

**MINUTES  
ALPINE TOWNSHIP  
REGULAR MEETING  
FEBRUARY 21, 2005**

**05-13           REGULAR MEETING**

The Alpine Township Board met on Monday, February 21, 2005 at 7:30 p.m. at the Alpine Township Hall, 5255 Alpine Avenue, Comstock Park, Michigan. Board Members present were Supervisor Marta Brechting, Treasurer Jan Brechting, Trustees Jim May, Sharon Steffens and Ted Wallace. Clerk Jean Wahlfield and Trustee Ron Cordes were absent.

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

Supervisor Brechting added two items to the Consent Agenda which was the Annual Fire Report of 2004 and a request for Memorial Funds to be transferred by the Fire Department.

**May offered a motion, supported by Brechting to accept the agenda as amended. Motion carried 5-0.**

**05-14           CONSENT AGENDA**

**May offered a motion, supported by Wallace, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of: Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting and Closed Session of January 24, 2005, Consideration of Bills, Receipt of Annual Reports: Planning Commission 2004 Synopsis of Activity, Building and Zoning Permit Activity Report for 2004, 2004-2005 Planning Commission Work Plan, Historical Commission 2004 Summary of Activities, Annual Fire Report of 2004, Request for Memorial Funds to be Transferred, Resolution #05-03 - Authorizing Clerk to Enter into Grant Agreement to obtain HAVA Voting Equipment, and Receipt of Correspondence. Motion carried 5-0.**

No public comment was offered at this time.

**05-15           COMMISSION REPORTS**

**Planning Commission - May:** The Commission met two weeks ago to discuss the progress of the Master Plan as changes are needed on the maps developed by Beckett & Raeder. The regular Planning Commission meeting consisted of training by the Township Attorney for new Planning Commission members.

**Zoning Board of Appeals - Wallace:** The Zoning Board met on January 31 for the purpose of electing officers. The February meeting will have one variance request as well as training for new members.

**Historical Committee - Cordes:** In Cordes' absence, Steffens commented that the next Historical Open House will be held on March 20 and will feature the Palm Sunday Tornado of 1965.

**Sewer & Water - Brechting:** The NKSA had several meetings regarding changes that have taken place in regard to the Grand Rapids contract. A meeting was held this morning at Plainfield Township with the Kent County DPW to review DPW duties and responsibilities. A special meeting will be planned to discuss whether or not to pursue the proposed treatment plant for the new board members of all the municipalities participating in the Authority.

**Library - Cathy Clair:** Kent District Library held an in-service for all library staff on January 17, 2005. As of February 15<sup>th</sup> there are 224 registered in the Adult Book Club and Clair's personal goal is 300 registrants. The adult program held on February 16 was full with a waiting list. In the month of January visitors increased by 18.5% and the circulation increased by 13.5%. Clair reminded the Board of the March 7<sup>th</sup> tour of the Alpine Library. She thanked those who have already submitted their reservations and encouraged those who haven't yet to try to attend.

Clair distributed a calendar of events for the Spring programs and specifically mentioned the program featuring Dianna Stampfler on the Islands of Michigan. Clair highly recommended this program.

#### **05-16 KENT COUNTY SHERIFF OFFICER WHITING - ANNUAL REPORT**

Deputy Sheriff William Whiting distributed the Year End Report for 2004. Deputy Whiting began his presentation stating that two new Neighborhood Watches were started and a new program that he is implemented within the Township will be called Business Watch. Business Watch is very similar to Neighborhood Watch, however it differs that instead of a calling tree, businesses will fax information to each other. Training seminars will be provided for employers and employees to know what to look for when observing criminal activity. The first Business Watch meeting will be held this Thursday and will include businesses on Alpine Avenue from Lamoreaux north to Ten Mile Road. The second Business Watch will be businesses located along West River Drive and a third Business Watch will complete Alpine Avenue, with businesses located south of Lamoreaux ending at Four Mile Road.

Another successful program implemented by the Sheriff's Department has been "Shop with the Sheriff." This program, in conjunction with Wal-Mart, is held in December and allows needy children to shop for clothing essentials and a toy. The children also enjoy riding in the patrol car with lights and sirens running.

Whiting explained the comparison numbers to the Board and audience stating that an increased number of calls do not reflect poorly on the Township. He explained that we should think of calls as "service calls by the sheriff."

Whiting stated that there were some road patrol changes as the County has gone to 12-hour shifts, which affords Alpine Township more police coverage.

The Board thanked Deputy Whiting and Treasurer Brechting advised the Board and audience that Whiting has consistently been easily accessible to residents thru the Township Offices should any problems or questions arise.

#### **05-17 REVIEW OF TOWNSHIP FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT**

Dan Veldhuizen, Siegfried Crandall PC partner, discussed the Township's Fiscal Year End 2004 auditor's report. He explained the three main categories of the audit are: The Independent Audit Report, The Reporting Model and Comments.

As Veldhuizen explained the Independent Audit Report, he commented that this item belongs to Siegfried, however the statements are the responsibility of the Township and it is the auditor's responsibility to express a financial opinion. The key concepts of the Independent Audit Report are that the audit reports a **reasonable** assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatement. The two types of material misstatement are: errors and fraud. Veldhuizen felt that the opinion was presented fairly and that Alpine Township had relatively few corrections and that the Township is good shape and on strong financial ground.

The Reporting Model has initiated several new reports that are required as well as the reports that have been required in the past. The Management Discussion & Analysis is a narrative overview of financial statements. Another change is the government-wide financial statement whereby a municipality financial statement is presented more like a business financial statement and includes a long-term perspective.

Veldhuizen explained the three funds: General, Water and Sewer. He stated that all funds have a healthy balance, however the General fund indicates a decrease as costs have increased and revenue decreased.

Supervisor Brechting requested Veldhuizen specifically address the correction of the Administration fees, which he noted that the corrections have been made.

Steffens commented that she liked the new changes that GASB has required and felt that some of the back pages of the audit report contains valuable information that should be shared with the township citizens. Veldhuizen reported that all municipal audit reports are available on the Department of Treasury's web-site.

#### **05-18            McCONNELL HOUSE DISCUSSION**

The Board received a letter from Daniel Fagan requesting to move the McConnell house (assuming the farmhouse is inhabitable and moveable) to his residence on 3552 9-Mile in order to attach it to his current home. He felt that having the house moved rather than demolished would be a positive.

Fagan also reported that the Building Inspector felt the house was structurally sound and able to withstand a move. In addition, the house would fit on his property and comply with the zoning ordinances; however it was stated that the house would need to be brought up to the current building, electrical, mechanical, and plumbing codes.

Board members discussed the Fagan request and noted that the Township would be responsible for removing the foundation at the existing Baumhoff location. Board members felt that a consultation with the township attorney would be in order so that the Township would be held harmless if the house is moved. Board members also expressed that if the house could and would be used, it would be better than demolition.

**May offered a motion, supported by Wallace, to allow Mr. Fagan access to the inside of the home and then he may present a formal presentation to the Board at the March meeting. Motion carried 5-0.**

#### **05-19            REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF RECREATION SPORTS COMPLEX FEES AND SCHEDULES**

Supervisor Brechting proposed the following issues for discussion:

1. Currently softball has four leagues which are self-supporting.
2. The Township has received requests from other schools and soccer teams for field usage.
3. There was no money budgeted for FY 2004-2005 for a Soccer program. All sports will have to be self-supporting
4. The three small soccer fields which have drainage concerns, which translates into safety concerns should be removed, with four soccer fields available. The smaller soccer fields were originally built as fields for younger children, but were not on the original park plan.
5. Consideration of the size of some of the programs: we do not have the parking spaces available for so many activities.
6. The south soccer field will not be able to have spectators on the north side of the soccer field, because of safety concerns from the adjacent softball field to the north. Fly balls could become a township liability.

A Board discussion ensued and it was the consensus that the Sports Complex would have to be self-supporting. Board members also indicated that the Sports Complex is for soccer and softball baseball, and one sport should not dominate. Supervisor Brechting pointed out the importance of having a regular groundskeeper to go over the fields and to do inspections for safety hazards. Supervisor Brechting proposed a \$20 per game fee. It was mentioned that the concession building may be opened in the future.

John Gonzalez had requests for use of the softball fields. He questioned if he could use the softball fields for baseball

by using removable bases with safety pegs.

John Simonds spoke on behalf of the soccer program (Northwest Screaming Eagles). He offered to do the stripping to save money for use of the soccer fields. He pointed out some areas where he felt the Township was wasting money.

**May offered a motion, supported by Wallace, to have a Recreational Policy for the Sports Complex ready by next month. Motion carried 5-0.**

## **05-20 SUPERVISOR'S REPORT & BOARD COMMENTS**

Beckett and Raeder will give a presentation on the Master Plan in the future.

United Growth has requested a \$500 membership fee. **Motion made by Steffens, supported by May, to approve \$500 Membership Fee for United Growth.**

Supervisor Brechting received a request for our portion of a matching grant from Roger Sabine, Director of the Kent County Parks Department. Board members requested more information regarding the timetable of payment. **Wallace offered a motion, supported by Steffens, to table the approval of \$20,000 matching funds until more information is received and will be discussed at the March meeting. Motion carried 5-0.**

Supervisor Brechting informed the Board that the blueprint for future Fire Station 1 was completed and that the plan includes a fourth bay and everything the fire department personnel would ever want. The student that developed this plan is submitting it into a competition for his class. This plan does not reflect any or all future plans the Township may have for a new Fire Station.

The new website and newsletter will be ready at the end of this week.

It has been brought to the Supervisor's attention that a possibly exists for Alpine and Plainfield to share costs for a cell phone for the Deputy Whiting. The cost would be \$35/month for six months. Brechting will bring back more information next month.

The Board, by consensus, discussed the need for a special meeting with ALL members to be held next Monday evening to discuss the NKSA proposed wastewater treatment plant. Board members requested that one of the engineers be present to answer questions. It was noted that the NKSA will meet on March 3 for an informational meeting with the new cost estimates.

Ted Wallace stated that he felt the MTA Conference was invaluable and thanked the Board for allowing him to attend.

With no further business or public comment, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jean Wahlfield  
Clerk

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Marta Brechting  
Supervisor

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Beth Alt  
Recording Secretary

