

WHITEWATER TOWNSHIP BOARD
Whitewater Township Hall, 5777 Vinton Road, Williamsburg, MI 49690
231-267-5141 Phone

SPECIAL MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES

Monday, December 2, 2024, 9:00 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER:

Supervisor Linda Slopsema called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL:

Clerk Wendy Hoeksema called Roll.

Present:

Supervisor Linda Slopsema
Clerk Wendy Hoeksema
Treasurer Jill Koester
Trustee Tim Arends
Trustee Randy Mielnik

A quorum was established.

Absent:

None.

ALSO PRESENT:

Recording Secretary Kay Held

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

None.

SET/ADJUST AGENDA:

There were no changes to the Agenda.

FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

CLOSED SESSION:

Discuss Chris Patterson's Confidential Legal Opinion on Keep Whitewater Rural

Discuss Chris Patterson's Confidential Legal Opinion on Short-term Rental Enforcement

Board Action:

Ms. Koester made a motion to go into Closed Session with Chris Patterson and staff to discuss *Keep Whitewater Rural, v. Whitewater Township*, Case No. 2023-36775, pending in the Michigan Court of Appeals, regarding trial and appeal strategy that if discussed in Open Session would cause a financial detriment to the Township pursuant to MCL 15.268(e).

Mr. Arends requested the name of the suit be accurately reflected in the Minutes to "Keep Whitewater Rural, Inc. and Vicki Beam." The corrected motion reads:

Ms. Koester made a motion to go into Closed Session with Chris Patterson and staff to discuss *Keep Whitewater Rural, Inc., and Vicki Beam v. Whitewater Township*, Case No. 2023-36775, pending in the Michigan Court of Appeals, regarding trial and appeal strategy that if discussed in Open Session would cause a financial detriment to the Township pursuant to MCL 15.268(e).

The motion was seconded by Mr. Mielnik.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Slopsema-Y, Arends-Y, Mielnik-Y, Koester-Y, Hoeksema-Y. Motion carried.

Board Action:

Mr. Mielnik made a motion to go into Closed Session with Chris Patterson and staff to discuss a confidential written legal opinion prepared by the Township attorneys on short-term rentals and enforcement within the Township pursuant to MCL 15.268(h). Ms. Koester seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Koester-Y, Arends-N, Hoeksema-Y, Slopsema-Y, Mielnik-Y. Motion carried.

***Note: The Board went into Closed Session at 9:18 a.m.**

***Note: The Board returned to Open Session at 11:07 a.m.**

BOARD COMMENTS/DISCUSSION:

The Board postponed discussion in Closed Session on the Keep Whitewater Rural, Inc., and Viki Beam v. Whitewater Township topic to further explore whether there may be any possible Conflicts of Interest as will be researched by Township Attorney Chris Patterson.

Regarding the Short-term Rental topic, the Board discussed the Civil Infraction matter related to enforcement as well as the previous resident survey that was conducted in the past. The Board discussed the possibility of a Study Committee, public workshops, and a Resident Outreach Committee to facilitate another survey and feedback sessions.

No motion was made on either Closed Session matter.

The Master Plan is out for public comment at this time. The Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing prior to forwarding it to the Township for consideration and adoption.

The Board discussed addressing a prior Resolution from 2008 from the Planning Commission at the January, 2025, Township meeting.

Mr. Arends asked for clarification on the posting of Draft and Approved Minutes. The Supervisor and Clerk specified requirements.

The next Township Board meeting is Tuesday, December 10, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.

Ms. Koester stated there was prior Board consensus regarding the need to secure the network; i.e., webpages, internet, cameras, email system. Social Exploration was approved to conduct a full analysis of the Township's Information Technology system. They have done so and ordered the necessary equipment, to be installed on arrival. She met with Anavon and asked for a bid; they would like to do an evaluation of existing equipment. The Township is also considering a bid from VC3. It appears each company runs the IT system with the equipment they provide. She asked the Board to give direction regarding information to these providers.

Some equipment still needs to be returned by former Board Members. The current Board will determine what equipment is salvageable and what needs to be purchased. There was also discussion about software/licenses. Ms. Koester and

Ms. Hoeksema will investigate the equipment status/needs. Procuring the proper equipment and services are a time-sensitive matter.

Clerk Hoeksema noted Township Asset Logs are not current. The Supervisor and Clerk will search for information on their computers related to any Assets.

There was discussion about cell phones through Verizon.

Mr. Mielnik referenced an inquiry from Dollar General regarding a liquor license. Dollar General has been in communication with Zoning Administrator Graber.

Supervisor Slopsema announced Michigan Townships Association (MTA) is holding a training program at Crystal Mountain on Thursday, 12/19/24. Board Members may register through the MTA Membership online. The program is also being held at other locations.

The MTA is holding a luncheon at the airport on Thursday, 12/5/24.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Kim Elliott, 11940 Lossie Road, Williamsburg, MI 49690

Mr. Elliott inquired about the "Baggs Road" issue (Keep Whitewater Rural, Inc., and Vicki Beam v. Whitewater Township) and the meeting being publicized. He was informed there were two Closed Sessions today regarding that and another topic to discuss confidential attorney opinions and that the meeting notice was posted on the website and the box outside the building. Mr. Elliott expressed his lack of confidence in the Township Attorney. He shared his opinion on Baggs Road and that people should be able to use the land while following the rules. He does not believe it is fit for residential development use. Mr. Elliott also asked to be notified of meetings related to Baggs Road.

ADJOURNMENT:

Board Action:

Ms. Koester made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Hoeksema seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

Presented by: Kay Z. Held, Recording Secretary