

**VERMONTVILLE TOWNSHIP
JULY 30, 2009
MINUTES**

The Vermontville Township Board met in regular session on Thursday, July 30, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the Opera House.

Present: J Owens, B Miller, B Moore, J Nehmer and S Stewart. Public present: Dave Chase, Bob Starring, Lorraine Miller, Kim Eldred, Darlene Hosey, Shirley Harmon, Sue Villanueva, Carla Rumsey, Joe and Virginia Harvey, Dean Monroe, Don and Marcia Grant, Jeff Winans, Mike Hosey, Christine Lacksheide, Kay Marsh, Tim James, Judy Owens, Rose Heaton, Rob Cook, Brian Peacock, Dan Sowles and Steve Pifer.

Owens called the meeting to order at 7:00.

Pledge to the flag.

Motion by Owens, support by Nehmer to approve the agenda. All ayes. Carried.

Deputy Peacock reported there were 38 calls for service in the township during June 2009 and 16 in the village.

Steve Pifer gave the fire report.

Dan Sowles reported there were 7 ambulance calls; 6 transports and 1 cancel. The department passed the state inspection and on July 18 they did extrication training with the fire department. In September the training will be on electronic reporting which will be mandatory in December. They did ventilating training and accomplished 7 CE credits. Johnny Miller is spearheading a benefit supper and auction for the ambulance service; accompanied by our Amish community.

Miller asked Sowles how the ambulance department is doing financially. He replied transports are up and the department is doing well.

Jeff Winans, Assessor, reported on the July Board of Review.

During public comment, Shirley Harmon asked for clarification on a motion approved at the June 25 board meeting concerning the F&A Committee continuing to approve bills or if they are to only work on developing an authority.

Christine Lacksheide reported on an incident between herself and Blair Miller that allegedly took place on Lansing Road regarding "road rage".

Marlene Bernheisel stated she agreed with Lacksheide and that she observed Miller participating in "road rage" against other drivers.

Dave Chase, Board of Review Chairperson, explained the letter he sent to the board, containing the hours the Board of Review spent during July, was an informational letter for board members so they would be aware of what the Board of Review had done.

Mike Hosey, Commissioner, stated he discussed dust control with Tink Trumble, Shaytown Rd resident, and said he understands the dust is bad, but the county budget is very tight right now, but hopes to have something done about it by Sept.

Bills added to the consent agenda were: General Fund-Carleen Samann for website maintenance; Staples for office supplies; and MTA for "On Call Firefighter" handbooks and Opera House Fund-Brian Moore for re-keying locks and keys.

Moore stated he did not feel Nehmer should be reimbursed for phone expenses. Nehmer stated she brought it up when doing the budget and it was approved in the budget. Motion by Moore, support by Owens to not pay Nehmer's phone bill. 2 ayes (Moore and Owens), 3 nays. Carried.

Nehmer requested a correction to the minutes: the word breading should have read BREAKING.

Motion by Owens to approve consent agenda items with corrections, support by Nehmer. All ayes. Carried.

Owens reported there were 20 corrections completed at the July 21 Board of Review and the minutes are on file. The website posted the B of R meeting as being at 7:00 p.m, but it was from 8:00 am – 12 noon. There has been a correction on the website for future meetings.

Owens read a letter from the Tax Tribunal concerning the Village v the Township. The letter stated the township did not respond in a timely manner, so the case was dismissed. Winans stated he did send a letter within the 14 days allowed and is waiting for a reply from the Tax Tribunal.

Nehmer asked if the Assessor's contract has been signed. Owens stated it had and will be filed with the clerk.

Nehmer reported Eaton County Treasurers office will no longer answer tax questions; all calls will be referred to the Township until delinquent taxes are sent to the county. As requested, Nehmer broke down the General Fund CD as follows: \$20,000.00 in the Money Market account, \$10.00 to open an account at the LAFCU, \$100.00 deposited into a savings account (as required) and a CD for \$74,437.19 at 1.89% interest. She gave the ambulance quarterly report stating \$1,666.00 is needed per month to meet expenses and so far that is being met.

Shirley Harmon gave the library report.

Moore reported the lock has been changed on the front door of the Opera House and new keys given to board members and a pad lock has been put on the attic door.

Owens stated now that the F&A Committee has been established as a non statutory committee, he wonders if they need by-laws or run their meeting according to parliamentary procedure. Nehmer stated she didn't feel they need by-laws; let them run their meetings and do their job.

Owens referred to an email Miller sent to Tim James and cc to the board; stating he felt it was an unauthorized email as the board knew nothing about it. Miller asked why he needed Owens approval to send an email. Discussion continued.

Blair questions whether the letters Owens sent to Scott Peters and Ira Flowers concerning the F&A Committee were legal. It was explained it had been discussed and thought to be approved they be on the committee, so letters were sent informing them. Nehmer stated she doesn't think the F&A Committee should approve bills. There was some discussion concerning sending emails to other departments within the township.

Motion by Stewart, support by Owens to appoint Scott Peters and Ira Flowers to the F&A Committee. All ayes. Carried.

Motion by Miller for the F&A Rep to be the supervisor; it's always been that way and should continue to be so, support by Stewart. Owens explained he did not have the time and that he had already asked Moore if he would be interested. After some discussion, there was a vote of 1 aye (Miller) and 4 nays. Failed.

Motion by Owens to appoint Moore to the F&A Committee, support by Nehmer. 4 ayes, 1 nay (Miller). Carried.

Owens reported he contacted a private company that does dust control and he has information for anyone interested.

Owens stated he did not contact the insurance company concerning the indemnification clause on the OH rental form, so the issue was tabled until August.

Miller reported the affect the Nashville Dam will have on Vermontville Township residents. He is forming a river cleanup to take place in September in conjunction with Barry County.

Owens apologized for the mix-up in time for the B of R meeting and stated he will notify the website of future dates and times. Nehmer stated she was disappointed the meeting was held in the fire barn; it's a small area and should be held in the Opera House. She requested she be notified of B of R dates and changes in the Assessor's scheduled day because she gets a lot of calls and refers them. Owens will send B of R information to board members.

There was much discussion concerning obtaining information from the Assessor's office. Miller offered to show the B of R members software that would benefit them and township residents.

Nehmer stated she previously talked with Winans and Stewart and all are in agreement township offices are needed. She said the Opera House is the only building the township owns and would like to use it for offices. She has contacted the State Historical Society and Stewart has talked with Jeff Seavolt, MV Buildings Trade class, about constructing a handicap ramp. There was much discussion. A special meeting will be held on Monday August 24 at 7:00 p.m. in the Opera House to inform the public and discuss the possibility of putting offices in the Opera House.

Moore stated the insurance adjuster deemed the roof damage was storm damage. We need to obtain bids for repair. Moore will put together a spec sheet and a taking bids ad will be placed in the Hastings Reminder, MV News and Charlotte papers; to be due August 25th. They will be discussed at the August meeting.

Miller stated residents should be able to vote on whether or not they want to form an authority with neighboring township, so we need to consider it for a 2010 election.

Owens stated the F&A Committee will investigate all aspects of a fire authority and Nehmer stated we do not need to discuss it until they bring the information.

Joe Harvey questioned where the money would come from for offices.

A rep from J Ad Graphics stated bids for the roof repair do not have to be opened publicly because it is being paid for with private money; not public funds.

Shirley Harmon, once again, asked about the F&A Committee approving bills or not.

Sue Villanueva stated the F & A Committee was waiting for the new members to be present before they reviewed the proposed by-laws again.

Christine Lackscheide asked that the bathrooms be opened during meetings.

Don Grant stated it is interesting two people don't want others looking at the bills.

Joe Harvey stated if the Assessor continues to be in the Fire Barn, the township will have to reimburse fire for expenses because the fire millage is to be used for fire only.

Tim James stated when the by-laws were sent back to the F&A Committee for review; the fire chief said he wants a fire committee and asked them to look into the possibility of an authority.

Gary Goris stated it was the first meeting he had attended and it appears you would need a knife to cut the tension at the board table. He said the board is fighting against each other; that Jack has to take charge and Sharon and Brian have good ideas but won't say anything. He said the people elected Jack and the board needs to work with him and quit bickering. He said it appears everyone has their own agenda; that no one was helped tonight. He said the board is here for the people, now work for the people.

In response to Harvey's comment about money for offices, Stewart stated whether there are offices in the Opera House or not, it needs to be made handicap accessible.

Miller explained his side of the event reported on by Lackscheide.

Motion by Nehmer, support by Owens to adjourn. All ayes. Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:01 p.m.

