

# CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF WHITE LAKE

## Approved Minutes of the Board of Trustees Special Meeting

September 26, 2017

Supervisor Kowall called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. He led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Clerk Lilley called the roll:

Present: Rik Kowall, Supervisor  
Terry Lilley, Clerk  
Mike Roman, Treasurer  
Mike Powell, Trustee  
Scott Ruggles Trustee  
Liz Smith, Trustee  
Andrea Voorheis, Trustee

Also Present: Amy Bertin, Recording Secretary

**It was MOVED by Clerk Lilley, SUPPORTED by Trustee Powell to approve the Agenda as presented. The MOTION PASSED by a voice vote (7 yes votes).**

### PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Doug Hanks, 10115 Joanna K. He saw a copy of a letter written by Supervisor Kowall to the Library Board stating the Township would like the library to join them and save money in the Civic Center Concept Plan. But then he also said if they preferred to have a standalone building to go ahead. Why have you not allowed the library to go ahead and apply for the bond?

Clerk Lilley stated he would respond to that question under the Trustee Comment section of this meeting.

**It was MOVED by Trustee Powell, SUPPORTED by Trustee Voorheis to amend the Agenda, add Item 7B, Trustee Comments. The MOTION PASSED by a voice vote (7 yes votes).**

Mr. Hanks has seen many comments on social media that the voters voted for the library building to be freestanding. If you change that to a campus setting, does it void the original vote for the library? Can you change the concept of what was voted for?

Susan Diehl, 9170 Twin Lakes Drive. She appreciates all the effort and time the Board devotes to ensuring the budget for White Lake is sound. We rely on you to make good financial decisions. The Board is getting beat up on social media with a lot of misinformation regarding the library bond. If people would take the time to get out from behind their computer or cell phone and walk up to the Township and ask for a couple documents, it would become very clear what your fiduciary responsibility is to this Township. There is a misperception that because the voters voted on a bond that the Township is supposed to write a check. There are many people relying on this Board to make the right fiduciary decisions for everyone in this Township,

not just select people.

Theresa Johns, 9105 Steephollow Dr. She FOIA'd a summary of the accounts receivable. It was noted at the last Library Board meeting by President Rossow he would not pay the Township for their payroll in the amount of \$125,217. If the library has not spent their money wisely, she doesn't expect the Township to continue to allow them not to pay their invoice. It is not fair to the people in this Township and it is not fair to you.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **A. BUDGET REVIEW**

**It was MOVED by Supervisor Kowall, SUPPORTED by Treasurer Roman to Open Public Hearing for the Budget Review. The MOTION PASSED by a roll call vote (Smith-yes/Voorheis-yes/Powell-yes/Ruggles-yes/Roman-yes/Lilley-yes/Kowall-yes).**

Supervisor Kowall gave a brief overview of the 2018 Budget. The overall budget remains fairly close to what it was in previous years. We've been very conservative in the monies that have been spent. We have seen some increases in revenue due to the valuation of homes in the community and number of new homes being built. The budget does reflect the use of fund balances to balance the budget. We contributed to OPEB, the retirement funding that has been mandated by the State. White Lake has worked very diligently to ensure the funding is there for our retirees.

In the General Fund, there have been changes in Township staffing. There have been some reductions in costs associated with the SAW Grant and a reduction in the amount forecasted to be transferred to make the Phase One sewer debt 2018 final payment.

The Fire Fund, the maintenance on Stations Two and Three are going to be high in 2018 as there are paving and roofing projects. The Fire Fund has a slight increase of 1% of budgeted revenues.

The Police Fund, DARE is now a separate non-profit entity called White Lake Police Foundation so funds can now be classified as a tax deductible charitable donation. There was a 2.5% increase in budgeted revenues.

The Building Fund reflects a request for a full-time building inspector position, an increase in overtime and a new vehicle. There has been a tremendous amount of activity in the Building Dept. and we will also be instituting a Rental Ordinance.

The Water Department is in good shape. The existing meters are old, defective and inaccurate. Those meters are in the process of being replaced which will cut down on the loss of revenues from unreported water usage. Also, accounts are being audited to bring them current. There will be ongoing refurbishment and updating of the Water Department.

The Parks and Rec budget reflects the continuation of M-59 pathway projects.

The overall 2018 budget revenues increased by 3%. Some of the exclusions were the revenue expenditures for the SAW Grant and DARE was removed. The budget revenues are a 1% decrease for General Fund, 1% increase for Fire and 2.5% increase for Police.

Clerk Lilley commented regarding the Building Dept. budget. They are requesting an additional person, what appears to be an excessive amount of overtime as well as a new vehicle. Before any of that money is spent, he would like to see the job description come before the Board, the overtime numbers to be justified, and if the vehicle is purchased that be an item brought before the Board for approval. As far as a tentative budget he doesn't have any issues but would definitely like the Building Dept. items addressed.

Trustee Smith agreed with Clerk Lilley's comments regarding obtaining more information concerning the Building Dept. requests.

Trustee Powell requested clarification as to why the revenues were down 1% this year and then another 1% next year. The building permits are up as well as other development projects. He questioned whether there were funds for the Huron Valley Youth Assistance reflected in this budget? He would like to see a budgeted amount of \$5000 for that. Also, does the Township provided funding to the DARE program?

Supervisor Kowall responded, regarding the 1% decrease, that there was some question as to what our share that is coming back from the State will be. The Youth Assistance is reflected in the Police budget and the DARE program is self-funded. Any further questions by the Board he would suggest be sent in writing.

Christina Marble, 5550 Old Flint Rd. She had questions regarding the budget as follows: Page 5, line items for technology equipment, improvements, betterment and equipment acquisition in the amount of \$350,000. What are those for and what equipment is this? Page 15, what are administrative costs in the amount of \$150,000? Right below that line, what are professional fees in the amount of \$50,000 for? In the Police Fund, what is the amount of \$45,000 under miscellaneous for? On page 13 what are the expenditures under improvement revolving capital outlay for the township hall in the amount of \$100,000 for? Why is it \$100,000 here but 20 million in the Capital Improvement Plan for 2018?

In response for Page 5, the amount of \$350,000, the exact items comprising the amount were unknown. Page 15, the administrative costs in the amount of \$150,000 were to Oakland County who manages the sewers. The professional fees in the amount of \$50,000 were for engineering costs, etc. Within the Police Fund, the amount of \$45,000, the exact items comprising the amount were unknown. Page 13, the amount of \$100,000 was for planning purposes. The money projected in the Capital Improvement Plan is not in the budget. It is just a plan or guide, not projects that are currently being implemented. You must have a plan in place in order to qualify for future grants.

It was suggested that if the Public has any questions regarding the line items in the budget they email the question with a CC to all the trustees so everyone is aware of the concerns and

responses. Whenever money is spent, there is always an invoice so the funds can be tracked, otherwise it is just a projection. Every time you open a new category to itemize expenses, you have to track it making the process extremely time consuming and complicated.

Ms. Marble questioned whether the money to build the civic center will be put on the ballot? Who is on the steering committee for the civic center complex? If the Township isn't sure the voters are behind them, why are they spending \$45,000 for a consulting firm? They should be certain the citizens are behind it before spending the money.

Trustee Powell commented that the Board members are not experts so we look to professionals to assist us and give us options. Our job is to come up with options and ideas and get the voters response to those. The consultant is hired to help us understand the options available to us then we'll get input from the public.

Trustee Smith clarified the meetings being held at Lakeland High School with the consultants are not a Town Hall format. The input is an online survey for residents to take. The data from that survey will be given back to the steering committee. The survey will remain open until the consulting process is finished. At this point there is not an open mic situation for the public to comment.

Mr. Hanks would challenge the Board to come up with other options for this campus idea. We haven't looked at other properties in the Township or even rehabilitating the property they are on. You've given us only one option and spent \$45,000 and will probably spend more. In the Spinal Column it was stated the \$45,000 came out of a building account, not out of a miscellaneous account. Within the purchased property 15 acres are wetlands and 11.4 acres are buildable. Will that be enough room to build what you want?

Ms. Diehl. To conform with the Michigan Uniform Budgeting Act it requires things to be presented down to the object level. The object level would be things like miscellaneous, salary, benefits, supplies. When you present it to the public, it is not necessary for you to have subcategories. Also, we currently have a very safe and secure community. There is only a 1% increase for Fire and Police but there is also an increase in homes. Hopefully, that small increase will be enough to maintain the level of response to the citizens.

Alan Gocha, 440 Hilltop Dr. He questioned what the different rating numbers represented on the projects listed in the Capital Improvement Plan. He was told the numbers were assigned on a priority system created by the Planning Dept. Also, are the items listed as new construction already determined to go forward? He was advised it is just a wish list for a potential plan. It is a lengthy process from first deciding to move forward with a project and starting it.

**It was MOVED by Trustee Powell, SUPPORTED by Treasurer Roman to Close Public Hearing on the 2018 Budget. The MOTION PASSED by a voice vote (7 yes votes).**

## RESOLUTIONS

### A. RESOLUTION #17-036, TRUTH IN TAXATION

Martin Ciurlik. From what he read, you only have to go through a disclosure process if it is outside of the realm of normal Michigan accounting procedures. If that is the case, what realm are you going outside of?

Mr. Hanks. For the library, the voters increased their operating millage. Would that be part of this application?

**It was MOVED by Treasurer Roman, SUPPORTED by Trustee Ruggles to approve Resolution #17-036, Truth in Taxation. The MOTION PASSED by a roll call vote (Lilley-yes/Roman-yes/Powell-yes/Ruggles-yes/Voorheis-yes/Smith-yes/Kowall-yes).**

## TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Clerk Lilley. From his personal perspective, he voted for the library bond issue to move forward so the Township could have a library. He did not see anything in that proposal that indicated to him how big it would be or if it was going to be on its own property or combined. He agrees with the Supervisor there are economic benefits in combining the library with the township hall. There is no intention to use the money voted on for library purposes for anything else.

For the last two months this Board has taken a tremendous amount of heat with people saying they want the bond money distributed. No matter what the library has done as far as their planning procedures and their meetings with consultants, when you come to the township hall we have policies. Number one, you have to submit your plans for site plan approval, you have to get rezoning, and you have to go through this process of engineering reviews and obtain permits.

What he is looking at to approve the bond for the library is for them to go through the site plan review process. There needs to be a traffic study. All these things need to go out for bids, not just a projection on a sheet of paper. We need to know from the bids what the actual costs are going to be. Once we have got to the point all these things have been obtained, he personally will be ready to make a decision of whether we are going to allow the library to move forward as a separate building or to pursue a campus design.

Supervisor Kowall stated there is a lot of misinformation floating around social media. Number one, if the library had full site plan and zoning approval, we still couldn't vote on it. All the documentation that is required by the bond attorney was only recently submitted and is still under review. You can't vote when you don't have the process done. It has to be reviewed,

make sure it meets all the Treasury guidelines, then it can come back to the Board for a vote. Just because the millage passed, you can't do anything until it is approved by the bond attorney.

Denise Stefanick, Library Assistant Director. Her impression was that this is a budget meeting and we weren't going to be discussing library issues. There are others in the public that would have liked to hear what Mr. Lilley had to say. Mr. Lilley should also know that the bonds were supposed to be issued July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Trustee Smith clarified the process regarding the consulting meetings which will be held on October 18 and November 8 at Lakeland High School. The meetings are more of a presentation by the consultants. They are collecting the data from the surveys and they will go over the results with you. It is not an open Town Hall type of format. If you have comments, please take the survey. The steering committee is being given all those comments and data and we are going over it together as a group. If there is a resident that would like to see it, speaking for herself as a member of the committee, she doesn't have a problem sharing that information.

There is a Regular Library Board Meeting tomorrow at 6:45. The Regular Township Hall Meeting was rescheduled to take place this Thursday, Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. at the Dublin Senior Center.

There is a process regarding issuing bonds. Of clarity, that process wasn't started until she amended the Agenda in August and our Board voted to begin that process. This Board can't vote yet as we are not in that stage of the process. The consulting process is not to determine whether one or two buildings are best or one or two saves you money. This is more of a master plan conceptual idea of what could happen on the campus. They are going to present three ideas based on the steering committee, public and stakeholder input. Those three options will be presented to the public on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

She is for upholding the integrity of the vote and the will of the people. The people did vote and she is here to represent the people. Please contact her with any comments or concerns. Everyone deserves the respect to be heard and listened to.

Trustee Voorheis has participated in the online survey and she plans to get her 80 year old parents to participate as well. She will comment further on library issues at the Thursday meeting.

Trustee Ruggles. There is going to be a library. It is a long and frustrating process. There is a lot of emotion associated with this process. Everyone is excited about having a new library but it takes time. Once everyone understands the facts on how we proceed and what it takes to get to the point of making a vote, then maybe we can relax and understand what the Board is

doing rather than distorting facts. If there is any confusion regarding the ballot language, look it up and reread it. He will comment regarding the library further on Thursday.

Trustee Powell reminded everyone that the ballot language just gave the Township permission to sell up to 8.6 million dollars of bond. It didn't say where, the size, color of the building or anything else. Just up to 8.6 million for the use of the library. Wouldn't it be great if the steering committee plans could save the taxpayers a million dollars or more? Either taxes would be less or the money could be reprogrammed into the library for uses other than a building. His goal is to provide for the will of the people at the least cost possible. Here in this Township we have a process. After all the plans are designed and submitted to the Township, the Planning Commission reviews those and grants preliminary approval of the plans. The Township Board reacts to that and then it goes back to the Planning Commission for final site plan approval. Nobody knows the exact length of that process. His goal is to get a library but they also need a township hall. If we can save the taxpayers money, he would plead for the people's patience and understanding to accomplish that.

Treasurer Roman. The library is a separate entity and has a separate board. This Board cannot force the library into doing anything it does not want to do. We cannot force them to do a combined facility if they chose not to. Holding up the bonds would serve no purpose that is positive. It would be his hope the library would agree to a combined facility but at this point it appears they've decided they don't want to go that route. That is their decision and he will support it. The library keeps saying the bonds were supposed to be issued in July. If the bonds were supposed to be issued in July, the process should have started six months prior.

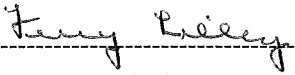
Supervisor Kowall stated this Township needs a new library, hall, police and fire station. This is a whole process and it can't be circumvented. We cannot vote on anything until the Treasury guidelines are met. We are not at that crossroad yet. When we get there, that is when decisions will be made. Until such time, gather the information and look at the timelines from there. Hopefully, Thursday night people will get a little better understanding.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**It was MOVED by Trustee Voorheis, SUPPORTED by Trustee Smith to approve Adjournment of the meeting. The MOTION PASSED by a voice vote (7 yes votes).**

Adjournment of meeting at 7:00 p.m.

I, Terry Lilley, the duly elected and qualified Clerk of the Charter Township of White Lake, County of Oakland, State of Michigan, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the September 26, 2017 special board meeting minutes.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Terry Lilley", is written over a horizontal dashed line.

Terry Lilley, Clerk  
White Lake Township  
Oakland County, Michigan