

**MINUTES
ALPINE TOWNSHIP BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 23, 2006**

06-97 SPECIAL MEETING

The Alpine Township Board met on Tuesday, May 23, 2006 at 5:00 p.m. at the Alpine Township Hall, 5255 Alpine Avenue, Comstock Park, Michigan. Board Members present: Supervisor Marta Brechting, Clerk Jean Wahlfield, Treasurer Jan Brechting, and Trustees Ron Cordes, Jim May, Sharon Steffens and Ted Wallace.

06-98 CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Supervisor Brechting called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

J. Brechting offered a motion, supported by Wallace, to approve the agenda as written. Motion carried unanimously.

06-99 BUDGET WORKSHOP AND DISCUSSION - FISCAL YEAR 2007 APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Supervisor Brechting presented an updated budget amendment list and reviewed some of the budget amendments items:

- The interest was the primary item that increased.
- General municipal legal fees received an additional \$6,000 from Recreation groundskeeper. It was noted that there is a separate line-item for legal fees associated with SADs.
- Grounds maintenance received \$5,000 moved from the watersheds/drains line item.
- The Fire Department grant line item will reflect that the grant was not received.

Steffens questioned if the Doorenbos legal fees were itemized and/or other legal costs for lawsuits. Wahlfield stated that the attorney references the case with the amount, the legal costs are easily attainable. Steffens requested that the Board be informed of the lawsuit charges.

J. Brechting stated that property owner VanEss has recently paid his SAD commitment which was received and will be an additional revenue for the current 2006 budget.

Steffens offered a motion, supported by May, to approve the budget amendments. Motion carried 7-0.

A separate line item for the Fire Department MIOSHA requirements will be added.

06-100 REVIEW OF BIDS AND PROPOSALS FOR 2006 & 2007 FISCAL YEARS

COMMUNITY ROOM ROOF

Supervisor Brechting noted that Community Room roof replacement was the highest priority. She distributed three bids for discussion. Board members discussed various differences among the proposals. It was the consensus of the Board that the work should be completed within the current fiscal year.

May offered a motion, supported by May, to accept the low-bid received from WeatherShield Roofing for the Community Room roof with May and Cordes to inspect the work performed by this company at Fire Station #1 prior to the final acceptance of the bid. Motion carried 7-0.

It was noted by Supervisor Brechting that the Hammond bid for roofing also included a bid for painting at the Community Room. Supervisor Brechting stated that other bid requests for that job have not been received. Cordes suggested that Supervisor Brechting ask for recommendations on the details of painting and the prep work required.

COMMUNITY ROOM ELECTRICAL

Supervisor Brechting informed the Board that Electrical Inspector Frank Mileski inspected the electrical wiring at the Community Room and that all the appliances were wired to two circuits. Mileski informed the Supervisor that there is room for more circuits in the panel. Supervisor Brechting will contact Contract Electric to correct this situation.

COMMUNITY ROOM TABLES

It was also noted that the Community Room tables need to be replaced. The price per eight-foot table is \$200. The Community Room will need eight tables.

RESURFACING WESTGATE/WESTSHIRE ROAD

It was the consensus of the Board that the Township's share of \$37,500 for road micro surfacing in the Westgate subdivision be paid from the FY 2006 budget year.

In a motion offered by Cordes, supported by Steffens, authorized \$37,500 to be paid in the FY 2006 fiscal year for the micro surfacing in the Westgate subdivision. Motion carried 7-0.

DEPUTY CLERK DESK

Supervisor Brechting presented a bid for the deputy clerk's work station to be changed so that she is facing the public as they walk in as opposed to having her back to them. Supervisor Brechting stated that the change was discussed last year. The existing work space will remain the same with an additional corner piece.

Cordes questioned why if we have a receptionist at the front then why is it necessary for the deputy clerk to be facing the front. It was explained that especially during election year when residents are coming in and if the deputy clerk is on the phone or typing, her back is facing the public.

May offered a motion, supported by Steffens, to approve the bid of \$781.90 from Modern Office Interiors for the deputy clerk's work station. Motion approved 7-0.

CELL PHONE FOR GROUNDSKEEPER

Supervisor Brechting indicated that the groundskeeper did not want to carry two cell phones while she is working at the complex. The groundskeeper suggested that she be paid a monthly payment of \$20 while she is working to pay for her cell phone.

Board members discussed the pros/cons of purchasing a cell phone contract from the township, or just paying the requested \$20/month to the groundskeeper. Wahlfield stated that she would appreciate cell phones available for her precinct workers on election day. It was decided that it would be more cost effective to pay the groundskeeper monthly than to purchase a yearly contract.

May offered a motion, supported by Wallace, to pay the groundskeeper \$20 month for the use of her personal cell phone while she is working on the Township grounds not to exceed six months. Motion carried 6-1, with Wahlfield dissenting.

TOWNSHIP CENTER CONCERNS

Supervisor Brechting stated that the Township Center parking lot has experienced flooding in the front lot by the bike rack and there is also a problem in the west lot entrance at 6-Mile by the bridge. Engineer VanderMale suggested a company that could repair these problems. The Supervisor will obtain bids on these issues.

Another issue of concern is the trees and sign in the Township Center yard. Supervisor Brechting received some information from Brouwer's Tree Service and Tru-Green. It was recommended that the two trees be removed because they are dying. The approximate amount to remove the trees would be \$32/ per tree including cutting down and chip disposal and the big tree by the road would be \$160-170. It was noted that the tree should be removed by the generator also. Once the big tree by the sign is removed, the signs needs to be refurbished at the cost of \$1,000.

Board members discussed tree removal and questioned the whether or not the sign needs to be repaired. It became a general consensus of the board that a walk around the grounds would be prudent.

Steffens offered a motion that the trees by the Township Center sign and the generator be removed and the sign be refinished.

Discussion: Board members wanted to look at the signs. Steffens advised that having the sign refurbished before it needs to be totally replaced would be wise and she revised per previous motion.

Steffens offered a motion that two trees, one located by the sign and the other by the generator, be removed. The motion was supported by J. Brechting and approved 7-0.

Supervisor Brechting informed that Board that the window seal on the West door needs to be replaced. A bid was received from Vos Glass for \$500. A broken window at Station #2 needs to be replaced at a cost of approximately \$180. Supervisor Brechting requested permission to go ahead and have these items repaired if the bids do not exceed \$500.

It was the consensus of the Board to approve the repair of the door at the Township Center and the broken window at Fire Station #2 if the bids for the work do not exceed a total amount of \$500.

Supervisor Brechting is still waiting for bids on a new furnace for Station 2 and the concrete has been lifted at this location as well.

Supervisor Brechting also informed the Board that the Sports Complex does not need an additional well. Additional zones for the underground irrigation can be added. Constantine Irrigation will complete the project at a bid not to exceed \$6,000. The Board decided that all bids should be received before any work is authorized.

The playground at the Sports Complex needs to be brought into ADA accessible compliance. The process of collecting bids is still underway for the walking track repairs.

The board was informed that Alvin Hill requested permission to remove weeds away from Township fire hydrants. It was noted that Alpine has a contract with Plainfield Township to maintain the (450) hydrants. Questions arose regarding liability for Hill. It was noted that Hill also mows the lawn at Station 2 and is on the payroll.

May offered a motion, supported by Cordes, to retain Hill as a township employee through this year to mow the lawn at Station 2 and remove weeds from township hydrants. Motion carried 7-0.

Supervisor Brechting explained to the Board that the Fire Department expressed concerns that Memorial Funds were being used for a Fire Safety Class to be held this summer in July . It has been the Fire Department's tradition to purchase special equipment from Memorial Funds with the family receiving recognition via a plaque attached to the equipment. After some discussion, **Cordes offered to donate \$720 for six firefighters to attend the Farm Safety Seminar in July at the May Farm.** The Board thanked Cordes and accepted his generous offer. The Fire Chief and Department will be informed of his donation.

Supervisor Brechting informed the Board that a decision needs to be made regarding the CDBG request of an additional \$25,000 to be paid in this current fiscal year. It was noted that by paying the money back, the money will be available for the Township to use on other projects in designated low-income areas.

Discussion ensued whether or not CDBG funds would be used for sidewalks. Steffens explained to the Board that in the past, sidewalks were funded through CDBG funds because the property was eligible for that purpose. Sidewalks are also funded through the SAD process. Cordes felt that CDBG funds would better serve the residents with water and sewer, as opposed to sidewalks. After this discussion the Board decided that the an additional repayment of CDBG funds would come out of the current 2006 budget from contingency.

Steffens offered a motion, supported by Wallace, to move \$25,000 from Contingency Fund to pay back to Community Development as an extra installment payment towards the McConnell House. Motion carried 7-0.

Regarding employee benefits Supervisor Brechting proposed the following amendments to the employee policy:

- The insurance opt-out benefit will decrease from \$5,000 to \$2,500.
- Health insurance will be available with employees pay 10% of the monthly premium costs.

In response to Wahlfield's question, it was noted that the opt-out benefit is in lieu of hospitalization and would be applied to the employee's pension. At the present time, Creative Benefits was unable to give a quote for health or dental insurance increases. Supervisor Brechting stated that this proposal is opening up a better opportunity for employees needing insurance. Wahlfield noted it would be helpful to see some numbers on paper.

Supervisor Brechting was requested by the Board to check with Plainfield Township and the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce if there was a possibility of joining into their program. It was noted that the Employee Policy will have to be amended to reflect any new changes.

Supervisor Brechting also questioned the Board whether or not to continue the \$50/longevity benefit which is included with the pension. J. Brechting explained that the longevity benefit was provided in the pension or into a deferred compensation account. It was noted that life insurance is another benefit that needs further discussion.

ASSESSING DEPARTMENT

Supervisor Brechting distributed a copy of the agreement between the Township and Tom Doane to work part-time as a Level III Assessor. The agreement included a 22-hr work week at \$35/hr with vacation, personal days and holidays based upon longevity. No health benefits or pensions are to be paid.

Tom Doane addressed the Board and explained how he arrived at his proposal based a survey of assessor in similar situation. J. Brechting, Steffens, and Wahlfield complimented Doane on his performance and professional manner.

Cordes offered a motion, supported by J. Brechting, to increase Doane's wages by 3% as requested and which has been done for other Township staff. Motion carried.

06-100 DISCUSSION OF SWPPI PLAN AND REQUIREMENTS

Supervisor Brechting spoke with both MTA and Kalamazoo Township Treasurer and at the present time there has been no changes. She stated that she will keep the Board up to date on the requirements.

06-101 CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #06-12: AMENDMENT TO CAFETERIA PLAN

It was noted that several employees have signed up for AFLAC insurance. This amendment will include the AFLAC supplemental insurance program to the township's cafeteria plan.

Steffens offered a motion, supported by J. Brechting, to approve Resolution #06-12: Amendment to the Cafeteria Plan. Motion carried 7-0.

06-102 SUPERVISOR'S REPORT AND BOARD COMMENTS

Steffens questioned the Budget Summary Comparison as the Revenue and Expenditures were equal amounts. Supervisor Brechting noted that the Contingency amount was included. Supervisor Brechting verified with Steffens and J. Brechting that the Contingency Fund was to be increased by 7%.

Wahlfield noted that in reviewing past Planning Commission minutes, the Planning Commission did not adopt an ordinance for sandmining and minutes confirming this were distributed in the Board packets. It was also noted that the forbearance agreement with the Crawford family for their sandmine operation still needs to be signed.

May expressed concerns over Planning Commission members conduct. Supervisor Brechting informed the Board that a training session will be conducted for the Planning Commission to address the concerns.

In response to Cordes' question, Steffens offered the history of the Jost property and how the Township acquired the individual parcels. The Township purchased three acres for the placement of the McConnell house. The Jost family donated the barn and its parcel to the Township. Cordes wished to convey the feelings of the Historical Commission that they feel if the barn were to be moved to another location, the community would have a positive feeling for the project and would likely be more involved in a restoration effort. Steffens suggested that the Historical Commission check with the Building Department to see what is in their records on plans to utilized property near the existing community room.

It was noted that the request from Kent District Library for \$550 amount previously approved along with the 2005/2006 budget will be forwarded to the Library.

06-103 PUBLIC COMMENT & ADJOURNMENT

Liz Christensen provided comment opposing the \$2,500 reduction in the pension benefit. Christensen stated that she would be better off declining the proposed salary increase to retain the \$5,000 in pension. Christensen stated that the Township is only as good as it treats its employees, and if the employees feel that they are treated fairly, that the employees will do their best.

Supervisor Brechting stated that she did agree, however she felt the Board had responsibilities to its residents. She stated that Alpine is one of the few municipalities that offers "100 % opt-out" for health care benefits.

It was the consensus of the Board that the next special meeting will be held on June 12, 2006 at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Wahlfield
Clerk

Marta Brechting
Supervisor

Beth Alt
Recording Secretary