

Vergennes Township

Regular Meeting Minutes

April 21, 2008

The regular meeting of the Vergennes Township Board was called to order by Tim Wittenbach at 7:00 pm in the Vergennes Township Hall.

Members Present: Wittenbach, Stone, Baird, Nauta, Hoffman

The agenda for the meeting was approved with one addition – Langlois Private Road. The minutes for the March 17 meeting were accepted. The treasurer's report was read and accepted. Motion to approve the bills by Hoffman; seconded by Baird. **Motion Carried.**

Public Hearing: Historic Commission Ordinance – Opportunity for residents to address any concerns – The public hearing was opened and closed at 7:05 with no comments.

Unfinished Business:

1. Discussion – Historic Commission Ordinance – Fallasburg Historical Society had a meeting the same night, so they were not represented. Craig Wood commented that the Society needs to reorganize, and get their finances in shape. There being no requests by residents to maintain the ordinance as it is, the Board discussed options. There was a motion to hold a public hearing at the May 19 meeting to discuss rescinding the ordinance by Stone; seconded by Nauta. **Motion Carried.**

New Business:

1. Alden Nash West – Private Road/ Site Condominium Addition – The Planning Commission had recommended approval of the additions being proposed by Steve Hansen, who was present for board questions. A new legal description is needed for the road addition and the trail, as well as several other details. There was a motion for approval of this site plan review contingent upon receipt of the legal description, final engineering plans and subsequent review and approval of township engineer and attorney by Stone; seconded by Nauta. **Motion Carried.**

2. Designation of Township Attorney, Auditor, Engineer, Planner - Motion by Stone, seconded by Wittenbach to appoint Jim Doezema of Foster, Swift, Collins and Swift as township attorney, Phil Sauerman of Hungerford, Aldrin, Nichols and Carter as township auditor, Dave Austin of Williams and Works as township engineer and Jay Kilpatrick of Williams and Works as township planner. **Motion carried.**

3. Approval of Designated Depository Institutions – There was a motion to approve the use of Huntington Bank and Kent County Money Max by Hoffman; seconded by Baird. **Motion Carried.**

4. High Speed Internet – Lack of Access for Residents – AT&T representatives have told Stone that they have no future plans for the expansion of DSL delivery and/or equipment in the township. They are currently focusing on a new product that bundles internet, cable, cell and other amenities. It is not available to Vergennes at the current time, as their immediate focus is on urban areas. Comcast continues to focus on densely populated areas as well. Stone stated most of the township’s topography is not well suited for wireless solutions, and satellite service can also be spotty with wooded areas and hilly terrain. Parts of the Township have DSL from AT&T, but it is very inconsistent, and it does not appear to have anything to do with an effort to provide high speed service in an equitable way. There is a concern that Vergennes will be “left behind” technologically, and the lack of high speed internet service will eventually affect land and housing values. Stone proposed a meeting for residents to attend for more information, and potential providers will be invited. Stone will continue to research options. The Vergennes Methodist Church across the street has inquired about the potential of sharing some high speed with the township offices. The Board generally agreed that this is feasible, and Betsy Davidson will advise after the VoIP installation from AT&T is complete in May.

5. Bruce Langlois Expired Private Road Construction Permit – Langlois reported to the board that he has talked to the road commission and needs a new entrance permit from them as well, along with payment of a bond. He has hired Tom Skipper to finish the work, and said that Larry Wilson of V-Tec Engineering will continue to serve as his engineer. Langlois was advised that in order to perform the required inspections at the proper stage of construction, Dave Austin needs more communication from Langlois or his contractors. To date, no inspections have been requested, and there has been much activity at the site. Wittenbach suggested that Austin, Wilson, Langlois, Skipper, the Road Commission and Vandersloot need a meeting to coordinate all of the details. Wittenbach motioned to approve a new Private Road Construction Permit pending a meeting of the above mentioned interests to work through details, and the re-establishment of an escrow account in good standing; Hoffman seconded. **Motion Carried.**

There was a question from the Board regarding the Henschke’s building permit. Wittenbach stated the attorney’s letter went out on the 18th, and the Henschkes have one month to act.

There were no public comments, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:58.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mari Stone