

THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OSHTEMO
Township Board Meeting
June 9, 2015

Township Board work session was held at the Township Hall. Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Supervisor Libby Heiny-Cogswell
Clerk Deb Everett
Treasurer Nancy Culp
Trustee Nancy Carr
Trustee Dusty Farmer
Trustee Grant Taylor

Also present were Township Attorney James Porter, and 7 interested people.

Update – Kalamazoo County – Undersheriff Paul Matyas advised a revised police protection agreement from the Sheriff's Office would be presented to the County Commission on June 16th.

Appointment of Trustee - The Board reviewed a proposed procedure previously distributed at the May 19th joint meeting to fill the recently vacated Trustee position; each board member would indicate their top three choices to arrive at two candidates from which one would be selected. The first balloting showed Bob Anderson with 5, Gary Smith and Zak Ford each with 4, James Lefler with 3, and Dave Bushouse with 2. The first round resulted in three candidates, not two; consensus was to choose from the top three. The second balloting showed Bob Anderson with 2, Gary Smith with 1, and Zak Ford with 3.

Motion by Taylor, second by Culp to appoint Zak Ford to fill the trustee vacancy. Carried 6-0. Trustee Ford was then sworn in and seated.

Discussion – Trustee Information Request Protocol – Information regarding procedure for Trustees to obtain and share information from Township staff was reviewed; protocol is needed to preclude e-mail exchanges which would violate the Open Meetings Act.

Update – Sewer Issues – 9th Street & Greystone Neighborhood – A memo from Public Works Director advised of a broken sanitary sewer line at 2970 South 9th Street which required emergency repairs; the broken pipe is a private sewer system, therefore, reimbursement is being sought. Further information from the City of Kalamazoo has been requested regarding the Greystone pump station recent overflow issue.

Update – Groundwater Restricted Use Zone (GRUZ) – The proposed GRUZ was presented to the County Commission on June 2nd.

Discussion – Consent Agenda Items

WMU BTR 2.0 – A memo from Planning Director Milliken provided a status update regarding the Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant advising more design details were requested; WMU will be entering into a design process and return to the Board in the fall for consideration of a revised grant application.

PMN Equipment Agreement – A memo from Treasurer Culp requests the Board authorize the Supervisor to sign the agreement with Public Media Network to approve their purchase of existing audio/visual equipment and replace it with equipment to be owned by PMN; quotes for other upgrades by the Township will be brought back to the Board for consideration.

The Board work session adjourned at approximately 6:15 p.m.

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

PRESENT:

Supervisor Libby Heiny-Cogswell
Clerk Deb Everett
Treasurer Nancy Culp
Trustee Nancy Carr
Trustee Dusty Farmer
Trustee Zak Ford
Trustee Grant Taylor

Also present were Township Attorney James Porter, Planning Director Greg Milliken, Fire Chief Mark Barnes, and 14 interested people.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Items on the consent agenda were:

- a) Minutes of May 12th regular and May 19th joint meetings
- b) Receipts & Disbursements Report
- c) PMN Equipment Agreement Request
- d) Update on WMU BTR 2.0
- e) Update on North Drake Road Non-Motorized Facility

Motion by Taylor, second by Farmer to approve the consent agenda. Carried 7-0.

REZONING REQUEST – RR TO R2 – SECTION 36

Planning Director Milliken presented a recommendation from the Planning Commission to approve the rezoning request, for a 2.58 acre parcel on the west side of South 11th Street just south of Parkview Avenue. Approximately 2 acres of the southern portion of the parcel are currently zoned “RR” Rural Residential with the remaining zoned “R4” Residence as is the parcel to the north; the applicants owns both parcels. He advised the request is to rezone the current “RR” portion to “R2” Residence. In response to Board member questions, he advised the applicants plan to build a duplex and expressed willingness to the Planning Commission to sign a contract spelling out their intent. Attorney Porter clarified the Board cannot require a contract but the applicant can offer one.

There was lengthy discussion regarding whether the request meets the goals outlined in the Genesee Prairie Sub Area of the Master Land Use Plan (MLUP) which designates the area as “Conservation Residential” with a vision toward reestablishing prairie, preserving open space, interconnecting roads and clustered development to set aside open space. Board member comments and concerns included the area is recognized as prime agricultural soil, a reluctance to rezone in advance of defining “Conservation Residential” to meet the goals of the MLUP, the Planning Commission considered the size of the parcel would make it difficult to achieve the goals, would this request perpetuate other requests, the Planning Commission felt the MLUP would not support rezoning of larger parcels for more intense development.

Motion by Farmer, second by Culp to accept the rezoning request for First Reading and set Second Reading for June 23rd. Carried 6-1 with Heiny-Cogswell voting no.

DISCUSSION – POLICE PROTECTION

The Board discussed the five questions posed by Consultant Leonard Matarese regarding police protection.

- What is the value to the community of local control of its police agency?
- How does this affect hiring and promotional decisions?
- What level of community engagement does the community seek?
- Is there value to having a dedicated workforce with a long term commitment to the Township?
- How would the Township handle future growth with regards to police services?

Comments and concerns included benefits of local control include hiring, scheduling, directed patrols but also more responsibilities and at what cost, there is communication from citizens regarding lack of or delayed follow up, the Township has no authority to direct current deputies, we would like long term deputy assignments to build relationships with business owners and residents, there is a need for proactive policing which assists prevention, the county has not kept up with community growth in the number of deputies county wide, the Township should work with the Sheriff to attain a contract as previously discussed, this issue has gone on long enough.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Trustee Ford was welcomed to the Board.

Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell reminded all of the Movies in the Park on June 18th.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:05 p.m.

DEBORAH L. EVERETT
Township Clerk

Attested: ELIZABETH HEINY-COGSWELL
Supervisor