided with the prices that the league pays for uniforms, equipment, and trophies and he explained that people are struggling to pay for the fees. He thanked the Board again for letting them play at the fields.

Arends stated that this is something the Board will review. The league has done a great job keeping the grounds clean and it is great family atmosphere.

Larry Orłowski, 6588 Lonnie Court, thanked the Board for the opportunity to submit the documents he presented at the Town Hall Meeting and he appreciated the time they took to review them. He stated that he ~~feels~~ **is not sure** that a Special Assessment District for York Creek is ~~not~~ what he personally wants. He suggested a committee to be established to study the delivery of law enforcement services in Alpine Township. He further commented on a millage that passed a few years ago for police and fire.

10-54 COMMISSION REPORTS

Planning Commission: Cordes- No meeting was held last month. Planner Thomas is working on revising the wording for the special land use portion of the Zoning Ordinance. The Site Plan Review Committee approved an interior and exterior addition remodel for Lake Michigan Credit Union located at 4560 Alpine Ave. NW.

Zoning Board of Appeals: May- No meeting for the month of May.

Historical Committee: Schweitzer- Last month's program was a presentation given by Phil and April Alt on their trip to China. There is no program schedule for next month due to Father's Day..

Sewer & Water: Arends- A special meeting was held to reconsider the REUs assigned to restaurants and bars and no conclusion was reached. The painting of the Westgate water tower is underway and some complaints about residue left on some resident's property were received.

Park & Recreation: Wallace- No report

**10-55 PENDING AND NEW BUSINESS- CONSIDERATION OF PDR
APPLICATION- 2638 8 MILE ROAD NW-PROPERTY OWNER-CARL
CRANMER**

Supervisor Arends stated that property owner Carl Cranmer has submitted a PDR application for the farm located at 2633 8-Mile Road NW for the 2010 Kent County Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program through the Kent County/MSU Extension. The Township Board has approved the request the past several years. Trustee May was concerned that the request has come to the attention of the Board for several years and noted that no farm in Alpine Township has been accepted into the program. It was noted that the scores and rankings for applicants are not published.

May offered a motion, supported by Cordes, to approve and recommend the PDR application from Carl Cranmer for the property located at 2630 8-Mile Road NW (41-09-09-400-004). Motion carried 7-0.

10-56 REVIEW DEMOLITION BIDS- 4975 WESTSHIRE DRIVE NW

Supervisor Arends introduced Alpine Township Building Inspector Gary Campbell.

Campbell stated that the Township has a court order to demolish the house at 4975 Westshire Drive NW. The structure is rotting and uninhabitable. As directed he has obtained three bids from contractors for the demolition. He stated that the Walsh bid was \$6400, Cordes was \$6800, and Pitsch was \$6900. Campbell explained that he had requested that all the bids be inclusive of utilities disconnects that could total \$700-\$1000 and follows the criteria outlined in the request for bids. Upon review of the bids, it was determined that the lowest bid from Walsh was not inclusive. The other two bids were inclusive and Campbell recommended the low bid received from Cordes Trenching 1.

Arends reviewed the history of the property and the steps taken by the Township to work with the property owner, but in this case the property was ordered to be demolished due to the unlivable and unsafe condition of the structure.

The Board discussed the information. Arends requested that Trustee Cordes exclude himself from the voting on this matter.

A motion was made by May, with support from Wallace, to accept and approve the Cordes Trenching 1, Inc. bid of \$6800 to demolish the structure at 4975 Westshire Drive NW. Motion carried 6-0, with Cordes excluding himself from the vote.

**10-57 DISCUSSION-RESCIND ORDINANCE NO. 09-06- VEHICLE BUSINESS USE
LICENSING ORDINANCE FOR SNOW PLOWING AND TRASH HAULING.**

Supervisor Arends explained that the 425 Agreement between Alpine Township and Plainfield Township was dissolved. Plainfield Township was licensing the snow plowing and the trash haulers for Alpine Township as part of the Agreement.

Building Official Campbell stated that the Township had to get something in place to take over where Plainfield Township left off once the 425 Agreement was discontinued. He stated that the current ordinance doesn't have any enforcement provisions or penalties. The building official stated that the Township needs to cover everyone or give the department more tools so they can make this ordinance work.

The Supervisor stated that in order to rescind the current Ordinance, Ordinance No.10-03 has been drafted and provided to Board member for review. Township Attorney Jeff Sluggett has reviewed the new ordinance.

A motion was made by May, with support from Wallace, to approve Ordinance 10-03 – An Ordinance to Repeal Alpine Township Ordinance No. 09-06 entitled “Vehicle Business Use Licensing Ordinance of Snow Plowing and Trash Hauling” and ordered for publication. Motion carried 7-0.

**10-58 DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF TOWN HALL MEETING OF
APRIL 26, 2010-POTENTIAL YORK CREEK SPECIAL ASSESSMENT
DISTRICT**

Arends stated that he was glad that meeting was held and it was good to hear the public on the SAD issue.

May thought it was a good meeting. He commented on the discussions for both sides of the issue. He stated that he was surprised to hear some of the residents of York Creek that for against and for the potential SAD.

Cordes thought it was a good discussion. He stated that a study committee on this issue was a good idea. His only concern was the cost to implement the SAD process and the burden it would have on the Township.

Wahlfield stated she had several concerns about the different statistics that have come out and that numbers can be twisted and turned. She stated that the communication with York Creek has improved. She mentioned the property tax laws that are set in place based on the property and that the Township can not change that. She commented on the great job the Sheriff officers do in York Creek and for the Township.

Wallace stated he thought the Town Hall meeting was not so good because of the fact that there was no dialogue allowed between the Board and the residents that spoke. He was concerned that if the Township pursues an SAD like this, that the Township will have to look at other apartment complexes and properties in order to be fair.

Schweitzer stated that he thought everyone had a good chance to talk and give their opinion. He stated that a lot of information has been given. An SAD would be very difficult to administrator and would cost the Township a lot of money.

Townsend stated that he has prepared a statement that he would like to read so that he is not misinterpreted or misquoted. His letter, he stated the reasons why he began to pursue this SAD issue.

He mentioned other statistics that he gave the Board throughout this process. He stated that if the SAD issue is ultimately left to the people of Alpine Township for a vote, it would pass overwhelmingly.

Arends stated that he doesn't have any new stats, but old stats that were requested from the treasurer. He mentioned the amount of taxes that York Creek pays based on the number of people that live in the complex. He stated that if those people didn't live in the complex, the Township would be hurting in terms of State Shared Revenue. He commented on the good job that the community officer is doing in the Township. He commented on the steps York Creek are taking to improve the quality of residents living in the apartments. He further mentioned the other steps York Creek are taking to prevent crime in the apartment complex.

A motion was made by May, with support from Townsend to form a committee that consists of one person from each voting precinct, one person from York Creek, and one person from the Board, to study the fire and police protection for Alpine Township, and report their findings at the August 16, 2010 Board meeting.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Wahlfield asked what the role will be of the committee and that this is not the job of a committee to find facts but it is the job of the Board. She stated that the Board was elected to do these things, not to pass the buck to a committee.

Arends stated that there are two issues on the table. First being the Special Assessment on York Creek and second the police and fire protection.

Townsend stated that there has been a lot of crime in the Township in the last few years.

Arends asked the Board for permission to ask Sherriff Stelma some questions.

Arends asked Sherriff Stelma if Alpine Township is having more problems and issues than other jurisdictions.

Sherriff Stelma stated that Alpine Township is not having more problems than any other jurisdiction. He stated that he thinks that all law enforcement is understaffed nowadays.

Arends asked if York Creek Apartments are worse off than other apartment complexes of their size.

Sherriff Stelma stated that York Creek is not worse off compared to other complexes of that density. He further stated that he thinks that York Creek is better than most. He commented on the good things that he has seen while driving through the York Creek apartment complex. He stated that he has opposed for years the charging of law enforcement to the citizens of the county and he is afraid that the idea of the Special Assessment is a step in that direction. He further stated that he feels this idea would tie the hands of law enforcement to that one specific area, which is not what is in the best interest of the citizens.

The Board asked Sherriff Stelma questions concerning the police protection in other surrounding jurisdictions and how they compare to Alpine Township.

Arends thanked Sherriff Stelma for being at the meeting to answer questions.

The motion on the floor was revised by May.

A motion was made by May, with support from Townsend, to form a study committee to look into the police and fire protection for the residents of Alpine Township, that will consist of two people from the Township Board, one person from each voting precinct, and one person from York Creek Apartments, which will be selected at the August 16, 2010 Board Meeting. Motion carried 4-3 in a roll call vote with Arends, Schweitzer, and Wahlfield dissenting.

A motion was made by Wahlfield, with support from Cordes to set aside any discussion on the SAD for York Creek Apartments, not consult our legal counsel or discuss the issue at any Board Meeting until the committee comes back and represents their findings to the Board. Motion carried 7-0.

10-59 K.C. TREASURER NOTICE-RIGHT TO FIRST REFUSAL OF FORECLOSED PROPERTY- 4380 COREDES AVENUE NW

Treasurer Townsend explained that Kent County has provided information to the Township regarding the right of first refusal of foreclosed property. He provided location information and explained that he went with Supervisor Arends to look at the property. Townsend stated that he could not think of any way the Township would be able to use this piece of property and recommended that the County be informed that the Township has no interest in purchasing the parcel.

A motion was made by Wallace, with support from May, to inform the Kent Country Treasurer that Alpine Township has no interest in purchasing the foreclosed property known as 4380 Cordes Avenue NW (PP# 41-09-35-201-002). Motion carried 7-0.

10-60 FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Chief Christians provided information on the Fire Departments request to purchase Thermal Imaging Cameras also known as TIC's. He explained that the department is in the process of looking at different vendors and the cameras range from \$8,000 to \$10,000 depending on the features you want. He passed around a camera to show the Board. The Chief explained that the Fire Department would like to purchase one of the cameras utilizing memorial funds and have the other camera paid for out of the current FY 2010 budget.

A motion was made by May, with support from Schweitzer, to approve the purchase of two Thermal Imaging Cameras, one to be paid for using Fire Department Memorial Funds and the other from the FY 2010 Township Budget. Motion carried 7-0.

Christians provided a memo dated 05/17/10 regarding the work fire department Grant Committee has underway. Chief Christians thanked Planner Sue Thomas, Arends, fire staff, and firefighters for their work on writing grants. He commented on the American Fire Grant and the success they have had with this specific grant. The department is working toward obtaining a vehicle exhaust system for each fire station that would eject the fumes from the truck directly out of the building. He stated that the grant request is for \$86,200 and a 5% matching cost of approximately \$4,310 from the Township.

The Board asked Christians several questions about the grants and the exhaust system for the fire stations.

A motion was made by Wallace, with support from May, to allow the Fire Department to pursue the grant and commit \$20,000 from the Township to match the funds if the grant is obtained. Motion carried 7-0.

10-61 SUPERVISOR'S REPORT AND BOARD COMMENTS

The Board members had no comments.

10-62 PUBLIC COMMENT

Fritz Wahlfield, 730 Marlene St. NW commented on the PDR grants and why Alpine Township hasn't had any. He gave a brief history on the PDR program and how it got started. He stated that he doesn't think the Township will see any farms in the PDR program for a long time.

Dan Hibma, York Creek Apartments, commented on the amount of 2009 taxes that York Creek Apartment paid and passed out a report for those taxes.

Randall Kracker, legal representative from Varnum Law Firm for York Creek Apartments, commented on the earlier discussion from the Board on the SAD for York Creek. He stated that they will continue to object to the SAD for a single apartment complex, but is willing to work with the Township on the township wide study that will be taking place. He urged the Board to make a motion to lay to rest this idea of a single property special assessment district that deal with police and fire protection.

Cordes stated that at this point he thinks the Board can not consider that motion because of the study committee that is being formed.

Arends expressed his appreciation to the Kent County Sherriff Department. He stated that the discussion on the police and fire services has no bearing on the performance on the Sherriff Department.

A motion was made by May, with support from Wallace to adjourn at 9:54 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.

Jean Wahlfield, Clerk

Alex Arends, Supervisor

Erin Randall, Recording Secretary