

**THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OSHTEMO**  
**Township Board Meeting**  
**September 8, 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 Dusty Farmer  
Trustee Zak Ford  
Trustee Grant Taylor

Also present were Township Attorney James Porter, Township Engineer Marc Elliott, and 3 interested people.

**Public Comment** – Dick Hertzell, 2484 Isle Harbor Court, commented he was glad the North Drake Road sidewalk project has finally been completed and the road can once again be traveled safely but was concerned with the tall weeds on both sides of the sidewalk from Croyden to Gordon Foods. He also commented private sector contracts sometimes have retainers to keep projects on schedule and the Board might consider such for the upcoming South Drake Road non-motorized project.

**Update – Kalamazoo County Sheriff’s Department** – Capt. William Timmerman provided information on recent activities in the Township.

**Budget Workshop** – Discussion on revenues included the administration fee on tax bills, currently at .01%, originally 1% instituted in 2010 due to the number of large commercial tax appeals with board policy at the time deeming the fee revenue be used for appraisals for the appeals. Attorney Porter advised the number of big box store appeals are rising and becoming an issue state wide. There was also discussion that the statute authorizing the fee provides the revenue may be used for assessing department operations. Consensus was to build the 1% administration fee back into the budget with .5% each on the summer and winter tax bills for assessing department operations and reallocate general fund revenue that would otherwise be used for the assessing department to road projects. Final review and approval would come with the 2016 budget adoption.

The Board work session adjourned at approximately 6:50 p.m.

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

**PRESENT:**

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

Also present were Township Attorney James Porter, Township Engineer Marc Elliott, Parks Administrator Karen High, and 16 interested people.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- a) Minutes of the August 25<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.
- b) Receipts & Disbursements Report.
- c) Building Official Appointment

Motion by Taylor, second by Farmer to approve the consent agenda. Carried 6-0.

### **DRAKE FARMSTEAD MASTER PLAN**

Consultants presented information regarding the proposed Drake Farmstead Master Plan; the project included meetings with Township staff, the Oshtemo Historical Society and public workshops. Sharon Woods, Land Use USA, presented information of a market feasibility study conducted related to possible revenue generating uses for the Drake Farmstead including event space, and exploring partnerships with other entities or institutions.

Ken Peregon from O'Boyle, Cowell, Blalock & Associates, along with team members Bill Demming and Nelson Nave presented the proposed master plan for the Drake Farmstead. Improvements would include continued renovation of the Drake House by the Oshtemo Historical Society (OHS) in partnership with the Township including barrier free access, construction of an event barn, agricultural uses including a food forest and educational gardens, pavilion and outdoor event area, preservation of the historic driveway, historically inspired gardens, gazebo, a trail/walk system, and additional parking.

Mr. Demming commented sustainable programming and maintenance should be planned for as the plan develops.

Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell read a letter of support received from the Oshtemo Historical Society.

Kathryn Steadman, 6124 Old Log Trail, also presented a letter of support.

In response to board members questions, it was noted the plan would be accomplished depending on available funding, and the OHS is a non-profit volunteer organization that has invested hundreds of hours in restoring the Drake House in partnership with the Township.

Motion by Everett, second by Heiny-Cogswell to adopt a resolution adopting the Master Plan for the Drake Farmstead. Roll call showed Everett-yes, Farmer-yes, Ford-yes, Heiny-Cogswell-yes, Taylor-yes, Culp-yes.

### **PLANNING DIRECTOR APPOINTMENT**

Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell presented a recommendation to appoint Julie Johnston as Planning Director, noting the interview process had been completed by a committee of board members and staff.

Motion by Farmer, second by Everett to appoint Julie Johnston as Planning Director. Carried 6-0.

### **OTHER BUSINESS ASSESSOR APPOINTMENT**

Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell presented a recommendation to appoint Kristine Biddle as Assessor, noting the interview process had been completed by a committee of board members, staff, and Board of Review member.

Motion by Taylor, second by Culp to appoint Kristine Biddle as Assessor. Carried 6-0.

### **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell advised the next board work session on the 2016 budget will be September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

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