



**ACME TOWNSHIP REGULAR BOARD MEETING
ACME TOWNSHIP HALL
6042 Acme Road, Williamsburg MI 49690
Tuesday, March 4, 2008 7:00 P.M.**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER WITH PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AT 7:00 P.M.

Members present: D. Dunville, R. Hardin, W. Kladder, P. Scott, E. Takayama, F. Zarafonitis
Members excused: B. Boltres
Staff present: S. Vreeland, Township Manager/Recording Secretary
J. Iacoangeli, Planning Consultant

INQUIRY AS TO CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: None noted

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion by Zarafonitis, support by Scott to approve the agenda as presented, changing the order of business to have the Sheriff's Report during Special Presentations and to swap the order of the public hearings. Motion carried unanimously.

A. CONSENT CALENDAR:

Motion by Takayama, support by Dunville to approve the Consent Calendar as presented.

RECEIVE AND FILE:

1. Treasurer's Report as of 01/31/08
2. Clerk's Report as of 02/22/08
3. Draft Unapproved Meeting Minutes:
 - a. 02/11/08 Planning Commission
 - b. 02/25/08 Planning Commission
 - c. 02/13/08 Shoreline Preservation Advisory
 - d. GT County DPW Sewer & Water Committee Draft Meeting Minutes 02/14/08

ACTION – Consider approval:

4. 02/05/08 Township Board meeting minutes
5. Accounts Payable of \$48,893.05 through 02/21/08

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

B. LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT: None

C. CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Undated letter from Paul & Martha Pash opposing the Immanuel, LLC rezoning request: received and filed.
2. 02/19/08 e-mail from Alice Buell, 4403 Baywood Drive, regarding Meijer, Inc. and VGT issues: received and filed.

D. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

Sheriff's Deputy Mike Matteucci reported that 25 traffic citations were issued and there were two personal injury accidents during February. There were 208 total calls for service, including 15 criminal complaints and 36 non-criminal complaints.

E. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. **Public Hearing to consider approval and submission of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant application for shoreline property acquisition:** Matt McDonough from the GT Regional Land Conservancy has been asked to assist the township in making an

application to the MDNR Trust Fund for a Recreation Grant to purchase the three properties immediately south of Bayside Park as part of the Shoreline Preservation project. The Trust fund will contribute a maximum of 75% of project costs; the rest must be raised locally. Addition of the land area to the existing Bayside Park will enhance existing recreation opportunities and open scenic views from US 31.

The DNR Trust Fund Grant process is lengthy. There are two application dates per year; April 1 and August 1. Submission by April 1 yields a preliminary score and assistance from DNR staff to amend and improve the application for resubmission prior to August 1. Some information, such as a bird study, can be submitted as late as October 1. Most years between \$25 – 29 million is available for land acquisition. Decisions come in December in the form of a request from the DNR for the state legislature to appropriate the funds, which would occur the following spring. Then the DNR and township would enter into a project agreement, the township would update appraisals, perform environmental assessments and have title work done. The DNR reviews these three items, which can take 2-3 months. Closing can then occur, probably around a total of a year to a year and a half after grant approval is obtained.

Application scoring is based on many factors, including preservation of unique natural features and wildlife habitat, expansion of public recreation opportunities and level of public support.

Usually McDonough attends the DNR Trust Fund decision meeting in December, so he would know right away whether or not the application has been approved. The township can't purchase the land in advance and be reimbursed later, but sometimes an interim purchaser can be found to acquire the land temporarily until the township can come to closing. Rarely the Conservancy has served this function. McDonough has discussed the project with Rep. Allen and Sen. Levin, and he believes Rep. Walker is familiar with it as well.

Takayama asked how the application is currently scoring. McDonough stated that it isn't necessarily scoring at the top of the range, and that the scoring criteria have been tweaked by the DNR over time to favor larger parcels with significant wildlife and hunting and fishing opportunities. His preliminary scoring means that this application may be at the bottom level of what's been funded recently. The success of the application can also depend on the mix of applications it is up against. He would not invest the time in the process if he did not believe there was a good chance of funding.

Zarafonitis noted a typographical error between the first two pages of the application as to the total acquisition purchase; McDonough and Vreeland will fix this. Also to be amended is a paragraph in the narrative stating that no lands previously acquired by the township using DNR Trust funds has been relinquished to other parties. The township turned Bartlett Park at the VASA trailhead over to the County several years ago.

Takayama questioned a line item for relocation costs of \$60,000 for current land occupants, wondering why this would be paid when they are receiving significant money for selling their land. McDonough discovered, during a phone call with DNR staff, that because this is a government-funded grant program we must follow federal relocation cost guidelines. If you move someone out of their home you must cover costs for finding a new home, moving, interim rent and other items up to a certain cap. He believes this to be a high-end estimate, which will not harm the application's scoring.

The township has already applied for federal appropriations for this project as well, from the NOAA Coastal Estuarine Lands Account in particular, through Sen. Levin's office, Sen. Stabenow's office and Rep. Camp's office. The township is also undertaking a local fundraising campaign, asking for donations from individuals and various private foundations. The goal is to provide 30% of the asking price locally – this would improve the DNR

application score by 10 points. Pat Salathiel, Shoreline Preservation Co-Chair invited members of the audience to consider a contribution to the cause. Kathleen Guy, VP – Development at NMC is part of the committee and is its fundraising expert.

Public Hearing opened at 7:29 p.m.

Linda Wikle, 7174 Deepwater Point, asked if there will be a township-wide fundraising campaign mailing. She believes it would be very beneficial. Salathiel reported that a letter and brochure have been prepared for a mass mailing after an initial private donor campaign.

McDonough stated that any members of the public who have strong feelings about the project are welcome to provide letters of support to be on the record with the applications being prepared and submitted.

Joyce MacDonald, US 31 North, strongly supports the project. The land under consideration for immediate acquisition would be adjacent to her home.

Owen Sherberneau, Peaceful Valley Road, strongly supports open up public waterfront along the US 31 Corridor and urged the Board to pursue the project.

Salathiel thanked the township for initiating this project. She believes public waterfront acquisition will be an asset to the community and will support the local economy.

Matthew Vermetten supports the project and thanked the Board and Salathiel for their hard work. He believes that with the region's track record of public waterfront acquisition in downtown Traverse City that the entire region should be invited to participate as a continuation of the earlier project.

Andy Andres, speaking for his family, wholeheartedly supports the project. The township missed the opportunity to acquire what used to be a trailer park where the Shores Beach Condominiums are now for \$70,000, and he'd hate to see another opportunity wasted.

Larry Inman, Crockett Road, believes this is an exciting project and would be a "crown jewel" for the township. He would like to work with Kladder tomorrow to provide a letter of support in his capacity as our County Commissioner.

Salathiel encouraged any community members to submit letters of support to Kladder for inclusion in the application materials. McDonough reported that community support is worth up to 50 points for the DNR Trust Fund application; it's impossible to have too many letters. Takayama suggested including the township Master Plan; the new Parks & Rec plan will be included which provides strong support.

Public Hearing closed at 7:37 p.m.

Motion by Takayama, support by Scott to adopt Resolution #R-2007-07, 2008 Recreational Grant Application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for the Acme Shoreline Preservation Initiative. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Kladder thanked Salathiel and the Conservancy for their hard work.

2. **Public Hearing regarding proposed Acme Township Parks System Plan to replace February 2003 Parks & Recreation Plan:** Iacoangeli presented the Acme Parks System Plan 2008-2013. The township is required to update its community recreation plan at least every five years to remain eligible for DNR grant funding. The DNR provided detailed guidelines for what the plan should include. A community visioning session was held on January 16, and was followed up by an on-line and paper public survey. The plan includes a

description of the planning process, goals and objectives and criteria for success. Public input and discussions with the Parks & Recreation and Shoreline Preservation Advisories identified several key goals: preservation of shoreline, creation of public waterfront parks, and promoting non-motorized trail interconnectivity between parks, homes and businesses. The plan also discusses promotion of linear natural areas along water courses to protect the environment and maintain wildlife corridors, and a recommendation for a multi-use park for recreation such as baseball, softball and soccer. The plan specifically discusses a shoreline preservation zone between Bayside Park and the MDOT Gilroy Park and provides the mechanism to apply for grants to acquire those properties. The “price tag” for meeting the goals of the five year plan is approximately \$12 million, mostly for land acquisition, with some for trail enhancement and development of other recreational opportunities. Potential state and federal grant funding sources are also identified. The plan is justified by 2030 population growth projections for the Traverse City area with an expectation that there will be significant pressure from the growing population to develop the waterfront extensively. The draft plan has been available on the website for several months, was recommended for approval by the Planning Commission and copies were sent to County Planning and the NW MI Council of Governments.

Zarafonitis commended Iacoangeli on the plan and the amount of information it contains. Dunville wishes the school would have used some of that information. Parks & Recreation Advisory Chair Owen Sherberneau is extremely pleased with how the project went and the work Iacoangeli performed. Kladder asked if his committee is ready to work with and implement the plan; they are.

Public Hearing opened and closed at 7:50 p.m., there being no public comment.

Motion by Zarafonitis, support by Takayama to adopt Resolution #R-2008-06 adopting the Acme Parks System Plan 2008-2013. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

F. OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Cherry Capital Cable Council Accounting and Status Update:** Vreeland summarize her memo to the Board. It appears that there may be about \$7,000 available for distribution back to Acme Township once the CCCC is disbanded. There could be more available from funds and equipment housed at the library once TCTV2 is no longer operated by them after June 30. We expect that in April the CCCC will want to know whether the township would like all of its share of the assets, or whether it would contribute some or all to any public non-profit group that might assume operations of the public access channel to help get them started. Kladder would prefer to have all of our share come back to us, to help us equip ourselves to broadcast our meetings on the new governmental access channel. He believes that people do watch our meetings. Scott believes that the township should receive all its share back and we should seek local bids for a cost effective set of equipment. Zarafonitis agreed that we should receive the money but he believes that people should come to the meetings and participate and is less concerned with future broadcasting. Hardin, Takayama, and Dunville would all like to receive the funds and try to get back on the air.
2. **DPW Sewer and Water Update:** Kladder provided an outline of a potential three-phase project to acquire additional sewage treatment capacity (potential development of a second sanitary treatment plant on Hoch Road). Phase I includes opportunities to discuss how the various governmental units participating will interact and share responsibility, and the ability for new governmental units to participate. A consultant to assist with the process would be selected. In Phase II a preliminary design is prepared. In Phase III the project is bid out and constructed. There has been discussion about having designs and/or construction performed by one firm and reviewed and/or executed by another. Kladder, as Sewer & Water Committee Chair, has invited DPW members and County Commissioners to a meeting to discuss ideas and concerns and firm up the process. He hopes that the RFQ for preliminary design will occur by this summer. Hardin asked where treated water would be discharged; Terry Boyd

from Gourdie Fraser who was in the audience stated it would discharge to Boardman River. Hardin noted that the discharge should be cooled before release so as not to harm the fish population.

Kladder reported that at the last Sewer & Water meeting an ad-hoc committee of five was approved. He will make the selections and would like to include a County Board member, an educator/public relations person, and someone with engineering expertise. The group will constantly monitor the financial health of the septage treatment plan. Jim Wiesing from MSU Extension has agreed to facilitate a meeting in mid-March to brainstorm ways to improve the septage financial picture in the short-term – before the next bond payment is due this fall. The townships need to repay the County loan of \$400,000, and may be short at this time of making the next payment by about \$200,000. The goal of this group is to find ways to decrease that shortfall. By July some additional reports will be available for use in tackling longer-term solutions to the septage treatment plan financial picture. Public education is critical as well; they have been working in particular with restaurants to encourage them to have their grease traps cleaned out regularly and the contents hauled to the treatment plan. The grease in the traps comes from washing dishes and the like; the oil from the fryers is handled separately. Some restaurant chains have haulers from downstate come take their grease away; Kladder wants to convince them to have it dropped off at the plant. Some restaurant owners have been caught triple-bagging their grease and depositing it in the trash.

3. **Metro Fire Reorganization Update:** Kladder and Zarafonitis have had extensive conversations with various concerned citizens and volunteered firefighters, as well as members of other township administrations, and some progress is being made. Three key issues remain: composition of the Board (current proposal 2 each from Acme and East Bay, 3 from Garfield; Kladder would prefer to have two from each township and one person who is an expert regarding fire departments and more concerned about the department than one of the member communities); how difficult it should be to pull a township out of Metro (Kladder hopes it will remain very difficult, feeling the department can operate better for each member as a whole); and how the authority should be equitably funded (right now taxpayers in each township pay different assessment rates). Funding could be based on SEV, population, number of calls for service in each jurisdiction, or some combination of factors. Metro Administration is currently working on what assessment would be required if all taxpayers in all three jurisdictions paid at the same rate. Kladder would also like for it to be easy for other governments to join the authority if they would like. He had seen information that the system can become more cost effective when it grows.

Last month the Board adopted a resolution seeking discussions with Metro Fire administration about equitably dividing utility costs for the township hall/fire station building. He provided a memo this evening detailing discussions that took place yesterday. Items that have come to light include: there should be a lease agreement with Metro Fire for the space they use; the township should be a named insured on Metro's insurance policy and perhaps they should be a named insured on ours as well. Kladder anticipates annual re-negotiations of how utility expenses will be shared. Hardin asked if there has been resolution of how Tom Henkel is being utilized. He is still the station Captain, but he no longer performs any functions related to that position during township working hours. Some of those tasks are being covered by Metro-paid duty crew. There are ongoing discussions about how they will proceed to fund a full-time Captain if the hoped-for SAFER grant does not materialize.

4. **Discuss RFQ/RFP for potential designated Township Engineer:**
Motion by Takayama, support by Dunville to approve the RFQ/RFP for Township Engineering services. Motion carried unanimously.
5. **Discuss Boat Launch improvement study completion:** Vreeland summarized her memo to

the Board. Zarafonitis feels that moving forward to complete this long-outstanding project would be particularly in keeping with the newly adopted parks system plan. Takayama expressed concerns about the potential size and scope of launches or parking that might be developed within Saylor Park. He feels that some of the drawings approving parking for up to 100 cars and trailers is excessive in terms of impact on Saylor Park and neighboring residents. He believes there should be a very public process to determine the appropriate scale of the project. Zarafonitis noted that there have been several public input processes. Wikle and Kladder noted that the road end area at Dock Road is wide, a property to one side is available for sale and the water becomes deeper more rapidly. Hardin pointed out that using Saylor Park may self-limit the maximum boat size and manage potential traffic to the site. Dunville supports moving ahead with the contract with Gourdie Fraser as originally proposed. Takayama would not support wide asphalt areas leading to the water, and parking should be set back in areas not currently used by the public. As much bathing beach as possible should be preserved, and the launch itself should be kept minimal. Zarafonitis echoed Takayama and feels that one launch lane at a time is sufficient. Scott would like to see the project move ahead, but would like 1-2 launch lanes at most for small boats under 25'. Kladder supports the small size, and is additionally concerned about assessing ongoing maintenance expenses.

Motion by Zarafonitis, support by Scott to authorize Gourdie Frasier to move forward with Phase 2 of the 2003 boat launch project contract for a Saylor Park site, keeping in mind that the improvements suggested should be small scale.

Scott wants to ensure that there is public input into the process. Takayama suggested a site visit with the engineer with township officials to assess specifics.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

G. NEW BUSINESS: None

H. REPORTS

1. **County Commissioner's Reports** – Larry Inman: Relocation of some of the courts has left some vacant space in the historic building being repurposed for District Court, Friend of the Court and probation-related operations. Renovations should be completed by June and are being financed through funds on hand. David Bennett, a consultant used previously to examine needs for jail improvements, is coming back to assess changes over time and assist with additional recommendations to meet future jail needs as they outgrow the current facilities within the next 10 years. 60% of the \$36 million annual County budget goes to various elements of the corrections system, “controlling behavior of 2% of the population.” The County is also assessing how and if e-mails should be stored and made available to the public. The County Commission has changed the level of employee benefits for Road Commissioners to match County Commission entitlements. Retired Road Commissioners will have a similar plan as well, and will be invited to educational meetings in the late spring. Once they leave the system they will no longer have health insurance coverage but if they have 8 years of service and reach a certain age they will have an option to purchase participation in the plan at their own cost. They will no longer receive full free coverage for themselves and their families. Inman commended Kladder’s work on the Sewer & Water Committee, particularly relative to septage plant finances.

Hardin listened to an NPR program about the condition of our roads recently. He asked if our Road Commission is considering pulverizing any of our roads to gravel or if they will be instituting some sorely needed repairs. Inman believes road conditions are the leading issue in the County and one of the leading issues in the state. Leelanau County has had, for some time, a road millage. He has met with some of their commissioners about how their program works; the millage is charged on the property tax bills, and the County allocates the proceeds to needed repairs. The Road Commission has an informal community task force examining

the question of how to fund road repairs and improvements in the community. Perhaps the state will raise gas taxes, but it appears likely that local millages may be required. Inman may suggest having some of last year's County budget surplus contributed to the Road Commission to help with repairs in the short-term.

2. **Parks and Maintenance** – Tom Henkel: received and filed.
3. **Sheriff's Deputy** – Mike Matteucci: received and filed.
4. **Farmland Preservation Specialist** – Brian Bourdages: received and filed. Bourdages will be providing a quarterly report.
5. **2008 ZBA Goals** – ZBA Chair Joe Kuncaitis: received and filed. The Board will receive goals from the Planning Commission and citizen advisories shortly.

H. PUBLIC COMMENT & OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY COME BEFORE THE BOARD:

Mr. Andres noted an opportunity Vreeland mentioned earlier to obtain a grant to construct boat launch improvements for at least 75% and possibly as much as 90%. He suggested that while concerns about appropriate sizing of improvements are valid, the township does need to think about the future, potential needs for expansion, and whether or not that level of grant funding might be available in the future.

Gene Veliquette and his family enjoy using the public parks, particularly Bayside Park. However, he does not feel the existing parkland is over-utilized and is unsure about the need to acquire additional shoreline. He is particularly concerned about the impact of having those properties leave the tax rolls combined with increased maintenance costs. Mr. Veliquette had also hoped to see construction on a Meijer store underway already, and at the very least hopes it begins this spring. He is "appalled at what's happened at LochenHeath." When he purchased a portion of the land now in that development the taxes jumped, and he understands the taxes took a jump again this past year. For how long is setting aside public parkland but not creating commercial growth a fiscally viable option? He believes property values at LochenHeath have dropped 20% - 40% over the past week and wonders what the impact on our budgets for fire protection and other services would be. He hopes all of the litigation is over; he realizes the township itself is no longer involved in litigation but believes some individual officials are still in litigation.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:25 p.m.