

ALAMO TOWNSHIP BOARD

REGULAR MEETING

Alamo Township Hall
7901 North 6th Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

September 13, 2010

Present: Supervisor Vlietstra, Clerk Sportel-Bogard, Treasurer Stoneburner, Trustee Feniger, Trustee Potter-Williams and Deputy Supervisor Fisher

Also Present: 10 Interested others

Supervisor Vlietstra called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

MOTION by Clerk Sportel-Bogard to approve the minutes of September 7, 2010, as written, **support** by Treasurer Stoneburner. Carried. (Trustee Feniger abstained as he was not present at the meeting.)

ASSESSOR'S REPORT

No report.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT REPORT

Deputy Supervisor Fisher reported August permits of 2 electrical, 1 mechanical and 4 building. (\$988.80).

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Captain Kizer reported 15 calls for the month of August. A donated house will be used for training exercises prior to being burned down; inspections for hazardous materials are complete. Hose testing resulted in no failures. General truck maintenance is scheduled for this fall. In 2012, 12 radios will be obsolete; the Department is seeking to participate in an intergovernmental grant to secure replacements.

ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT REPORT

No report. Supervisor Vlietstra reported he had not completed the document capturing his conversation with the Ordinance Enforcer on outstanding issues. Treasurer Stoneburner stated she and the Clerk will meet with the Ordinance Enforcer and address the issues.

PARKS BOARD REPORT

Parks Board Secretary reported an opinion is being sought regarding load limits for the 5th Street Bridge following a Parks' subcommittee report on the possibilities associated with abandoning 5th Street (parking lot, non-gated entry into the Park, connecting the park to the Kal-Haven Trail). An interim report related to the Parks Master Plan is due in October. MSU determined that the white spruce are stressed (crowding, lack of sunlight/moisture and planted outside of their natural habitat) rather than needle cast; solutions to occur as part of the Master Plan. Again due to the Master Plan being incomplete, budget figures have not been attached to Parks Board approved projects slated for completion in 2010. Citizens expressed lack of support for the Township holding the restricted account. The Board accepted Little League's Annual Plan and is recommending the Board of Trustee extend the Use Agreement. At Lou Conti's request the Board conferred a certificate of recognition to Kevin Van Dam as a Parks sportsman for international achievements. The archery program suggested by Supervisor Vlietstra was briefly discussed and will receive additional consideration at an upcoming meeting. Lou Conti proposed a pavilion, the subject of considerable discussion at the September 7 workgroup, discussion of which is slated for later in the agenda.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

Member Sweitzer stated 6 persons will attend the upcoming MTA Conference. The Commission formed 2 subcommittees to look zoning in the 4 sections comprising the D Avenue corridor and commercial districts including the possibility of establishing a third commercial category. Work on the next Land Use Plan update is commencing.

TREASURER'S REPORT

(through August 31, 2010)

General Account:	\$145,588.49
Parks Fund	\$ 10,418.63
Fire Truck Account:	\$ 18,301.10
Brokerage Account	\$249,662.78

CLERK'S REPORT

Clerk Sportel-Bogard reported \$55,029.81 in liabilities for the month of August.

Two Otsego high school students provided work in Alamo Center and Liberty cemeteries above and beyond their community service hours. Payment was made for hours in excess of community service.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

1. Kalamazoo Valley River Trail

Paul Banner with the Friends of the Kalamazoo Valley River Trail provided an update on the construction of the trail from Mayors' Riverfront Park in downtown Kalamazoo to Ft. Custer. MDOT will provide 8 million dollars in funding if matched locally by the same amount. A Resolution is being requested to assist the Friends generate additional community support. Six municipalities have passed a Resolution thus far. Deputy Supervisor Fisher had distributed a Resolution fashioned after the Schoolcraft Resolution; text was changed to correct a typo and to reflect the connection with the Kal-Haven Trail rather than the Kalamazoo River Trail traversing Alamo Township.

MOTION by Trustee Potter-Williams to sign the Resolution in support of the Kalamazoo Valley River Trail, **support** by Clerk Sportel-Bogard. Trustee Feniger – yes; Trustee Potter-Williams – yes; Treasurer Stoneburner – no; Clerk Sportel-Bogard – yes; Supervisor Vlietstra – yes. Carried.

2. Use Agreement – Little League

Deputy Supervisor Fisher referenced the distributed copy of the Little League Annual Plan for 2010. The Parks Board has accepted the Plan as written and recommends the Board of Trustees extend the Use Agreement from October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011.

MOTION by Supervisor Vlietstra to extend the Use Agreement for the upcoming year, **support** by Trustee Feniger. Carried.

3. Parks Board Construction Project

Parks Board member Lou Conti provided copies of the proposal to Board members not at the September 7 workgroup. Treasurer Stoneburner referenced the Board's policy on public comment and her expectations that it be followed. Trustee Feniger was appointed time keeper.

Lou Conti described the proposed metal-roofed, octagon-shaped structure with a fire pit seating 72-78 people (correcting the 64 noted in the literature) and is estimated to cost \$7,000. Funds (to be taken from the restricted account) are exclusive of labor as this will be donated. He stated the funds in the restricted account were not public dollars having been raised through other avenues. He stated he has obtained quotes since the work group meeting. It was noted the Board policy requires the Township Purchasing Agent when applicable. Possible uses are included on the proposal and the structure could also be used for "Patriots' Day" celebrating September 11th.

Clerk Sportel-Bogard thought the pavilion was a good idea but believes the park needs to be user friendly and unanswered questions need to be answered first.

Treasurer Stoneburner agreed and requested that the master plan be completed before proceeding. She states she sought public comment as citizens came to pay their taxes and citizens felt the project was too costly. She stated she does not believe the number of tables drawn on the diagram is possible and shared concerns about the fire pit being left unattended. She will be contacting the Township insurance carrier.

Deputy Supervisor Fisher suggested the presentation should include the full discussion from the Parks Board to ensure the Board was making an informed decision. The capacity of the pavilion has been variously listed as 64, 72-78 and 32. Logistics (trash, reservations, cleaning, access, etc.) were brought up at the Parks Board meeting but not resolved; the Board determined the gates to the Park would not be unlocked a few months ago and has not been discussed since; and, the current 5-year plan does not contain a pavilion. She noted \$2,500 of the restricted account is currently set aside for other projects; the remaining projects could not be funded.

Supervisor Vlietstra and Lou Conti reported conversations with Ron Stolk, Friends of the Kal-Haven Trail who states the funds may be used however the Parks Board chooses; **a written document was received stating same.** Deputy Supervisor Fisher observed the Parks Board has not determined to use the funds for a purpose other than what was originally intended.

Trustee Feniger stated he believes there is a lack of awareness about the park and the locked gates do not provide a welcoming tone.

Dick Bennett lives adjacent to park and supports the construction saying it will be the focal point of the Park. He believes outstanding questions to be minor in nature and that insurance already addresses Park amenities. He believes taking advantage of Lou Conti's open schedule is in the best interests of residents.

Supervisor Vlietstra referenced the setback concern for a neighbor and said the setback exceeds those required for gravel mining. He also inquired if the restricted account allows check writing capacity, which was addressed in the affirmative. He read a statement governing such accounts. Treasurer Stoneburner noted she felt the Board had provided her with the authority and if this wasn't the intent adjustments can be made to add a secondary signatory and have the Clerk handle the account.

Trustee Potter-Williams inquired if the plan was to have the construction done in time for the picnic season next year. Lou Conti stated it is slated for completion by the end of November so it can be used during the cross country ski season.

Dick Bennett expressed disdain for people who were trying to derail or delay the proposal and that there are plenty of dumpsters in the park to address the trash concerns.

Dan Knight stated vandals comprise 1% of the residents and the remaining 99% should not suffer or be deprived of using the park.

Deputy Supervisor Fisher noted this project started out as a pavilion and through discussions outside of Parks Board meetings other decisions appear to be represented as having been reached. She repeated she is not opposed to the pavilion, but believes unanswered questions should be addressed first and that this project should be prioritized along with other projects approved for completion this year.

Lou Conti stated he had contacted all but two Board members with the remaining Board members having no recollection of purposefully removing the pavilion from the current 5-year plan.

MOTION by Supervisor Vlietstra to accept the recommendation of the Parks Board to build the gazebo with the expectation that the gate issue be resolved by picnic time by the full Parks Board, **support** by Trustee Potter-Williams.

Trustee Feniger felt the expectation should not be a part of the motion, asking what happens if the structure is built and a majority of the Parks Board votes to keep the gates locked.

Supervisor Vlietstra rescinded his motion.

MOTION by Supervisor Vlietstra to accept the recommendation of the Parks Board to build the gazebo, **support** by Trustee Potter-Williams. Clerk Sportel-Bogard – no; Trustee Feniger – yes; Supervisor Vlietstra – yes; Treasurer Stoneburner – no; Trustee Potter-Williams – yes. Carried.

4. Rezoning of 12th Street/D Avenue Corner

The Planning Commission is recommending rezoning the corner of 12th Street and D Avenue to C-2. Treasurer Stoneburner clarified that this is solely the parcel that the applicant requested, not the additional parcel included by the Supervisor.

MOTION by Trustee Feniger to accept the Planning Commission’s recommendation to rezone the corner of 12th Street and D Avenue to C-2, **support** by Trustee Potter-Williams. Supervisor Vlietstra – yes; Trustee Potter-Williams – yes; Trustee Feniger – yes; Clerk Sportel-Bogard – yes; Treasurer Stoneburner – yes. Carried.

5. Planning Commission Recommendation for Staff Support

Neither Planning Commission member was sure on the nature of the recommendation. Deputy Supervisor Fisher suggested this was the recommendation to establish a single point for review for applications coming before the Commission. Supervisor Vlietstra noted he didn’t know anything about this. The recommendation was tabled pending additional information.

6. JBS Letter of Support

Supervisor Vlietstra passed around a letter that Cooper Township will be sending and proposed the Township do the same.

MOTION by Trustee Feniger to support Gun Plains Township, **support** by Supervisor Vlietstra. Carried.

7. Other

Treasurer reports a taxpayer advised her that gravesite décor is being taken from the Alamo Center Cemetery. Clerk Sportel-Bogard will check into this.

AUTHORIZATION OF LIABILITIES

MOTION by Trustee Potter-Williams to pay the liabilities, **support** by Trustee Feniger. Carried.

BOARD MEMBER TIME

None.

CITIZEN COMMENT

L. Rayman (Desires the Board take responsibility for Assessor Laws’ consistent lack of reports.)

S. Giacobone (Did not receive a call back on her report of a speeding gravel truck; inquired about the outcome)
Supervisor Vlietstra reported identification of the truck was not possible due to the number of trucks dispatched during that same time frame.)

J. Spitzner (Nice to see passion; discussions are not personal; noted Assessor Laws did not return calls, therefore he was unable to appeal his assessment; and, requested an avenue to voice his concerns about the outdoor furnace ordinance, asking if enforcement would be similar to that of the blight ordinance). Supervisor Vlietstra and Trustee Feniger provided information on the Planning Commission meetings and referenced possible alterations to the ordinance.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Trustee Potter-Williams to adjourn, **support** by Trustee Feniger. Carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Garilyn Sportel-Bogard
Alamo Township Clerk