

<p style="text-align: center;">YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Special Board Meeting – Public Input on Township Hall & Office Renovation</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Saturday, January 11, 2020</u> 11:00 a.m. Yankee Springs Township Hall 284 N. Briggs Rd., Middleville, Michigan 49333</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MINUTES</p>	<p>FINAL MINUTES Page 1 of 18 YS BOT – <u>Special</u> Renovation Mtg. 1/11/2020</p>
<p>Meeting called to order at 11:01 a.m. by Supervisor Mark Englerth.</p> <p><u>PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE</u></p> <p><u>Roll Call:</u> Knowles, Englerth, VandenBerg.</p> <p><u>Absent with Notice:</u> (Weather-related) Lippert, Jansma.</p> <p><u>Staff Present:</u> Frank Fiala, Dave VanHouten, Ron Heilman</p> <p><u>Visitors:</u> 35 (Not including staff present).</p>	<p>CALL TO ORDER</p> <p>PLEDGE</p> <p>ROLL CALL</p>
<p><u>PURPOSE OF MEETING:</u> Public Input regarding the Township Hall & Office Renovation</p> <p>M. Englerth commented on the history of the township hall/office, and how it has changed to its current status.</p> <p>L. Knowles wants to do what the collective board decides. L. Knowles commented that we were here today to hear what the public’s ideas are.</p> <p>S. VandenBerg agreed with Knowles and said he wanted what the people (audience) wanted.</p>	
<p>RECESS: 11:11 a.m. Break for audience to see plans (on table). RESUME: 11:21 a.m.</p>	
<p><u>Supervisor Englerth asked for Questions from the Audience:</u></p> <p>R. Heilman, of Johnson Dr., commented on having the “cart before the horse on everything here.” Heilman commented that finances were not even figured out. He commented that he heard talk of a bond. It’s going to cost us considerably more – general obligation bond, noted Heilman. Heilman noted lower coupon value on a general obligation bond. He felt the best way to go is with a revenue bond, which is said to be at a 3 to 5% coupon rate. “Why didn’t they sit down and figure out what they were going to do as a board about financing before passing?” asked Heilman.</p> <p>M. Cunningham, of Heritage Bay Dr., mentioned an application for a committee to take another look at this issue (proposed renovation). Cunningham asked if it (the newer committee) was going to be addressed at this meeting or if it was just going away. Cunningham noted that it was put off to this meeting.</p> <p>Englerth commented that this was an informational meeting to move forward with the existing plan. “The original committee was what?” asked Englerth.</p>	

M. Cunningham commented the committee were people who worked in the building and lived in the township. “Larry Knowles suggested we do another committee, and maybe have those who weren’t employees on it. That’s what I thought was going to happen at this meeting. It was put off at a meeting that Knowles was not at, and now it’s been put off again,” noted Cunningham.

M. Cunningham commented that when you finance a car, or house, “Do you exactly know how you are going to finance it before you find out the cost? The cart before the horse is not applicable here.” Cunningham felt the committee knew it was possible to finance this before the meeting. Cunningham commented on Baker Tilly coming and there was a special meeting regarding financing. Cunningham was the only attendee at the meeting from the public. Cunningham noted that at the meeting, he didn’t remember the exact interest rate, 2¼ to 3 %, “not 3 to 5 % though”, and didn’t hear of bonds (general or revenue) being talked about. “There was a ten year payback and they said our finances were great. We could almost pay for it out of our cash reserves.” Cunningham noted that Baker Tiller recommended paying \$300,000 out of the general fund and \$600,000 loan, which Cunningham agreed with. Cunningham figured at a 3% interest rate, the project interest would be \$97,000 bringing the project to \$1,000,000. Cunningham noted that Baker Tilley indicated taxes will not go up, and that he (Cunningham) agreed.

Englerth commented on \$15,000 for an attorney fee for the transaction (loan/bond). “Government can’t go to the bank... it is a bond,” commented Englerth.

Knowles commented, “A bond is exactly that -it’s a loan. We decide how much money we want to borrow and we put out requests for bids on that. Banks from all over could bid on it... that creates the bond.” Knowles commented that 2½ % is what they are expecting. “It is a bond, but it usually confuses people.”

Cunningham asked, “Does it change the dollar amount?” Knowles confirmed that it did not.

Knowles commented that it had never been discussed to raise taxes.

Englerth commented, “We say it will not increase taxes, I agree with that. However, when you are done bonding, you still are indebted over ten years for \$600,000. So will you pay more property tax? Nope. But do you need a fire truck? Do you want to put money in roads? Do you need more street lighting? Do you need more dry hydrants up by Barlow Lake? \$600,000 is \$600,000. If you remove it from the general fund, it will limit us, what we’re doing, for the next ten years. What you’re saying is right, but don’t say that it-it is still close to a million dollars.” Englerth commented that in this bond process there’s a window of time that the citizens can petition to put it on the ballot. Englerth said this was brought out in the meeting (with Baker Tilly) and this was not shared. “You didn’t share that, right?” remarked Englerth.

Knowles commented, “The attorney answered that and said it could not be put on the ballot unless it was for a millage.”

Englerth disagreed and then said, “But...that’s a good question and I’ll write it down and we’ll clarify it, because it appears we are on two sides of the fence.”

Knowles commented, “They can petition, but I say we keep going and find out what the community wants.”

Bob Genter of Parker Drive, commented on wants and needs. Genter felt that it was ludicrous to spend \$1,000,000 to add 1,700 sq. feet. “We want some part-time employees to have a million dollar better office?” asked Genter.

Bill Renner, of Beatrice Ave., inquired about the fixed expenses of the current building and the projected fixed expenses of the new building. Renner asked what would be an additional yearly increase or a decrease in cost.

John Jerkatis, Ravens Way, asked, “This is the question time of meeting right? Can you relate back to this group what are the problems you are trying to solve? Besides the obvious lack of maintenance...? By spending this million dollars?”

Knowles commented that when the committee was formed, “everything was in the open, at public meetings. Nobody here came to those meetings. That’s why you didn’t know there was a renovation going on. Otherwise, we would have had you (Jerkatis) on that committee as well. But the committee sat down and said the same thing, ‘What’s our needs and what’s our desires?’ Knowles noted that the group came up with the Assessor’s office needing to be enlarged. “They thought the Assessor couldn’t discuss anything with anybody because they would be stuck in the doorway. It was brought up about the structure of the floor for the weight of the files. They also said the Treasurer’s office was too small. Those two things. Then it was brought in that they wanted to secure the building to keep people out in case there was a problem. Then they added in the fact that they wanted both the Treasurer and the Clerk to be able to service that area, in case one of them wasn’t there. I’m talking about a sliding glass door. Those were pretty much the parameters, and these are the floor plans that they (Fleis & VandenBrink) came up with. That’s what we (committee) asked for.”

Jerkatis commented, “...But how it got to be a million dollars, I’m still questioning.”

L. Knowles commented that the group looked at numerous floor plans. Knowles also commented, “...If you are going to increase those office sizes, those two, and not eliminate the Clerk’s office, and not eliminate the Zoning Administrator, and not eliminate the Supervisor’s area, you got to do something bigger then. Whether it’s coming out here (hall area) or what, ... That group, that’s what they settled on. I’m not saying it’s right. Matter of fact, there’s an awful lot of it I don’t like. But that’s exactly what the group decided.” Jerkatis thanked Knowles. Knowles commented that when everyone seemed to get concerned that they didn’t know about the renovation, because they weren’t coming to the meetings, that’s when he proposed to do a committee again so then everybody could be part of it, and “we could start all over. But we decided to do this (public hearing) instead.”

Englerth commented, “Historically, you had a committee that was a group of what? If you put together another committee, you gonna use the same thoughts? This is the group (audience) that I work for. I’m not going to just pick my four best friends and put them on a committee. I’m not going to pick just the employees and say, ‘whatever you want’. Englerth reviewed previous plans to move the Assessor’s and Supervisor’s office out into the hall. “We were looking at \$60-\$70,000 solutions. Yes, we complained that if you pull a ceiling tile up, there isn’t any dry wall...it certainly needs some renovation. We struggle with everything we do. We had a local contractor... out of Lansing, that was getting us some carpet. ‘No can’t get that.’ LED lighting.

We replaced all the windows except the back ones in the office....I put them in. I paid a retired contractor... One of the problems with government, we spend a lot of time arguing and not enough time doing...It doesn't matter if you are a Republican or Democrat, Catholic or Methodist or an Atheist, we are a pretty conservative group. I'm not from this school. I didn't run for this office to spend a million dollars of your money. We could use it for a lot of different things." Englerth listed off: street lighting, dry hydrants out to Barlow Lake, to additional marine control on the lake. "I'm not talking about writing a ticket. I'm talking about keeping our community safe.. So I think this is where the really big push and shove comes from. We drug everybody downstairs the last meeting and showed you how dysfunctional that basement was. We could do a 24 x 24 block building with a set of doors with a roof over it and in the back of it have all the storage for paperwork that you need. I hope we store it better the we have and take better care of it than we have in the past. So there are more reasonable solutions... But that's kind of the struggle we are having. Why we didn't form one more committee is because the citizens of this township is the committee. And we pushed for this meeting, and by the way, thank you all for coming. I wish there would be another 100 people but on a day like today, this is a good thing."

Ann Hannapel-Nolan commented on being here since 1972 and being involved depending on the issues. Hannapel-Nolan asked about the renovation/building, "Is it a done deal or do the citizens have a say in the matter?"

Knowles commented, "This board agreed to hire a firm to prepare the documents and to move forward. That's it. We haven't agreed to spend more than that, which was \$90,000. It has been stopped.

Ann Hannapel-Nolan commented that \$90,000 could have been better spent "than having a group come in and say, 'Do a feasibility study.' I know there's certain things you have to do in government offices. ... a bigger, broader perspective has to be looked at as to what you eventually want to gain.... You don't have a need for a big space with hundreds of people unless there is a problem and then you can go and rent a bigger space. I just don't understand the justification for the amount of money that is desired to be put in to have a lovely new building."

Knowles commented, "We weren't turning anybody away from the committee. When we set up the building committee, we didn't deny anybody.

A. Hannapel-Nolan commented, "How many people knew about it, sir?"

Knowles commented, "Nobody, because nobody comes to these meetings. This has been going on for almost a year.... Now everybody finds out about it and everybody is upset. That's why I said we should start that committee over again and invite everybody that wanted to be part of it. But come and work. You're not going to do it in a day. I can tell you that. And that's why I did that."

Hannapel-Nolan commented "Good for you. Keep doing that. Keep the public connected..."

Knowles commented that they (the public) don't come to the meetings. "It was at our board meetings."

Scott Pierce commented about spending \$1,000,000, "...Doesn't anybody on the board think 'they're (the public) going to get pissed out there if we spend a million dollars?" Pierce suggested that it should be in the paper and knock on doors.

Knowles commented that it was in the paper.

Englerth commented that even though it was decided in a board meeting, “Nobody that sits on that committee of three, one of them is here today and two of them are not because of the weather, provided any other information other than what was here. I asked for the agenda the other day, there was no agenda for it ‘til last night and it’s an open meeting, closed meeting, public comment, boom. So you can see a little bit of my struggle. I work for you.”

Someone from the audience commented that they didn’t want to hear “closed meeting.”

L. Knowles clarified that Englerth didn’t mean “closed meeting.”

Englerth continued, “Even the notice of the meeting is normally put in by the office staff and it wasn’t... I got in my truck and drove out to J-Ad Graphics and put it in, because historically these things fall through the cracks.”

An unidentified audience member commented on the “nice, digital sign that was just put up a year ago”, and asked that notifications regarding township meetings be on the electronic sign instead of relying on the paper.

Greg Drier of Johnson Drive, on Gun Lake commented, “Have they weighed out the cost of doing this one over movin’ it to the fire barn and just adding on and then everything is new if their gonna do it because then you get a new kitchen, new handicapped bathrooms. It’s updated and it’s done once and they don’t have to go back and do it over again?”

Englerth commented, “I personally, and you’ve got two different sides here, we have not even began to ask all the different options.Pick a number. I do this in the construction business... You look at the fix of the building, so we did the parking lot. We did the bathroom, the roof... so at the end of it, really how much money are we going to have in this building in 20 years?...In the building business...we call it ‘putting lipstick on a pig.’ Now there are people who would love to leave this here for ever and maybe that is the right thing to do. Maybe it’s the right thing to do to put \$80,000 in it and call it a ‘ten year fix’, because who knows what government’s going to be – Yankee Springs, two-thirds of it’s owned by the State of Michigan. It’s population is pretty well set. But when you spend a million you have to be more diligent with that money than you do your own. And when we’re all said and done, maybe it’s isn’t as important as what we end up with. Is the process fair? Did you have voice at the table? America promises you that you can have your say. It doesn’t promise you that you can have your way. So this is what we are doing today. The reason somebody said they didn’t know why we didn’t have the committee, you are the committee. And I’m much more comfortable with a more divast? group than a hand-picked group. I could scream and yell that not enough people came. We’re blessed as many as did considered the day. So, hopefully we’ll have another meeting.We’re not all going to agree. But when we learn as a community to get involved and to own part of it, and to have a voice. And you know one of the most disturbing things is when you get a hold of some information, be sure that it’s good...So what are the best options?”

Greg Drier mentioned pole barns getting more “bang for your buck,” and noted some churches and other (community things?) are moving toward pole barns.

Englerth commented that a remodel can be more expensive than just starting over. “Community activities? What type of community are we going to be? Should we just add four offices down to the fire barn and put a community activity center down at the park? ...I believe the engineering firm said that there wasn’t room to put a township hall down with the fire barn and parking. I’d put a lot of money on the table and betted differently, but how it was steered and how it was geered, I have no idea. But look at all the options. Like I said, you want to put \$60,000 in it and revisit it? There is a question, if we can’t maintain what we’ve got now, and that is a fact, and that is historic, then you should get more?...”

Mr. Ritsema commented, noticing “mission statement and strategic plan” written on white board in the township hall, asked how the new building helps achieve the strategic plans and mission of the township. Ritzema (clarified) and asked how the renovation project will “help you guys (board/office staff) do what you need to do for us?”

Englerth turned it to over to L. Knowles.

Knowles commented that the committee got together and decided that the tax Assessor needed more room and the Treasurer did as well. The committee agreed that this would help them do their jobs. Knowles also mentioned that he believed security was an issue, and most communities are dealing with this now. Knowles noted that he agreed with that because “If my wife was here alone during the day, I would like to think there was some type of security.”

Englerth commented that he would answer the question. He commented that he has been the Supervisor for seven years and never had an office....cubby hole in back corner. “The zoning administrator was I think married to the clerk so I took the over old Supervisor’s office. ...Township government even for a Supervisor is a part-time job. But I do my business on the ground, whether I meet you at McDonald’s or your house, my kitchen table, where the problem is, over (at) the DNR. So I can make that work. So the Supervisor’s office has never been a precedence for a decade, right? And if you even look at the configuration of that office, that we don’t have multi-tasking abilities. ...Basically that office was built to residential standards and then we dumped tons of file cabinets on it. So to move those file cabinets in a better spot, and that’s why I said come out here 10 feet. \$150,000 fix and that’s with bells and whistles. So you’re absolutely right, I think the Sewer authority went down to how many days a week are you open in your office? (addressing L. Knowles).

Knowles confirmed the Sewer Authority is open five days a week.

Englerth commented, “But how many hours a day?”

Knowles commented “The office is currently open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.”

Englerth repeated, “Ten in the morning until two in the afternoon.”

Knowles commented, “That’s correct.”

Englerth commented, “So are we full-time staffed or are we not? How many times in your life have you got up, kissed the wife good-bye, gave her hug, need to come to the township. Should

we be open 2 days a week, 3 days a week, if it's important to be open, should it be Saturdays? Evenings? I don't know but these are some really good questions. And the fire station certainly provides- now everybody says 'You're all about moving it down to the – ok- Single campus maintenance -makes a lot of sense, ... How many dollars are you going to throw at it. How many year term fix are you going to-? I mean, this is an \$800,000 - \$900,000 project as we already put a parking lot out there, we put lighting out there. We put a bathroom that made 300 sq. feet dysfunctional back to how do we maintain, and behave and manage what we've got now. Turn around and look at behind you. Now we had all the storage area until we built a new bathroom because we didn't remodel the existing building. So did we create our own problem? But I think we can take little steps to get out of it."

Dave Van Houten, of Rock Dr., commented "...I think the Board wisely voted that we were going to do a remodel. VanHouten commented "... Who here wants to remodel, and who here wants to build a new building?"

Englerth commented, "We'll take a poll later. But we're actually going to get that data down. OK?"

D. VanHouten commented, "After that, I would have all of the processes reviewed. So if you're the Clerk, I would check with the County Clerk, what process are they are using, what computers systems, what storage systems. I would look at the storage, what they have, the Assessor, the Treasurer, make sure that we have the best computer systems, storage systems, backed up correctly in the cloud; state of the art. And then I would just say, and it sounds like that's what you're going to do, 'What do you want to spend?' ... So you have that number. Then you've got Larry's committee. ...Meet with those architects. You've got to design the description. This is what we have to accomplish. This is what we can do; we're on budget; move and we do it. We've been talking about this since 2002. So we don't have to make it that hard..."

M. Cunningham commented regarding the question "What is it (renovation) going to do for the township? What are we going to gain as people?..."Cunningham commented that there's a relatively steady stream of people (in the office). "If you are around much you see a steady stream. If you restrict the hours, drastically, how many of us get upset when you can't find an open time for the bank or whatever,... This building and our government serves a purpose, and it's boring, running elections, making rules, collecting taxes, ...This will enhance their ability now and and properly now and in the future. Say meetings like this, ...we need better communicating ability, we've got real cheap, poor system for getting sound out... Modern meetings now have big videos where everybody can see and hear everything..."

Marge Genter of Parker Dr., interjected, "But are we getting that? For our \$900,000, are we getting that."

M. Cunningham commented, "I wish it was \$50,000, but I didn't like what I paid for my car or my house. Government has to have it. You don't have a Navy without a ship, you don't have volunteer sailors because that's cheap...It's getting bid out competitively, that number is just the architect's estimate.

Greg Drier commented "Does that \$900,000 cover any structure like doing the ceilings in here or the floors?"

Englerth commented “We really don’t know ...even though the drawings look nice, it doesn’t have anything to do with the bathrooms, it doesn’t have anything to do with the kitchen and it doesn’t have anything to do with the furniture that’s going to have to go inside your new structure. So is that correct, Mr. Knowles?”

Knowles commented that Englerth was accurate beyond the west wall of the township hall except for the floor and the hallway. “The floor, ceiling, insulation, ...There’s talk of having a closet the entire width to get rid of all of the stuff (in southwest corner) that’s behind you right now.” All of the stuff is going to go (into closet), so it probably won’t get much smaller, “that’s what the idea was.”

Englerth said the hall would get smaller per sq. feet.

VandenBerg commented that he was at that meeting when the engineer presented the project. VandenBerg commented that issues were in the ceiling. Dry wall ceiling was not addressed per VandenBerg. VandenBerg noted the heating system is run up above probably six inches of insulation. VandenBerg commented that it needed to be addressed and it hasn’t been addressed financially, “It’s not part of the project that the engineering company presented to us.” VandenBerg commented “...When you start a job- all of a sudden- they call it creep. They’re not creeping down they are creeping up.” VandenBerg commented that the Board made a 3 – 2 decision. “That doesn’t mean that the entire board agreed with this project. Because we did not...But obviously in a democratic system, the three (3) takes the cash; they pull the kitty in. I just wanted you people to know, it was not unanimous. And that’s important for you to know...”

Scott Pierce asked if it is possible to get a list of “what we are getting.” “How many square feet of the offices; portion of money being spent there. In here what’s going on? Zero dollars whatever. “Somebody drew up something, and something I assumed was voted on or seemingly semi-approved to look at...”

Englerth commented “No. They didn’t. The amount of money that we given Fleis & VandenBrink, we don’t have that yet...They did propose HVAC system.... So instead of a \$10 project you have a \$40 project. The maintenance of an HVAC system vs. standard furnace, heating cooling, been there, done that. So the heating was addressed. I mean you got to assume they were replacing a lot of things. But the real question is, like you are asking, put the nuts and bolts on it. It was never achieved of ‘how much can you do this project for; how much you want to spend; what can we get done? Why isn’t some of it done? Because some people stand in the way of getting it done. That floor, we’re trying to get carpet on it... I don’t care if the carpet lasts a year, two or three years. Let’s pull the carpet and get it done and down. Well nope, drag our feet, ... then it was a safety hazard. So we removed the carpet. Course it sells to the public that the building is in bad maintenance. But anyway, some of our struggles.”

Knowles commented, “We do have a scope of work. When we do this, we hire an engineer to work with us to see what we want to do. I have a scope of work right here what they (Fleis & VandenBrink) came up with of what the committee decided what we wanted. Is it so detailed that we are going to figure out what electric we are going to do?... No. That comes with the design part. This was just original “get things going”. But... Yes, we do have a scope of work, and if you want to see it. I got it right in front of me.”

Englerth asked, (to Knowles), “You’re the only one here that sat on the committee, correct?”

Knowles, replied “Yes. Deb (Mousseau – Recording Secretary) did, too.”

Englerth commented, “You were aware of this meeting today, obviously. So what did you prepare for today for?”

Knowles commented, “Nothing. I thought we were here to hear what everybody else wanted.”

Englerth commented, “Ok. Thank you.”

Genther, Parker Dr., commented, “...That describes exactly why we are here. The three people that voted this \$900, and some odd thousand dollar expenditure on this board. One’s here. The two others aren’t. We’ll call it inclement weather. I call it, something else.”

An unidentified person commented, “I call it, ‘She lives a half a mile away.’ Are you kidding me?”

Genther replied, “Exactly”, and continued, “The whole problem is, Larry, they decided. Jan, Alice and you, and the committee and the (bank?) decided. Know you have three votes, come to this meeting, shove it through, that’s why we’re all here. That’s the bottom line...”

Knowles commented “Were you listening when I said I wanted to start that committee thing over again now that we have a bunch of interested people?”

Genther commented, “Why don’t you start with what you need first?”

Knowles commented, “We tried that. Who determines what we need?”

Genther replied, “Your community.”

Knowles commented, “That’s why I said, ‘Let’s have a new committee with the community...’”

An unidentified person yelled, “Nobody ..?.. \$900,000 dollars!”

Knowles commented, “I don’t either.”

VandenBerg asked, “Is the office staff going to be able to do a better and more productive job by spending a million dollars? Are they already doing their job? And I’m going as far as to say, they’re doing a pretty good job. ... I’m going to give them a pat on the back. I’m going back to the meeting two months ago and this is not a pat on the back. We got the storage facility in our basement, and we do have a fire room with a fire door, but it’s not used. So, if any of you have been down there, and I think a few of you have, it’s in disarray because of the building? Or is it in disarray, because of the staff? And I’ll end it right there.”

Aileen VanHouten, of Rock Dr., commented that she thought the meeting today was for input from the community. A. VanHouten commented that she felt it was pretty expensive for a

remodel. “The staff that works here. Yes they do have some needs. Could some changes be made to make them more efficient in their jobs? Are there some needs in the community? ... We are here to give our opinions, that’s what this meeting was for. Then we could come together again with maybe a new proposal, I don’t think anything was set in stone. ‘We’re doing this, we’re doing that.’ I think we’re here to give our opinions. So nothing’s done yet. That’s how I feel.”

Bill Renner of Beatrice commented asking about the files to be stored and whether the files were digitized.

Englerth commented that some files are required by law for the township to physically retain.

Englerth commented “...Historically, when we’ve tried to get documents that should have been there....But if we’re merely addressing storage and we wanted a fireproof two hour fire rating, that can be done with a 24 x 24 block building behind it forevermore fireproof storage, whatever. The floor loading, we talked about that a little bit and then in those drawings we’ve put storage cabinets of thousands of dollars- tens of- that doesn’t- what if you want to have the graduation, the wedding or whatever...so I guess, my situation is take a little more of the Larry the Cable Guy approach, see how effectively, efficiently, economically, we can do it.”

Bill Renner commented that basically some of the files had to be maintained in paper form and other files can be digitized.

Englerth commented “Yep. And some of them have to be kept forever. You’ve got is it Clerk’s? Is it election? Is it Scheuerman’s (the Assessor) files?Planning & Zoning. Some of them (documents) can be saved. Some of them can be dumped.”

Renner asked, “Is this building sufficient for the reasonable foreseeable future? It’s going to get more and more computerized...Do we need additional building to effectuate the proactive rather than reactive as far as adding facilities here when we have to go full-digitized? Does this building provide that?”

Englerth commented “I don’t know if I can answer that.... If you want to do a follow up meeting...Englerth commented that the biggest problem in society today is that 9 out of 10 people don’t know, “furthermore, they don’t care. So bless all you people for taking a personal interest. And if you want your government and your community to function more properly, take a more active role.”

D. VanHouten commented to VandenBerg, “...Shane, I think you introduced doubt. You said ... that there would be a lot of creep, overages and that type of thing in the building process. That’s why you pay an architect and an engineer to have tight specs. You spend some money up front so that you hit a budget...I’ve been in remodeling 35 years...I hit budgets and so can whoever’s going to be doing this. Would you agree with that (to Shane) if we have good tight specs... that you wouldn’t have creep?”

S. VandenBerg commented, “No. There are always extras. Always.”

Knowles commented, “That’s not true. At Gun Lake Sewer, I had a 10% contingency that I did not use. As a matter of fact, we ended up spending about 3% less.”

D. VanHouten commented, “The other point...Larry took a shot ... (Knowles was asked by the Supervisor) ‘What did you develop or what did you come here to present to the crowd?’ Larry asked me, there’s a slide presentation that was available that showed the history from 2002 to how we got here today. I decided not to do it because this is like herding cats –going in all directions. I thought we’d see if the supervisor would support the remodel of the existing building and what dollars people were comfortable spending... It wasn’t Larry’s fault, that it didn’t happen. It was mine.”

Patricia Kermeen of Deer Sight Drive, commented, “I think it’s time to spend some money and renovate this... it’s an investment. We have homes and we have cars and we take care of them.This building, ...needs storage for files, heating and cooling, whatever... but one thing I don’t think we need is private offices for part-time help.”

Englerth asked Mrs. Kermeen, “...How many dollars do you want us to spend? Do you want a \$100,000 fix? An \$80,000 fix? A buck eighty?”

P. Kermeen asked, “Why don’t you put some cost on this so we can see it?”

Englerth commented, “I think this a two-way street going in...”

Mrs. Kermeen commented that there’s a lot of maintenance that hasn’t been done to this building “and that’s a shame”.

Ann Hannapel Nolan asked how often the room (township hall) was being used.

Englerth commented “Four (4) (times) tops (monthly).”

Ann Hannapel-Nolan commented that offices could be put in this room (hall) and storage space. A. Hannapel-Nolan mentioned cubicles instead of private offices. “This can be done so well in here with a little bit of foresight and planning at minimal cost...Fix the ceiling. Do what you have to do for the actual physical working for the building... Work on the basics. Get basic ideas. We don’t need horns and whistles.... Any of the money that is spent is coming from the people- not from you. And I think sometimes government gets on a big puff that ‘We can do this. We can do this.’ We have to be responsible for your actions” A. Hannapel-Nolan commented that the Y Camp had rooms that could be rented at minimal cost. “That’s another option,” noted A. Hannapel Nolan.

Englerth noted meetings: Township (Board), Planning Commission, ZBA (not every month), and every now and then: GLPA (Gun Lake Protective Association), the Drain Commissioner, and the GLIB (Gun Lake Improvement Board).

VandenBerg commented that the township hall was occupied rarely, and that would be a more reasonable answer. VandenBerg commented, “If we had, let’s just say, if we had to take our Assessor’s office and we had to put it back in that corner (southwest corner) and all those files back against that wall, I think he’d be happy. And it would be minimal cost, extremely minimal, especially if you’re talkin’ about having the stand alone partitions.”

Ann Hannapel Nolan commented that she has heard there are township records stored in someone's home. "Now I don't know how real that is."

Englerth commented that he thinks that it is a very limited amount and that it no longer happens. Englerth commented, "Jan had some voting records or something, John? (referring to J. Jerkatis, former Treasurer in the audience)." Englerth referred to an economical solution, "and that's why I'm saying a masonry structure out back. Concrete floor."

Barb Cunningham, Heritage Bay Dr., commented on an essential form of government being to hold elections and voting takes place in the township hall. Cunningham has worked every election for the past six years. "...If we shrink this room, it's going to be tight.... It's important we serve the public and their right to vote and if we squish it down, we are not serving the public."

Englerth commented, "There's actually legal requirements that tell you how many square feet you have, so by law, we cannot violate that."

Barb Cunningham commented, "So when you say four (4) times a month, we have not heard anything about the elections, and you do not say anything about elections, just wait until November comes."

Englerth commented about the parking lot and money spent to expand the parking lot, "That's the only time the parking lot is full is at election time. Englerth mentioned "City of Hastings, elections, Central auditorium. All four precincts vote in the gym. Could we build a relationship with the Y camp? Could we build a relationship with the church? Rent those four times a year or spend a million dollars adding on to a building for...?"

B. Cunningham commented "A lot of "good could's" but there's no facts there. We don't know that the church, a church, or the Y Camp will do that and can the Y camp accommodate a presidential election?"

Englerth commented, "Absolutely. But I guess the question is that we'll agree on is, 'Let's ask.'"

Englerth commented to Mike Cunningham, "Is this your wife Mike? I didn't know if it was your daughter or not."

M. Cunningham commented, "Enough comments about my wife and her age and her looks.... I always thought those were inappropriate comments from..."

Englerth commented, "Mike, if you're upset, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to do that."

M. Cunningham commented, "Then quit doing it! Let's get back to business."

Englerth commented, "Yes. Sir."

M. Cunningham commented, "I'm sorry for the outburst, but I'm always tired of that kind of stuff that you do. Now, I know I'm in a minority here and it's not that I want to spend this

money, but I think that a certain ...”

An unidentified man in the front row stood up and commented (just before walking out of the meeting), “I don’t like this, ...ain’t a good idea, this million dollar bullshit.”

M. Cunningham continued, “At some point, something like that has to be done, also there’s been a reference to ‘a committee of three’. The three that voted were Board members, they are elected members of the township. They are not a committee. The committee that was formed was people who should have known, and I think did, know what this township, in terms of the building, needed. ...All of us have been brought up to speed on the stuff they already knew by hand. They made a recommendation to the Board. That committee did not decide the whole issue. They made a recommendation to the Board. These are your elected representatives. It’s not three people. It’s more closer to between two (2) to 3,000 of us, voters. We voted for them. Those three took more votes than for the other two. There was just two. You have to have a majority. You don’t have to have a unanimous vote. And a lot of times it comes down to that. So our board, your elected representatives, that’s where the democracy, our vote, ...for the most part where we’re heard, is through how we or who we elect to represent us. So we voted for those people. You voted for those people, and the people that are not here voted for those people. They made the decision to accept the recommendation of the committee. They did not make this decision. Your elected representatives did. You know I’m in the minority here, and I’ve been in the minority in all the other meetings and I feel like I’m speaking for those people who aren’t here because when you get people mad, the kind of person that we are that wants to get up and make our voice heard, that doesn’t represent everybody in the community. There are a lot of people that just don’t want to be subjected to this kind of an atmosphere and they don’t show up, but they pay taxes and they vote, too. So keep in mind that our neighbors are out there and they have opinions also. And they may not have come, but we, our, boisterousness doesn’t necessarily represent them.”

John Jerkatis, Ravens Way, commented that he respectfully agrees with most of what M. Cunningham “has delivered here”. Jerkatis commented that if the project came in at an estimated, “\$240 – 250,000 we probably wouldn’t be having this meeting...\$600 a square foot for an improvement, I think that’s kind of hit with everybody. It’s really exorbitant, out of control, somebody maybe just looking for another job or whatever and I’m not talking about our board members. I’m talking about engineering firms, construction firms, whatever... \$150 a square foot to put on an addition here, that would be like \$200,000...But we have other things in this proposal due to wants, maybe needs such as an HVAC system ... which is already in existence, functional, 100% in that room right now. New computer system, we’ve got computers in every office here. They’re functional, operating for the township, right now. Security system, don’t have that. Maybe that’s something that maybe you ought to boost it up \$20,000 to get that. ...All of these wants to make us more efficient and more effective and all of this should be looked at as ROI comparison, return on investment method. ‘What are we getting for that? Above what we’ve already got?’ Let’s get. ... We just need the space. Let’s get the space if we can justify that. But then the new video system, the new sound system, the new computer system, these things should and really be addressed and approved, individually, on a ROI analysis. And not drag the whole price of the project up to a million dollars. Thank you.”

Rob Heethuis, Lisa Lane, commented to J. Jerkatis, “That was good. I like that. ... I came here like everybody else to give an opinion. And certainly heard a lot of opinions. It’s all good. I was on GLPA (Gun Lake Protection Association) for 12 years. I was the President, the last six. My Vice-President was Chad Kraai. Chad Kraai would be the first guy to look at everybody and say, ‘Look, if you get anybody on Gun Lake, any two (2) people who agree on anything, that would be a miracle.’ It’s very difficult to do, and it’s obvious when we talk today. I came to give one opinion today and it’s on renovation or build. And that’s why we came here today, to give opinions. I write it down so I don’t repeat myself. The first time I saw our township hall, three decades ago, I admired the beautiful setting. It’s adjacent to historic Bowens Mill, Payne Lake and Barlow Lake, Yankee Springs Recreation Area; this area has room for growth. I believe our choice is simple. And what I’ve heard from you today, you agree. Renovation is fiscally responsible. We’re not spending, if \$900,000 is too much, I don’t disagree with that. But I heard everybody say there are certain things that this building needs. So let’s figure out what they are and what that should cost. It’s certainly more fiscally responsible than building something that’s going to cost twice as much? Two and half times as much? I don’t think anybody here would vote for a building that would cost \$2.5 million, \$3 million dollars. I don’t think that’s going to happen. A new structure at the fire barn? The engineering group said it didn’t fit. The measurements aren’t close. It costs three times as much. Parking doesn’t fit with possible needs of the barn. And the fire barn expansion, if needed to be, wouldn’t be available, and M-179 is too busy. We’ve looked at this for 10 years. We all sit here and say, ‘This needs something done.’ Maybe it’s not \$900,000. Maybe that price is a little more reasonable. Maybe that whole bid needs some adjustments. But let’s get on board with fiscal responsibility. Our building needs work and I think we should preserve our historic site.”

An unidentified audience member commented, “Excellent.”

A round of applause occurred.

Russell Kermeen, Deer Sight Dr., commented, “I sit here and they always say ‘You can only hear as much as your butt can stand.’ But we very well maxed that out right now, for everybody. The only thing I heard so far that I really appreciate, is Larry Knowles saying that they’ve stopped this thing and they’re going to redo, and let everybody else have an opinion instead of run this through with a big mop. So I think we’ve all ‘p & m’ed’ enough. Everybody had their opinion. Made the guy mad ‘cuz over his wife. Don’t like to see that. That’s the way we are when we’re old and we run our mouths, henceforth...”

Englerth commented, “Thank you.”

R. Kermeen continued, “...Thank you, Larry (Knowles). I don’t always agree with you, but I want to appreciate what you said. You said that five minutes after I sat down and I’ve had 55 minutes of ‘hmmm...’ So thank you very much for having this meeting. Let’s have another one...”

Englerth interjected, “Okie Dokey. I do not remember the Board actually putting ‘moving forward’ on hold. But I think what I’ve seen here today, and we’re not all on the same page, I agree with what Rob (Heethuis) says, not suppose to be on the same page.”

R. Kermeen asked, “Are we on hold or not, Larry?”

Knowles commented, “We are, and if you go back to the minutes of the last meeting...”

Englerth commented, “Okay. I’ll go look.”

Knowles continued, “But I talked to the engineer and they are not moving forward.”

VandenBerg commented, “I know I did not vote on it. I did not vote on that.

Knowles commented, “There was no vote. There was no vote on it.”

VandenBerg replied, “That means it was not a democratic decision.”

Englerth commented, “Anyway, regardless. And I want to hear in three minutes or less. I was going to put out some sheets and say ‘Who’s in favor and who’s not.’ Okay, I don’t think we can even define what you’re in favor of and what you’re in favor not. Okay. We want to do something productive. We haven’t decided what that is. Do we all agree on that?”

Tim Cunningham, of Heritage Bay Dr., commented, “I think what I’m hearing...from these people here, is for you to go back and do another estimate just for a renovation and no expansion...”

Englerth commented, “...We do have three board members here today. I think we’re going to bring back the information. What I’m going to ask is the board take and reconsider it. And come with three different options or whatever. And then as we move along, because we can’t do in the township meeting when we’ve got to pay the bills and listen, we can’t have this type of conversation and work or we’d be there ‘til midnight. So these special meetings, these group sessions, I think we are going to continue on that path, if the public is comfortable with this. We’ll advertise it in the paper. Because I guarantee no matter what we do, not everybody’s going to be happy. I think the majority of the people think it’s a million dollars or \$879,000 or whatever is not an acceptable warm and fuzzy.”

Scott Pierce commented and asked if there was any way that a meeting notice could be put on the electronic sign (on M-179).

R. Heilman commented, “I’d like to go back to what Larry was saying, if in fact they put that \$90,000 on hold for the design and everything and we have a meeting, ... We looked at this mess in the corner here that could be an office space. We looked at that cabinet (NE corner of hall) for I don’t know how many years now. So there’s places where we could, like you say, have the Assessor or Treasurer or whatever, have an office space and maybe a renovation the way it sounds like people are interested in doing. We know we have to do something and nobody is arguing that.”

Englerth commented, “The way it was done. It was all said and done and approved in moving forward prior to any knowledge of anybody, I think what we are doing now is backing up and saying ‘Okay. What are the options? ...I don’t have any certain agenda, but if you don’t think outside out the box, then you’re probably not going to come up with the best solution. There are dozens of things you could do. So what is it?Rent space, knock that old building down, remodel this, don’t matter. Be creative. I want you to challenge the Board with some ideas.”

Jack McClosky, Beatrice Ave., commented that he would like the board to be creative and think out of box. “You’ve talked about all the money we need to spend for storage and pay for records and stuff. I ran a computer department in a hospital for 32 years. I automated medical records a number of times. That’s being short-sighted of putting file cabinets and worrying about storage space, because if it’s not today, it’s gonna be down the road everything will be computerized. There may be some records that have to be kept in paper form, but that’s going to be minimal. Theoretically, these people could work from home, if it was computerized.”

M. Englerth commented, “...and what does your township hall look 5, 10, 20 years out?” Englerth quoted, Michael Brown, Barry County Administrator: “I don’t care what type of crystal ball you’ve got, the further out you look, the foggier it gets.” Englerth commented, “... Thornapple Township built their fire department at the wrong place at the wrong time. Now they’ve got a brand new, beautiful building, hundreds of thousands of dollars. And they say ‘It’s in the wrong spot. So if it takes us a little bit of time to get there, it’s okay. If we didn’t make any decision other than some carpet and some paint in three years, it wouldn’t be the end of the world. This isn’t a 911 call. Nobody is drowning.”

VandenBerg commented, “...That’s one of the main reasons why I disagree with the three... I felt the project was being...like I was being just shoved actually outside. OK. I totally disagree that we had to move forward 30 days from that meeting. That specific meeting... I thought that was wrong as wrong could be...Believe me, I’m going to take care of the will of the people. Whatever the rest of the people want to do, I don’t care. Like you’re going to know how I feel. I actually want to tell you one of the reasons that most of you are here tonight (today) is because you have the same feeling that I have. And I am way, way out of the box. And I do push the envelope.”

Dee Ryman, of Pine Meadows Dr. commented, “ ...We have on our street, a lady that has works at Steelcase for 40 years. She now is retiring in July... Where she works, she does not, she’s high up. She’s not. She’s really high up. She does not have glass sliding doors. She has a cubicle now she works in. And she said, ‘You can see everybody working and they all talk, but they don’t have there fricken private office.’ These people here do not need a private office. Period. That’s all.”

Englerth commented that if anyone wanted to be connected in some other way (i.e.: email), “We’ll get some paper and do that. I think that this is a process if we bring the community together, we have three or four of these. Whether you like it or not, you will happily accept that the process has been fair when we do move forward. I’m one of five board members, but I will ask that until we go down the steps and look at our different options which I wish we would have done to begin with, but anyway, thank you very much, I’m willing to go home if you people think we’ve done our job...”

**After adjournment, Supervisor Englerth asked the recording secretary to include the following two (2) letters in the minutes:*

January 8, 2020
11227 Oakleigh
Middleville, MI 49333
269-953-02800

Mark Englerth, Supervisor
Yankee Springs Township
284 N. Briggs Road
Middleville, MI 49333

Dear Mark;

We have received notice that there is a meeting this Saturday to discuss the renovation of the Township Hall. We read about the widespread public objection to this project in a meeting last fall. We would like to add our concerns to this objection. We own 2 lakefront properties in Yankee Springs Township. We are requesting that you deliver this letter to the Board as decisions regarding this project are considered, and if you are willing, read it aloud at the upcoming meeting.

Our opinion is that this expensive renovation plan is not in the best interest of the Yankee Springs Township property owners. Property tax assessments continue to rise in our case (\$1800 and \$2300/year) which translates into increased taxes. A project as expensive as this is concerning.

We are requesting that this matter be brought before the property owners in a referendum vote prior to this project being started. This is a lot of money and the extent of dissatisfaction with the Board's decision is notable. As Board members, it is the Board's fiduciary responsibility to reflect upon and consider the property owners input and concerns when making decisions. It should be noted that the Board is there to represent all property owners, not themselves or friends only.

In summary, we are asking that the Township Board call for a referendum vote on this matter before proceeding further. Only then will the property owners have meaningful input into this decision.

Respectfully;


Norman E Anderson


Beverly J Anderson

January 9, 2020

Mark,

We would like to express our strong objection to the funding of the township hall renovation. We feel this needs much more public discussion and should be brought to a public referendum vote.

Thank you,

Jerry and Beth Ryan
11251 Oakleigh Dr
Middleville MI 49333

**FINAL
MINUTES**
Page 18 of 18
YS BOT – Spec, Public
Hearing Mtg. Twp.
Hall & Office Renov.
1/11/2020

Full audio recording of this meeting has been downloaded to the township office computer system on 1/11/2020 immediately following meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Englerth with support from Knowles to adjourn at 12:41 p.m. Approved by all.
Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted:
Deb Mousseau

Date: Approved by Board of Trustees Feb. 13, 2020

Approved : _____
Janice C. Lippert, Township Clerk

ADJOURNMENT