

**Ross Township
12086 M-89
Richland, MI 49083
269-731-4888**

**Regular Board Meeting
June 15, 2021
6:00 P.M.**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Supervisor Hutchings.

ROLL CALL

Present: Christina Hutchings Michael Bekes Cindy Genung
 Lynn Harmon Diana Langshaw Mike Sulka

Absent: None

Also Present: Rob Thall – Township Attorney, Tim Snow, Deputy Clerk, approximately 20 interested residents.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by a moment of silence in memory of Clerk Linda Walters, who passed away suddenly June 9, 2021.

APPROVAL OF AMENDED AGENDA

Supervisor Hutchings recommended adding the Master Plan under Old Business and Park Funding under New Business.

Bekes moved, seconded by Harmon to approve the Agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Bekes moved, seconded by Langshaw to approve the consent agenda, which contained the following items:

- A. Board Minutes of May 18, 2021
- B. Treasurer's May Report
- C. Clerk's April and May Report (remains pending)
- D. Sheriff's Department May Report
- E. Fire Department May Report
- F. AGS MTD 2021 Report + Invoice

PARK COMMITTEE

Hutchings first commented that she has requested a monthly financial report on the Park. Harmon reviewed the report with the Board, which will be attached to the minutes. She noted that there was a \$1,000 gift from Rotary to the Park, and some Rotary members also volunteered to clean up the Park

before opening. Boy Scouts have cleaned the beach and trails. Gail Hurn is the Park Director. A fundraiser was held by Ned's, with 15% of the revenue being given to the park. There are issues regarding alcohol use and smoking at the park, and the Township Deputy assists as he is able. Hutchings noted that some people have been asked to leave the park and that she was hit with some flying gravel after asking someone to leave the park. Treasurer Genung reported that so far about \$10,000 has been received at the park from passes, and that about \$2500 has been taken in at the Township Office. More park stickers have been ordered.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Trustee Bekes said that the Master Plan is available. Please turn in the old Master Plan when picking up the proposed new one.

SUPERVISOR UPDATE

Hutchings said that she had shared information regarding website options with the Board. Also, she is at the park frequently helping when she can, noting that there are parking and traffic issues. She will work with law enforcement to find solutions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Don Lavender, 10670 North 40th St., spoke regarding traffic speeds on North 40th St., and that more enforcement is needed. He also asked if 40th Street is a local or County road, and voiced concerns with various large farm vehicles that damage the road.
2. Jean Hanson, 12432 East D Ave., said traffic in the bay area is up – both boats and cars. As there are no public restrooms in the immediate area, she has observed 3 individuals relieving themselves in her yard. There are free concerts from 7 – 9 pm each Thursday, and that the noise ordinance should be looked at.
3. Alex Harris, 868 LaBelle Terrace spoke about his background and indicated that he would be interested in being considered for Township Clerk.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Short Term Rental Ordinance is still pending
- B. No Parking Ordinance in south bay is still pending
- C. Master Plan – Bekes noted that every section of the Master Plan was reviewed by the Planning Commission. There must be a 63-day review period. Attorney Thall noted that the proposed new Master Plan must be sent to neighboring communities for and concerns. Public comments will go through the Planning Commission. Harmon asked that the Township Board discussion happen at the August meeting. Any questions from Board Members can go through Bekes, who will share them with the Planning Commission. Bekes moved, seconded by Genung to authorize the distribution of the Master Plan and to begin the 63-day review period. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION REGARDING CONDITIONAL REZONING – ALLENDALE PARK, LLC AT 156/160 EAST GULL LAKE DRIVE.

Jack Gesmundo from AVB and Attorney Patrick Lennon were present to discuss the proposed rezoning. Currently the property has two rental homes and 14 slips in the bay. There are 4 parcels in total and the Township previously asked the owner to rezone the area to C-1 Bay.

After discussion, Bekes moved, seconded by Langshaw to approve Ordinance 223, which conditionally rezones the subject property from the R-2 to the C-1 District as proposed in the March 11, 2021 Offer of Condition and related Site Plan/Architecture Rendering. The recommendation to approve is based upon the review findings of Section 25.3 – Conditional Rezoning that were fully covered at the April 26th PC meeting. This presentation is unchanged to what was proposed at the April 26th Planning Commission Meeting.

On a roll call vote, the following voted “Aye”: Bekes, Genung, Harmon, Hutchings, Langshaw, Sulka

The following voted “Nay”: None

Ordinance was declared adopted.

LABELLE TERRACE ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT – PUBLIC HEARING

Attorney Thall indicated that the Board will hold a public hearing and could grant tentative approval. The spread of the assessments would be determined at a subsequent meeting.

Harmon moved, seconded by Bekes to move into a public hearing on the LaBelle Terrace Road Improvement Project. Motion carried unanimously.

Chris Leroy, 8 LaBelle Terrace, said that not all properties were included in the proposed district.

Martin Ranly, 900 LaBelle Terrace indicated that he circulated the petitions and other information to the property owners and that the district includes properties from 4 LaBelle Terrace to S. Gull Lake Drive, and that 13 of the 18 shares have agreed to the district, noting that many can pay their assessments up front.

Chris Leroy said that property owner Bullard should be included in the district, and that the assessment should be determined by square footage, not road frontage.

Martin Ranly said that the Amended LaBelle Plat was not included in the district.

Attorney Thall said that the Township cannot spend any money on private roads and explained the benefit to property owners in the district.

Mr. Ranly added that the district was determined by road frontage, but that the assessment would be determined by equal shares, which is mentioned in the plat document.

Jane Kuckel, 16 LaBelle Terrace, said that shares for the assessment is appropriate, as everyone received equal benefit.

The Board requested an updated map from the vendor Mr. Ranly was working with to see the area of proposed paving, to ensure that all properties would be assessed appropriately.

The Supervisor closed the public hearing at 7:55 p.m.

Attorney Thall noted that any appeals regarding assessments would go to the Michigan Tax Tribunal, adding that wherever the paving goes, the property owners must pay an assessment. He indicated that additional properties can be added to the district.

After additional discussion Sulka moved, seconded by Langshaw to postpone discussion until a more detailed map is provided. Motion carried with Bekes voting "Nay".

Harmon indicated that if a special meeting needed to be held, she would be willing to have one.

ROSS TOWNSHIP WEBSITE SEMIFINAL SELECTION

After brief discussion, Bekes moved, seconded by Genung that Christina Hutchings have full authority to determine the vendor and sign the associated contract with the chosen vendor for our website development needs. In addition, this motion also includes the ability for the Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer to determine what features our website will have. Specifically, if the Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer all agree on a function for the website, then it could be pursued. If there is disagreement, of it board members request a functionality that is not acceptable to all three, only those opportunities would be brought back to the board for review and decision. In addition, Trustee Sulka will do a security review of any vendor selected.

Motion carried unanimously.

UPDATE ON "THE BLUFFS AT GULL LAKE"

The Supervisor said that there have been rumors regarding groundbreaking on this project, but that no permits have been pulled as yet. If the project is abandoned, the property must be returned to its original nature.

Attorney Thall indicated that there could be a development agreement and possibly a bond filed for the public improvements. He said that the Planning Commission should look at that.

Bekes indicated that he would take this issue to the Planning Commission. Attorney Thall said that there are several ways for approvals of site condominiums and he would look at the ordinance to see what options the Township may have.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE WITH CLERK ROLE

Supervisor Hutchings said that retired County Clerk Tim Snow has been asked to serve as Deputy Clerk and that retired Township Clerk Norm Kellogg has been asked to serve as Acting Clerk. The job posting has been placed on the website and at the Township Hall.

After discussion, it was determined that applications would be accepted through Friday, July 9 and that interviews would take place the week of July 12.

Harmon moved, seconded by Bekes to approve the appointments of temporary Deputy Clerk and Acting Clerk, and to approve the posting and timeline for the Clerk's position. Motion carried unanimously.

PARK FUNDING

Bekes indicated that the Board should be looking at a millage proposal for Park operations. Attorney Thall said that the Township could ask to recapture the rollback. The Deputy Clerk will double check the deadlines for upcoming elections.

PARK SIGNAGE

Langshaw said that she contacted some companies for signs at the Park reflecting those who gave grants. Langshaw then moved, seconded by Bekes to approve funds not to exceed \$2,000 to purchase the required sponsor/donor sign which was the final requirement per grant/donors of products at Ross Township Park in 2020. The final approval of the sign purchase will be done before July 1, 2021, with layout, wording, color and installation to be approved by Supervisor Hutchings and Trustees Harmon and Langshaw. Motion carried unanimously.

MEMBERS TIME

Bekes – None

Langshaw – None

Genung - \$10,000 has been received at the Park gate thus far and 149 annual passes have been sold. More help is needed for the Park Director.

Hutchings – Members of the Park Commission are helping at the Park. The Township's Deputy has been called several times, but more coverage is needed.

Harmon – Will not be at the July 20 meeting; Langshaw indicated that she would be at the meeting either.

After brief discussion, Harmon moved, seconded by Bekes to move the July meeting from the 20th to the 13th. Motion carried unanimously.

Sulka – None

There being no further business, Genung moved, seconded by Bekes to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Timothy A. Snow
Deputy Clerk