

THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OSHTEMO
Township Board Meeting
March 23, 2010

The Oshtemo Township Board public comment session was held at the Township Hall. Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Supervisor Libby Heiny-Cogswell
Clerk Deb Everett
Trustee Grace Borgfjord
Trustee Dave Bushouse
Trustee James Grace
Trustee Scott McCormick

Also present was Township Attorney James Porter, Township Engineer Marc Elliott, Planning Director Jodi Stefforia, and 3 interested people.

Township Liability Insurance Renewal – Agent Geoff Lansky provided an overview of the coverage for the Township’s liability, property and vehicle insurance. Attorney Porter recommended the Board consider adding the optional monetary damage coverage for zoning issues. This item will be taken up for action on the regular agenda.

H Avenue Sanitary Sewer Capital Improvement Project – Discussion was held regarding the proposed H Avenue Sanitary Sewer/Water project including reviewing current Sewer/Water fund balances, past and future revenues, current pricing opportunities, bidding the water project portion as an alternative, and the ability to make installment payments if the project were partially financed. It was noted this item has been discussed at several previous meetings. This item will be taken up for action on the regular agenda.

Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Supervisor Libby Heiny-Cogswell
Clerk Deb Everett
Trustee Grace Borgfjord
Trustee Dave Bushouse
Trustee James Grace
Trustee Scott McCormick

Also present was Township Attorney James Porter, Township Engineer Marc Elliott, Planning Director Jodi Stefforia, and 12 interested people.

Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell wished Trustee James Grace a Happy Birthday.

Motion by Borgfjord, second by James Grace to approve the March 9th regular meeting minutes as presented. Carried.

Income to the General and Fire Funds of \$3,397,304.13 and disbursements of \$139,377.94 were reported. Motion by James Grace, second by Borgfjord to accept the receipts and disbursements report. Carried.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Brandt Iden, 6067 Danford Creek, introduced himself as a candidate for the Kalamazoo County Commission 12th District seat.

PUBLIC HEARING – MNRTF GRANT APPLICATION

A public hearing was held regarding the Township’s application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for a grant to implement the recently adopted Master Park Plans, specifically improvements in the Oshtemo Township Park on West Main. Planning Director Stefforia advised while the Park Committee had recently approved recommending the Board approve a 30% match of \$93,500, information had come to light in the last two days that necessitated adjusting that amount to \$112,700 after it was clarified the match must be a percentage of the total project amount, not the grant requested amount. She also noted engineering and design costs were not included in the original master plan implementation budget.

Discussion was held regarding the availability of Park Fund reserves for this purpose and perhaps the sidewalk project on West Main if the proposed special assessment district is blocked.

Dan Holmes, 10868 West Main, inquired regarding the referenced special assessment district and commented he felt the Township should not establish special assessments without a vote of the people.

Trustee Borgfjord thanked Planning Director Stefforia for her department's many hours dedicated to this project.

Motion by Borgfjord, second by Everett to adopt a resolution to approve the grant application for the development of the Oshtemo Township Park. Roll call showed James Grace-yes, Borgfjord-yes, Everett-yes, Bushouse-yes, McCormick-yes, Heiny-Cogswell-yes.

TOWNSHIP LIABILITY INSURANCE RENEWAL

As discussed at the earlier board session, the Township's liability, property and vehicle insurance package was due for renewal.

Motion by Borgfjord, second by Everett to renew the policies with EMC Insurance Companies with the addition of Zoning Monetary Damages coverage and changing the policy deductible to \$1,000, at a premium of \$54,632.00. Carried.

HEALTH INSURANCE – SUB-GROUP – EMPLOYEE SPOUSES & RETIREES HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN ORDINANCE AMENDMENT – FIRST READING

Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell presented a recommendation from the Personnel Committee to create a sub-group of employees' spouses over age 65 and retirees who would receive health insurance coverage through a combination of Medicare and individual supplemental insurance policies and establish Township policy regarding reimbursement to the sub-group. She advised it came to her attention this date that the reimbursement for the Medicare supplemental policies may not be reimbursable through a Health Reimbursement Account; the Township accounting firm is reviewing. It was noted the Township's Health Insurance Plan Ordinance must be amended to reflect the proposed changes that the current proposed amendment might have to be adjusted to reflect the correct funding method.

Motion by James Grace, second by Heiny-Cogswell to accept the Health Insurance Plan Ordinance amendment for First Reading and set Second Reading for April 13th with the understanding the language may be changed to reflect the correct funding method. Carried.

ESTABLISH RECEIVING BOARDS FOR MAY 2010 ELECTION

Clerk Everett presented a resolution to establish receiving boards for the May 4, 2010 election noting that State law requires Township Board action to do so.

Motion by James Grace, second by Borgfjord to adopt a resolution authorizing the establishment of receiving boards for the May 4, 2010 election. Roll call showed McCormick-yes, Bushouse-yes, Everett-yes, Borgfjord-yes, James Grace-yes, Heiny-Cogswell-yes.

H AVENUE SANITARY SEWER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

As discussed at the earlier board session, the proposed H Avenue Sanitary Sewer/Water project was before the Board for consideration. The estimated total project cost is \$2,264,000 with an approximate amount of \$80,000 in engineering and design costs already paid.

Trustee Bushouse commented he wished to disclose that he and his wife own lots in the Essex Hills Plat which would be included in the proposed water project. Attorney Porter advised there is no conflict in Mr. Bushouse acting on this issue.

Trustee James Grace commented he would be in favor of proceeding with the installment purchase plan financing \$494,000 as presented in Schedule B of the previously reviewed proposals; there are adequate funds and the entire project should be completed.

Trustee Borgfjord commented she felt the project should move forward taking advantage of current pricing opportunities, using the installment plan as previously discussed. She also commented there should be discussion in the near future regarding mandatory connections.

Clerk Everett commented she would be in favor of proceeding, concurring with the previous comments.

Trustee Bushouse commented the Township has been progressive and should continue to be in protecting groundwater; this project is a good investment.

Trustee McCormick commented he felt the project should move forward with local contractors, using Schedule B and it may be time for mandatory connections.

Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell advised she had a statement from Treasurer Culp she is not comfortable using the available funds, understands the need for the project and thinks that until the economy gets better the project should wait and be done at a later date.

Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell commented the H Avenue project has long been identified as the number one priority project for capital improvement as it is a vital link for areas west of US 131, financing a portion of the project as outlined in Schedule B makes sense and the timing for bids could result in large savings.

Motion by James Grace, second by Borgfjord to proceed with letting the H Avenue sewer/water project for bid with the understanding of committing \$1.7 million from the sewer/water funds toward the project with the balance to be financed through an installment purchase agreement. Carried.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK REVISIONS

Attorney Porter presented a recommendation from the Personnel Committee to adopt a resolution amending Section 1.2, Appendix I, and Appendix J of the Employee Handbook to reflect the electronic format of receiving and acknowledging updates and updating the Employee Benefit Summary.

Motion by James Grace, second by Borgfjord to adopt the resolution as presented. Roll call showed James Grace-yes, Borgfjord-yes, Everett-yes, Bushouse-yes, McCormick-yes, Heiny-Cogswell-yes.

OSHTEMO SUNBURST 5K RUN

A map of the route for the Oshtemo Sunburst 5K Run sponsored by Consumers Credit Union was before the Board for authorization to use the road right of way.

Trustees James Grace had questions as to the Township's financial commitment to the event. It was noted this request is for use of the right of way only, which is necessary to have the route certified, a run board has been formed to plan the event, other sponsors are being sought and future updates will come to the Board.

Trustee Bushouse commented he would request Township procedures for large group gatherings be followed.

Motion by James Grace, second by Bushouse to authorize use of the road right of way for the run subject to a detailed accounting of the event cost. Carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell presented a recommendation from the Park Committee to approve an expenditure in the amount of \$2,500 for the Kalamazoo Nature Center to conduct a broad survey for a natural features inventory of the entire Township.

Motion by Borgfjord, second by James Grace to approve the expenditure as requested. Carried.

Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell commented the Township has joined the cities of Kalamazoo and Portage and Kalamazoo Township in an effort to be named the Google test site for their high speed internet. She advised residents can vote for the community on line through Friday, March 26th.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Everett, second by Borgfjord to adjourn to closed session to discuss pending litigation because doing so in open session could negatively impact the Township's position. Roll call vote showed McCormick-yes, Bushouse-yes, Everett-yes, Borgfjord-yes, James Grace-yes, Heiny-Cogswell-yes.

The Board adjourned to closed session at approximately 8:15 p.m.

Motion by Heiny-Cogswell, second by James Grace to return to open session at approximately 8:30 p.m.
Carried.

Motion by Everett, second by James Grace to authorize the Township Attorney to proceed as discussed in closed session. Carried.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:35 p.m.

DEBORAH L. EVERETT
Township Clerk

Attested: LIBBY HEINY-COSGWELL
Supervisor