

**YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Work Session #1

Thursday, January 30, 2018
6:00 p.m.

**Yankee Springs Township Hall
284 N. Briggs Rd., Middleville, Michigan 49333**

FINAL MINUTES
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1.11.18
Draft Minutes
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MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:05 PM by Supervisor Mark Englerth.

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

**PLEDGE
ROLL CALL**

Roll Call: Jansma, J. Lippert, Englerth, M. Boysen, VandenBerg.

Staff Present: F. Fiala

Visitors: L. Knowles (Former Zoning Administrator)

Board discussed limiting the meeting to no longer than 2 hours, possibly 1 hour.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Discussion: *A list of members of Boards and Committees was distributed Regarding Township Appointments.*

Planning Commission positions: M. Englerth commented on his conversation with G. Purcell regarding postponing appointments for expiring terms. Due to current issues that were occurring into the new year, drama, and a new board member, Englerth asked to move the appointments back.

Code Enforcement Officer Position: M. Englerth commented on the benefits of having a local enforcement person. Further discussion occurred later in meeting.

Board of Review- L. Knowles commented that the Board of Review has stellar realtors on it. J. Lippert asked that Dan Scheuerman, the Township Assessor, be added to the Board of Review.

Parks & Recreation Committee: A. Jansma commented on the Parks & Rec Plan 2018-2023 (important to applying for grants). An ad needs to be placed in the paper for public notification.

- **Motion by J. Lippert with support from S. VandenBerg to place an ad for Public Notification of the Park & Recreation 5 Year Plan in the Penasee Globe and Sun & News for publication. All Ayes. MOTION CARRIED.**

**MOTION FOR AD for
Public Notification of
Park & Recreation 5
Year Plan**

Fire Committee: Discussion on communication with the Fire station and the Board.

Follow Up:

Discussion occurred on following up on items after a meeting takes place. J. Lippert commented on having a work session on just going over the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan). A. Jansma commented on several things that weren't followed up on after meetings and between meetings.

It was also noted that there are terms on some committees such as the Water Advisory Committees.

Regarding local enforcement – Englerth noted the hourly rates involved comparing contracted work vs. a township employee (for code enforcement). Discussion occurred regarding applicants. L. Knowles noted the importance of having local zoning. L. Knowles spoke highly of Michael Maring’s (former YS Twp. Code Enforcement Officer) ability of code enforcement. It was noted: *An ad will be worked on to go in the papers for Code Enforcement applicants.*

Thoughts of Board Members:

M. Boysen commented he wants to leave the community better than when he came here-upfront and honestly, behind the scenes. Boysen commented he has “no agenda whatsoever”. Boysen sees a need for sidewalks/pathways noting that he lives on Payne Lake Road where he’s seen people walking, running and biking. Boysen commented on a 7 to 8 mile stretch of sidewalk that he sees commuting to Holland every day. Boysen feels the board has to do their due diligence. Boysen also commented on grant money being perfect for this type of project. Boysen feels the community has strong feelings towards sidewalks. He is concerned about the board taking on too many projects and failing at all of them. Boysen noted that he’d rather pick one or two things. M. Boysen commented on improvements to the township hall, noting that the hall hasn’t changed much since he attended a wedding reception in the township hall 40 years ago. Boysen also mentioned the Veteran’s Memorial being a bit of a disappointment. Regarding working on projects, as a board, “If we do that, as a team, wow, we’re going to win. I think with our community, we will leave it, better than we found it,” added Boysen.

S. VandenBerg commented that he feels the board needs to start being nicer to each other and treating each other with respect. VandenBerg commented on the rough time he’s had the entire time he’s been on the board. VandenBerg commented that people from the community have come to him about it. VandenBerg commented that he hears comments such “VandenBerg don’t give up, we voted for you.” “Obviously, I’m not going to give up,” noted VandenBerg. He also commented that the community wants growth. “They want new stores; they want new restaurants. We’ve spent a lot of years...let’s just say, being in a township that is a little hard to deal with when it came to anything new.... I think we could be a little user-friendly, because our community at this point in time is demanding this...I think we can do a lot better, and it’s going to start with us...I believe the community, when they see us respect each other, they’re going to start respecting us. I think they will fall in with a movement forward,” added VandenBerg. VandenBerg also mentioned that the community is tired of the backbiting that’s been going on. VandenBerg mentioned the Veterans Memorial as being sad, because the community is not behind it. He noted that Middleville worked on their Veterans Memorial for about ten years, “so it might just take a little more time” (for Yankee Springs). VandenBerg is not sure that the office/hall should be remodeled, noting that he would have a hard time putting \$200,000, and possibly more, towards the current township hall. He feels that maybe a new township hall should be considered. VandenBerg thinks our fire department is doing fantastic. “The Miller’s (Fire Station Chief and Deputy/Assistant Chief) have a good handle of what’s going on...But the bottom line is, we could all do better,” added VandenBerg.

A. Jansma commented on a previous elected official telling her to “just stay in that office. Don’t even worry about what’s going on outside of the office.” A. Jansma noted that the official “was probably right because she’s seen some real stuff happen that I just can’t believe happens. I don’t know that anybody can be the boss around here. It seems to be our problem. If someone brings up an idea, it’s not good. If some other people bring up an idea, it’s either going to be ‘my way’ or the highway... When you come in here everyday and look what we’re working in and see what were working with, it’s unbelievable.” Jansma mentioned someone from the township came in and said, ‘I’m ashamed of this place’. “He lives in our township and knows what’s going on...It’s ridiculous... when you walk on a piece of carpet and trip on it. And having people come in here, and you keep saying ‘business plan’, if this is a business, it sure as heck doesn’t look like it. I know that you can do your job in your truck, and you can do your job at home, whatever, but we have to come in here everyday. And people expect us to be here and have a smile on our face. And respect, I agree, with you, Shane, everybody should respect each other. I would like to be respected for what I know, you for what you know, Larry for what he knows, Frank’s got history you can’t believe... We just need to keep going frontwards instead of backwards all the time...I get so tired of hearing so much criticism... and we don’t really have a lot of money. We don’t even levy a full mill and a half. We processed over \$9.5 million dollars and we kept about \$400,000... But there’s no reason that we have to work in the kind of situation we work in. In 2012, the board voted to remodel this office, and they didn’t do it... They voted, and two months later, it didn’t get done. Now it’s five years later.”

J. Lippert agrees with the lowering of speed limit on M-179 and commented that it has reached a roadblock (regarding the speed limit). Lippert clarified “sidewalk” would be called “pathway/trails”. J. Lippert commented “I want our township to enforce our zoning ordinances. If you don’t enforce your zoning ordinance, why do we have a zoning ordinance. J. Lippert also would like to expand the offices the way it was proposed in 2010-2011, noting the working conditions of the Assessor, and his need for my more storage and area for file cabinets. J. Lippert stated, “This township was founded on our zoning ordinances... to be “hands on” with our township.” Boysen asked J. Lippert, “At the end of your period here, Yankee Springs Township, what you want to be known for is you enforce zoning? I’m just trying to understand.” J. Lippert commented, “I would like it to be a better place than when we moved here. It’s not happening.” J. Lippert feels the fire department was a big improvement for the township going with the Wayland contract. J. Lippert added, “We conduct honest elections here in the township... We are thorough in what we do when we conduct elections... Gossip and rumors destroy a township, and I was noted as saying that in the minutes at one of our meetings. What transpires here at a township board meeting, three weeks after that board meets, gossip in gas stations, in the restaurant, everything is turned around.” Boysen commented that there’s drama everywhere you go. Boysen felt S. VandenBerg was spot on with treating everyone as respectfully as possible. Boysen commented on going forward with something positive, such as pathways.

Boysen invited **L. Knowles, Former Zoning Administrator**, to comment. L. Knowles commented that he thinks the township is a lake community with a lot of issues regarding the lakes. He would love it if the township conducted a professional survey, to prioritize what we want to see happening here (in the township) because his vision of the lakes being overcrowded might not be everybody’s vision. L. Knowles commented that he meant no disrespect to the previous survey in which he and others from the township were involved in.

L. Knowles noted that the township needs to look at technology and embrace some things out there, whether it's conference calling, and being in business, "pulling your talent from where you have to", in a professional manner. File storage for items such as taxes, could be updated tech-wise according to Knowles. "The next person taking over will have their hands full with paper files. It's not that way any more," added L. Knowles.

F. Fiala, of the Planning Commission, and Chairmen of the Barry County Road Commission, commented that zoning started in 1972 in Yankee Springs. And agrees with Jan regarding the enforcement of ordinances. Fiala commented on a couple key things. He views everything we can do as a township and in zoning, as kind of a continuum. Fiala described zoning in which a hog farm could be next to a subdivision next to a landfill, (looser zoning and market driven) and compared it to some place kind of like East Grand Rapids where you may need to get the color of paint approved for painting your shutters. Fiala would like to try to have YS Zoning fall somewhere in the middle of that (continuum). Fiala felt the biggest challenge in zoning is, because it is complaint driven, you need to be sure when writing the ordinance that it's enforceable and you're going to enforce it. Fiala commented, "We need to enforce what we have...It's up to those on the board and Planning Commission, to ask what do we want the ordinance to do? How market-driven, how wide open do we want it to be?" Fiala also mentioned looking at it "as a journey not a destination", in terms of serving in the township, no matter how long or how many terms an individual be involved. Fiala also referred to having a strategic plan, and identifying some goals, and prioritizing the things the township wants to do, and bringing it down to a task level, just picking 3 or 4. Fiala also commented on the importance of having a champion or driver from the township board to work on or handle a project. Fiala added that he would like to see two more trustees, and have trustees grab onto a project to be a champion for that project and stay focused. Fiala also commented on the Road Commission office having a hall entry with security features and a nice office for the supervisor or director of the Road Commission with a conference table that everybody could use with a computer and a phone, where you can do things and conduct business because that lead person isn't there all the time. Fiala noted that it's a "showcase" when you walk in the door and when you walk in the door at YS Township, it's different from that.

Mark Englerth commented that #1 is the board has to spend more time "as a board". Englerth commented that trails is "a lot bigger project than we realized. People have dreamt this, worked it, sweated it and lost in the past. It's a big pig." Englerth mentioned "We have a fire department that will apologize to no one in Barry County." Englerth commented that zoning may not be what we had 4 years ago, and maybe a zoning partnership with Orangeville should be considered. "We have the ability to do great things," added Englerth. "We might not agree, but we get to set the stage," commented Englerth. Englerth mentioned, "Friends of the Robbins Cemetery, or Friends of Whatever, if you don't agree with it, fine, but don't disallow the people that would be volunteers ...The more steps you take and we could do 20 steps and have a level of trust, then when it goes to bad, we can get past it. But when we've got 5 steps, and everybody distrusts everybody, it's a hard hurdle to get over, so it's our job to be leaders, and not just the Supervisor, everybody here. We've been too busy bitchin' and moaning about the things that didn't work, and that is productive discussion and then you move forward, and past it and move on..." commented Englerth. Unfortunately, we just need to learn this path and I think we've took great steps toward that tonight to do that and if you're willing to put in another meeting a month and work through this, I'm

game....”(Board members agreed to meet).
“We have control of what the newspaper articles say. We can be a team builder and a community builder.... I’ve seen inmates that were so proud of what they did even when they were in jail that they brought their children and their wives, on Saturday, to share the fire station. It wasn’t about the fire station, it was about the opportunity to change their lives. ... So who do we really want to be? We can get in all the fist fights we want...But do you want to spend your energy being positive...?” commented Englerth.

S. Vandenberg commented that months ago, at the beginning of his trusteeship, Supervisor Mark Englerth was stripped of his seat on the Gun Lake Sewer and Water Board by a vote of 3 to 2. Vandenberg commented that he thought it was a terrible injustice of what was done.

Motion to reinstate Supervisor Englerth as YS Representative on the GLASWA Board.

- ***Motion by Vandenberg to reinstate Supervisor Englerth as YS Representative to the GLASWA board starting immediately. (See following discussion).***

Boysen asked if anyone wanted discussion. Boysen, being new to the board, sought comments from the board members and two visitors for information and background regarding the situation of M. Englerth being taken off the GLASWA board. Lengthy discussion occurred.

Agenda Item for next Board Work Session.

S. Vandenberg’s motion was not supported, so there was no need to rescind the motion. Englerth requested that S. Vandenberg not put it on the agenda for Board Action at the Feb. 8th Regular Board Meeting, but would prefer the motion/situation be dealt with at the next board work session. Date of next board work session is yet to be determined.

In summary, M. Englerth felt that the board accomplished a lot of good things at tonight’s meeting, and commented that 80% of this meeting was at least positive.

Previously, for tonight’s meeting, A. Jansma, Treasurer provided the Board with information on: YS 5-Year CIP (2017-23), Special Assessment Balances, Zoning Administration Contract, Casino Revenue Update, and Technical Support Cost Analysis.

A. Jansma requested the board to look at the Ocean Omega contract – noting a \$23 per hour savings – buying in blocks- for tech support.

Motion to approve purchase of 20 service block time at \$99 per hr. from Ocean Omega.

- ***Motion by Jansma with support from Boysen to approve 20 hours of service block time at \$99 per hour (at a \$23 savings per hour) for a one year period with Ocean Omega Systems. Roll Call: Lippert: Yes, Englerth: Yes, Vandenberg: Yes, Boysen: Yes, Jansma: Yes. ALL YES (5). MOTION CARRIED.***

ADJOURNMENT:

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Boysen with support from Vandenberg to adjourn at 8:05 p.m. Approved by all. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted: Date: _____

Deb Mousseau
Recording Secretary 1.30.18

Approved : Feb. 8, 2018

Janice C. Lippert, Township Clerk