

Regular Meeting of the Crystal Lake Township Board

Meeting held at 1651 Frankfort Highway, Frankfort MI 49635

May 10, 2016

Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Amy Ferris at 7 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance was made.

Roll Call: Ferris, May, Nielsen, Sullivan, and Trentham were present, constituting a quorum.

Agenda: Ferris moved that the agenda be amended and approved; Trentham seconded: all ayes. Motion passed.

Conflicts of Interest: Ferris asked if there were any conflicts of interest; there were none.

Minutes: Nielsen moved that the minutes of the April 12, 2016, Board meeting be approved; Trentham seconded; all ayes. Motion passed.

Guests: None.

“For the Good of the Community”: Ferris announced that a federal court permanently enjoined the state from enforcing a law which would have restricted local governments from providing factual information prior to voting day; Frankfort’s resolution opposing Enbridge’s Pipeline 5 was shared; state legislation pending would allow local municipalities to regulate medical marijuana enterprises; also, legislature may allow assessors to mail out tax assessments earlier to allow more time before Board of Review; there will be a race along the River Road/Betsie Valley Trail on September 30/October 1; Ferris acknowledged the passing of John Lautner, who had been helpful with flags for veterans in the cemetery.

Correspondence: There have been numerous complaints about barking dogs and properties with junk, plus questions/complaints about Dollar General and the M-115 road repairs.

County Commissioner’s Report: Commissioner Griner was not able to attend.

Public Comment: None.

Clerk:

- Sullivan moved that the outstanding bills be approved for payment; Trentham seconded; all ayes. Motion passed.

Financial Report by Treasurer:

- Trentham presented the current financial report. Trentham moved that the financial report be approved; Sullivan seconded; roll was called; all ayes. Motion passed.
- Trentham explained a situation involving double payments of tax funds: due to changes in the annual settlement process with the County, she paid the Library, FEAS, TBAISD, and other entities their share of delinquent tax returns directly, instead of waiting for the County to pay;

unfortunately, the County then paid the same entities the same amounts, so she had to request each group to repay the Township; everything has now been satisfactorily resolved.

- The annual Audit will be June 13-14, 2016

Committee Reports:

- **Airport Authority:** Ferris presented an email from Ken Laurence explaining that the Authority was trying to find answers to questions raised at the April Board meeting; Trentham raised a number of new questions, e.g., the need for a detailed business plan, job descriptions for the Airport Manager and Administrator positions, and itemizations of federal funds received and the obligations attached to them; others raised additional questions, such as how much information the Authority's existing consultants could provide and how the City of Frankfort and Benzie County have responded to the Authority's requests for additional funds; Trentham will draft a letter listing these issues.
- **Blight and other Civil Ordinances:**
 - Ferris recently brought together a variety of agencies to coordinate a comprehensive approach to resolving the multiple violations on the Rommel property; she will report back on further developments on this and other property blight problems; she has sent out numerous violation notices to other parties, with unfortunately little improvement thus far; Mr. Theis has said he is willing to allow the township to clean up his property and Ferris procured an estimate for \$3,000 that he cannot afford; May emphasized that communities and neighbors should help clean up these properties; Ferris will talk with our attorney to get guidance about putting liens on properties and what the implications/benefits those would have for the Township.
 - The issue of a Noxious Weeds Ordinance was postponed until next month, although there was little support for instituting township-wide restrictions, given the rural nature of most properties, and a preference to leave such restrictions to areas such as Planned Unit Developments.
 - Members identified examples of apparently dangerous buildings on Casey, Didrickson and Birchwood to begin with; there was general support for the updated draft of a Dangerous Building Ordinance, though concerns were raised about (a) the role of the Hearing Officer and whether s/he would be covered under our existing liability insurance, (b) which agency would be responsible for enforcing Fire Code regulations and (c) what kind of enforcement support the Township is entitled to receive from either the local Sheriff's Office or the State Police and what their respective capabilities are; Sullivan offered to review for grammatical corrections and the attorney will be asked to prepare a final revision for the next Board meeting.
- **Cemeteries:**
 - Although some veterans have expressed a desire for flags to remain on veterans' graves all year, Ferris has done extensive research with local and national veterans' organizations, including the American Legion and Arlington National Cemetery and most only use flags on Memorial Day or from Memorial Day to the 4th of July; she was encouraged to continue her current policy of permitting flags from Memorial Day through Labor Day.
 - Numerous retaining walls are starting to fall down, but at least one family has expressed a willingness to help restore the one near their graves; the next step will be to determine how that should best be done and by whom.
 - Given the difficulties due to unmarked graves, Ferris moved that she be given authorization to spend up to \$1,000 to purchase simple stones for about 10 graves; Sullivan seconded; Ferris, Trentham and Sullivan voted yes; May and Nielsen voted no. Motion passed. Given the concerns of May and Nielsen about the need to find cheaper alternatives, Ferris said she

would look into other alternatives, such as metal markers and report back. Dean Michaels suggested charging an extra \$100 for future burials that would be refunded when stones were erected.

- The sexton, RJ, has provided a utility cart which is being used in the cemetery.

- **Roads:**

- Bruce Walton reported that Elmer's, the company with the current County contract for road repairs, was able to start on Township road repairs earlier than expected and has completed work on Graves, Marquette, and Pautz; Carlson, Bacon and Didrickson will be next, followed by Adams, Mollineaux, Casey and Thomas; Trustee Nielsen suggested that the Road Committee start this fall to prepare a proposal to the County for next year's road work and a possible loan from the County to pay for it – to be repaid with the winter's road millage funds.
- Ferris reported that there have been many questions and some complaints regarding M-115 construction. Several persons had doubts about the organic refuse being dumped at the end of Snell Road, on the Walton property. In one instance, a forgotten culvert totally plugged with organic material was damaged and then "blown out", causing all that organic material to flow into Crystal Lake, visibly polluting it about 30 feet out in the small bay there. MDOT supervisor McCaw was contacted and asked how we could prevent the next such mishap; they simply promised it would not happen again.

- **Zoning:** Ferris will find out whether our current liability insurance covers lawsuits against the Township for zoning actions.

Unfinished Business: A resolution in support of maintaining year-round support from the Coast Guard will be presented next month.

New Business: In response to a question about what was being done to safeguard against loss of Township data, Trentham said she regularly carries her backup on a thumb drive in her purse and will enroll the Township in an online backup program provided by QuickBooks; Ferris also uses a thumb drive; Sullivan will implement a backup plan before the next meeting.

Public Comment: Concerns were raised about the need for more detail from the Airport Authority before additional funds are committed; the Board was asked to prepare a report on how much property tax is generated from the airport and those who use it.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Sue Sullivan, Clerk, reporting.