

**MINUTES
ALPINE TOWNSHIP BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 8, 2006
4:00 P.M.**

06-78 CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Alpine Township Board held a special meeting on Monday, May 8, 2006 in the Alpine Township Hall small conference meeting room located at 5255 Alpine Avenue, Comstock Park, Michigan. Board members present were Supervisor Marta Brechting, Clerk Jean Wahlfield, Treasurer Jan Brechting, and Trustees Ron Cordes, Jim May, Sharon Steffens and Ted Wallace.

Supervisor Brechting called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. She hand-out a revised 2006-2007 Budget Worksheet dated 05/08/06, a wage history sheet, CIP Request Sheets from the Fire Department, a set of MTA Compensation Surveys, and the Alpine Township 2006 Sealcoat List.

The agenda was approved with one change made by the Supervisor which was to remove Item #3-A - Discussion of SWPPI Plan and Requirements and move it to the regular meeting agenda of May 15, 2006 in a motion offered by May, with support from J. Brechting. The motion to approve the agenda carried 7-0.

06-79 BUDGET WORKSHOP AND DISCUSSION - MEET WITH DEPARTMENT HEADS

ASSESSING DEPARTMENT -

Assessor Tom Doane provided copies of the Assessing Department 2006-2007 Budget Request sheet dated 04/12/06. He noted that due to his change in status, the assessing budget has decreased approximately \$20,000 as compared to previous years with a full-time assessor. He noted that he does not submit mileage. The printer for the residential appraiser has been purchased within the current budget year and he anticipates purchasing a digital camera in 2007. The Education and Training line item has been reduced to \$1,500 and he noted that Assessors are required to attend one educational course every year in order to maintain the proper certification as required by the State. He explained that Residential Appraiser is one course away from attaining Level III status.

In response to questions from the Board, Doane noted that the 22 hours per week has provided the proper staffing for his department and helped the Township avoid staffing the department with full-time personnel. He explained that the re-appraisal project is underway with approximately 80% of the Township completed and completion anticipated at the end of 2007.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT -

Building Official Mark Fleet provided a hand-out noting that he is responsible for the Building Department and staff which include the administrative assistant as well as the electrical inspector and mechanical/plumbing inspector. He noted that his budget remains that same as last year.

The Supervisor explained that in her discussions with Fleet, she has asked him to continue to provide water and sewer administration to January 2007. At that time this arrangement will be reviewed.

Fleet discussed the duties of the building department administrative assistant noting that the job responsibilities have increased over the years with duties changing and over-lapping as the projects have become more complicated. He explained that he does not feel that the similarity in wages to the receptionist and deputy clerk is a good comparison to the work preformed by Kolkman.

PLANNING AND ZONING -

Planner Brendie Vega Mhkwanazi explained that her department goal for the coming year is to rework and update the 1989 Zoning Ordinance. She noted that the Township has been in a re-active mode rather than a pro-active mode when zoning concerns come into the office for review and approval. She has consulted MainStreet Planning and obtained an estimated cost of no more than \$15,000 in order to bring the existing Ordinance up-to-date. Some examples of items that need to be addressed include wind turbines, updating the adult entertainment ordinance requirements, sign regulations, and farm markets. She noted that Zoning Enforcement Officer Bob Deveraux has been a good addition to the department

Mhkwanazi reminded Board members of her memo explaining her health insurance benefits and concerns. She noted that she has found health insurance which would cover herself and her daughter. She would be able to take advantage of the insurance if she could take her health care dollar benefits outside the current Township program.

Board members discussed with the Planner the status of the projects currently underway which include the Wal-Mart site plan review, the Alpine Avenue-Alpenhorn Intersection SAD, and the anticipated completion of the Master Plan.

Also discussed was the uncertain status of Kent County's Purchase of Development Rights program which will be addressed at an upcoming K.C. Board of Commissioners meeting.

FIRE DEPARTMENT -

Fire Chief Ron Christians reviewed the budget information he submitted noting that the department is doing a professional job and needs to move forward. He requested that the Board give serious consideration to the request for full-time personnel. Items such as fuel prices not only impact the Department budget but have an impact on the firefighters who respond to fire calls in the personal vehicles.

Chief Christians explained that such items as the annual FIT testing of firefighters, required OSHA testing of the compressor air system, pump truck testing, and training of firefighters are some of the budget items that continue to increase in yearly costs. The safety feature that was suggested by the township liability insurance carrier for the remote overhead door opening system and alternative systems were discussed with the Board. The Supervisor had questions about the oil change and pump testing service perform by EVS last summer and the cost involved.

The education and training costs of new firefighter was also discussed with the Chief explaining that these classes are sometimes reimbursed by the State but this is not always the case. Board members suggested that the department look at a payback agreement for these costs if a firefighter leaves the department within a two year period of time. A discussion ensued on the new hire procedure with questions about physicals and drug testing policies.

Chief Christians briefly reviewed the CIP requests submitted by the fire department. He also requested an increase for the fire secretary wages.

06-80 BUDGET DISCUSSION

The Supervisor provided bid information on several pending maintenance and grounds issues. She noted that Haisma Heating has provided a bid to replace the unit heat at Fire Station #2 for \$1,700. Trustee May suggested that information be obtained on a radiant/infrared system.

Sports Complex improvements include the addition of underground sprinklering for \$5,625 with the Supervisor noting that a new well would likely be needed to run the system for the north field. The costs to upgrade and improve the walking track is \$14,000. Other items include replacing the soccer nets, repairing the tennis courts, and moving the gas tank.

The Supervisor noted that Linda Dunneback was interviewed and offered the groundskeeper position by the Personnel Committee. She accepted the job and started last Tuesday.

Replacing the roof and painting at the Community Building was discussed as well as maintenance concerns at other Township locations. The Supervisor noted that the annual maintenance review of Township buildings and properties has been completed and that she is in the process of typing up the list which include several other items.

Supervisor Brechting noted that in her discussion with the Road Commission that road surface conditions in the area of Westhire and Westgate roads will need to be addressed with an estimated cost of \$40,000. She also reported that the bill for the recent Indian Mill Creek drain improvement is \$2,950. The Kent County Park Director Sabine will soon be submitting the \$20,000 bill to the Township as part of our participating in a grant program.

The condition and future of the old Fire Station #3 building was discussed. Trustee May suggested that an alternative would be to put money aside for a new pole type constructed storage building instead of spending money on repairs.

Supervisor Brechting noted that she will complete the maintenance issues that could be addressed in the current budget year.

Employee wages and benefits were discussed. The Supervisor proposed that employees with health insurance pay 10% of their monthly premium in order to treat employees equally. In addition, she would recommend that the current \$5,000 amount set for health insurance be reduced to \$2,500. A lengthy discussion took place on the current hourly wage of the Assessor as well as the amount owed to CDBG and the principal and interest payments which will begin for the Alpine Township Center building and property this Fall.

A motion was offered by May with support from Wallace to freeze the elected officials wages in the FY 2007 budget. Those in favor of the motion were M. Brechting, May, and Wallace. Board members dissenting were J. Brechting and Wahlfield. A brief discussed ensued and

Trustee Steffens dissented. Further discussion of the motion took place with Cordes providing several comments regarding Trustees wages and per diems. Trustee May noted that there are many items in the Township which need to be brought into line. Following this discussion, May rescinded and withdrew his motion to freeze elected officials wages and was supported by Wallace.

Board members continued their discussion on elected official wages and per diems. The topic of Trustee attendance at committee meetings was discussed with consensus that Trustees will be paid for attending any committee meeting at which minutes are taken and constitutes official Township business.

A motion was offered by Steffens, with support from May, that Trustees be paid a per diem for attending committee meeting at which official Township business takes places and at which minutes are taken which will be distributed to all Board members. There was no further discussion and the motion carried 7-0.

Full-time employee wages were discussed and Board members reviewed the wage history provided by the Supervisor. A lengthy discussion ensued on the 22 hour per week agreement with the Assessor and his current hourly wage.

A motion was offered by May, with support from Wallace, to increase the full-time staff wages by 3% , exclude the assessors wages, beginning with the new Fiscal Year 2007 budget. There was no further discussion and the motion carried 7-0.

A motion was offered by Steffens, with support from Wallace, to increase three full-time elected officials wages by 3% which is the cost living beginning with the new Fiscal Year 2007 budget. There was no further discussion and the motion carried 7-0.

Part-time hourly wages were discussed by the Board.

A motion was offered by Wallace, seconded by May, to increase the part-time employees hourly rate by .25¢ for Fiscal Year 2007. A discussion took place on increases for employees Post and Haight and the increase was applied to these individuals. The motion carried 7-0.

The current fire personnel hourly run rate, Sunday sit, and practice night wages were discussed by Board members as well as those rates suggested in the Fire Department budget documents.

Following a suggestion by Trustee May, it was the consensus of Board members that the per person registration fee to attend the Farm Safety Seminar in July at the May Farm be paid from the Fire Department Memorial Funds.

A motion was offered by May, with support from J. Brechting, to set the Sunday Sit rate at \$39.00, the Tuesday Night Practice rate at \$30.00, and that the hourly fire run pay at \$13.00. A brief discussion took placed on the percentage of increase. There was no further discussion and the motion carried 7-0.

A motion was offered by May, seconded by Wallace, to set the hourly rate for the fire department head mechanic at \$13.75 per hour. The motion carried 7-0, with no discussion.

A motion was offered by May, with support from Wallace to set the fire maintenance hourly wage at \$12.50 per hour. There was no further discussion and the motion carried 7-0.

A discussion took place on the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals per diems and it was the consensus of the Board to not increase these per meeting amounts at this time.

06-81 SUPERVISOR'S REPORT AND BOARD COMMENTS

The Supervisor noted that further discussion would take place on decreasing the health insurance benefit amount to \$2,500 and for employees to pay 10% of their monthly premium costs. She will also work on obtaining additional bid information for those projects discussed earlier in this meeting.

Supervisor Brechting noted that the suggestion to increase the pay back amounts to CDBG would be addressed when the wage decisions made at this meeting are added to the estimated and requested columns of the budget worksheet. The \$60,000 amount in line item #440-974-001 will be removed as it is unlikely that the FEMA grant and subsequent dollar participation required of the Township will be realized in FY 2007. The Supervisor noted that she will obtain a bid to address the request received from the Deputy Clerk to re-arrange her work station area.

Supervisor Brechting stated that she will contact the Township Engineer about improvements to the Six-Mile Road entrance and the existing culvert at the Township Center property.

Trustee Cordes noted that he is working to create an industrial park for his property located on the east side of Alpine Avenue between Six-Mile Road and Vinton Avenue. He has obtained the necessary approval to cross the railroad tracks.

Noting that there were no public comments, a motion to adjourn was offered by Wallace, with support from May. The motion carried 7-0 and this meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Wahlfield, Clerk

Marta Brechting, Supervisor