

VERMONTVILLE TOWNSHIP  
JANUARY 28, 2010  
MINUTES

The Vermontville Township Board met in regular session on Thursday, January 28, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at the Opera House.

Supervisor Owens called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: J Owens, B Miller, B Moore, J Nehmer and S Stewart.

Pledge to the flag.

Stewart requested Budget Amendments be added to the Agenda under New Business. Motion by Moore, support by Stewart to approve the agenda items with the addition of Budget Amendments. All ayes. Carried.

Deputy Brian Peacock, Eaton County Sheriff's Dept, reported there were 47 calls for service during the period December 29, 2009 and January 28, 2010. Twenty seven calls were in the township and twenty in the village.

Jason Byington, Fire Department, presented the new turn-out gear purchased and explained the differences in the new gear v the old gear. He gave the monthly fire report.

Shirley Harmon, Ambulance Department, reported there were 122 runs during 2009 and reported the monthly activity for January 2010.

Deb Schaughnessy was present to announce she is running for State Representative for the 71<sup>st</sup> House District, currently held by Rick Jones who is being termed out this year.

Mike Atayan, County Drain Commissioner and Richard Slabaugh, drain inspector, reported on current county drain issues.

Jeff Winans, Assessor, reported there was nothing out of the ordinary happening in his office. Miller asked Winans to present the board with specific reports, spelled out in his current contract with the township. Winans stated he gives oral reports and anyone can come to his office and get any information they want. Stewart pointed out a specific section in his contract that states a written report will be presented on or before Dec 31, 2008 and each year thereafter. Winans stated he does not have all the necessary information to present that report yet, but will do so when he gets it. Stewart suggested omitting the date in the contract and word it in such a way that the report will be provided when all information is available. She stated if the contract is not being followed as written, it should be changed to something that everyone can agree upon and will be followed. Winans stated he will provide reports from now on.

Scott Peters read a letter he wrote concerning the handicapped ramp. He stated he feels some member of the board have an ulterior motive for wanting a ramp

and that is to move office into the Opera House. He gave specs, etc and quoted ADA rules. He accused the board of not investigating any other means of access like the portable chair, etc.

Jeff Winans, Assessor, stated the warrant he needed to sign was not given to him until after tax bills were sent. Nehmer said if he was worried about signing it by December 1, he should have been looking for it.

Russ Laverty stated he read in the Maple Valley News Blair Miller wrote a letter to the village concerning cleaning the river and JoeAnn Nehmer sent a letter to the village in support of a grant for a sidewalk to the proposed trail. He said the paper said Blair signed as Township Trustee and JoeAnn signed as Treasurer and unless the board gave approval for the letters, they could not use their titles. Laverty asked if the board ever checked with the bank about using bill payer for paying bills.

Virginia Harvey, once again, stated she did not think brick should be used on the front wall of the proposed office because it was too expensive. She said something cheaper, like vinyl siding, should be used.

Stewart asked to add bills from Ace Auto for \$557.88 to Ambulance bills and Vermontville Hardware for \$119.59 to Fire bills. Motion by Nehmer, support by Moore to approve consent agenda items. All ayes. Carried.

Correspondence was read.

Owens reported he met with the clerk on Wed and worked on preliminary budget expenses for 2010-11 and that the amendments to the county code were approved and two CPU's were approved at the County Commissioner's meeting.

Owens reported the Fire and Ambulance Committee discussed the charges for certain fire runs, and approved Hannah Pierce for membership on the department. He stated letters were sent to surrounding township regarding the fire authority and the deadline for a response is February 12. He stated Dan Sowles, Ambulance Director, will send a letter to the person who has not taken her state test after the township paid her tuition to attend EMT school.

Stewart reported it has been determined by the Unemployment Insurance Agency the township hourly EMT's/MFR's are not eligible for unemployment compensation; therefore, the library employees are the only qualifying employees in the township. She has been gathering information concerning the township assessor being an employee or contracted and recommended the board meet to make a determination when all information is available. She reported there are two scheduled elections for the township this year; that being the Primary in August and General in November.

Nehmer reported she attended a meeting of the Eaton County Board of Commissioners and learned there is a movie studio being built in Grand Rapids and they will be looking for location sites for filming. There is a plan to form an internet movie base where photos of local communities will be available for review by the studio for possible filming sites. She received a call from someone

at the USDA and they informed her Vermontville Township is not qualified to receive a grant for the ramp because the township's income base is too high. She stated the Women's Club is offering to donate some sound equipment to the township for use at township meetings and by the public. She provided the board with the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter ambulance report and stated more money has been taken in than in the past and feels Dan is doing a great job. She responded to Laverty's comments about her using her title without board consent. She said she did send a letter to the village regarding the sidewalk to the trail, but signed it JoeAnn and Tom Nehmer.

Shirley Harmon reported the library board has ordered carpet and agreed with the contractor that the new shelves will be built off site and then brought to the library as to not disturb the library patrons any more than necessary. They are discussing the possibility of getting another Michigan author to visit.

Moore reported the B&G Committee is looking for volunteers to paint the stage area. Miller inquired whether or not anyone has looked into getting the oleo curtain hung. Nehmer stated Doug Kelsey had contacted someone about doing that. She and Moore will contact Kelsey and see about the curtain.

Miller reported he and Stewart met with Jeff Seavolt, building trade's instructor concerning the ramp. The project will include the metal shop class, also. Seavolt was going to discuss the possibility with the metal shop instructor and get back to Miller. As of date he has not heard anything. In response to Laverty's statement concerning Miller using his township title in letters, he stated he has never used his township title in personal letters.

Nehmer requested there be another motion to approve the revised opera house rules because in the November minutes, it says there was one change approved; no alcohol allowed in the opera house. She reminded the board there were two changes; one being the alcohol, the other being no one, including service groups and non-profit organizations, could use the opera house without paying the rental fee. Motion by Nehmer, support by Miller to accept the revised rental policy as stated in the November 24, 2009 minutes; including no one uses the opera house for no charge. All ayes. Carried.

Owens stated Sue Villanueva is no longer a member of the Fire and Ambulance Committee and on behalf of the township, requested the clerk comprise a letter of thanks for all her years of volunteer service. The letter will be signed by all members of the fire and ambulance departments and the township board.

Nehmer reported PR calls to Kalamo have not all been billed according to the service contract and stated the contract was signed by all parties and needs to be followed. Stewart stated she is responsible for the fire billings and will bill for all calls to Kalamo according to the contract. Any questions regarding the billings should be brought before the township board.

Stewart recommended two budget amendments for approval. In the General Fund, she recommended \$4,000.00 be moved from Elections to Township Board Miscellaneous to cover the \$4,356.83 check written to the Department of Treasury/Tax Tribunal. This would leave \$270.95 in the Election budget and

make the TB Miscellaneous budget \$5,000.00. In the Fire Fund, she recommended putting the cashed CD (Eaton Federal CD # 41305) in the amount of \$30,599.67 in the Uniforms/Protective Clothing budget to cover the cost of the new turn-out gear. This would make the Uniforms/Protective budget \$32,599.67. Motion by Miller, support by Nehmer to approve budget amendments as recommended. All ayes. Carried.

Motion by Owens, support by Miller to approve Hannah Pierce for membership on the fire and ambulance department, as recommended by the F & A Committee. All ayes. Carried. Pierce is currently attending EMT-B school in Charlotte.

Joe Harvey stated the board approved a hardship request for a fire billing, but have no guidelines; such as for property tax hardships. He feels the board should have guidelines to follow check into why the hardship was requested.

Joyce Rathburn asked if the board was going to accept the offer of the sound equipment from the Women's Club. Owens replied he will send a letter thanking the Women's Club for the sound system.

Sandy Haas asked if the board had inquired about liability coverage for a ramp.

Laverty said the ramp would have to start so many feet from the door; to check legislation.

Brett Ramey, Kalamo Township Supervisor, requested a copy of the proposed service contract and would like the \$150.00 PR charge spelled out more. He said he would need it so they could decide if they are going to stay with Vermontville or look into going someplace else for fire coverage.

Motion by Miller, support by Moore to adjourn. All ayes. Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Sharon Stewart  
Vermontville Township Clerk