

APPROVED 8-5-2014

Regular Meeting of the Casco Township Planning Commission

July 7, 2014 - 7:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bruce Barker, Daniel Fleming, David Campbell, Lewis Adamson, Paul Macyauski and Judy Graff

ABSENT: Dian Liepe was excused

STAFF PRESENT: Susan West, Recording Secretary

1. **Call to Order and review of agenda** - Meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm. There were no changes to the Agenda.
2. **Approval of minutes of 6/4/14 regular meeting** - Motion by Campbell, supported by Adamson, to approve the Minutes of the June 4, 2014 Regular Meeting as written. All in favor, MSC.
3. **Report from the Township Board Representative** – Graff reported on the June 16, 2014 Meeting as follows:
 - a. With regard to Parks and Recreation:
 - i. The Casco Preserve is in the final stages with a ribbon cutting ceremony scheduled for August 12, 2014. The County will do a testing of the water. Fleming stated that between the time of performing the test and receiving the results, the levels could change.
 - ii. Jessup stated that the County Parks Committee will make a recommendation to the County Board of Commissioners that the County take over ownership of the Blue Star Trail.
 - iii. A statement made by Jeanne Van Zoeren was misquoted in the Herald Palladium indicating that Casco Township was reluctant to take ownership of the trail. But actually, after due diligence, Casco Township decided that because funds were not available and because it is not a priority, the Township decided not to take ownership.
 - iv. The County Commissioners will set-up a special meeting to address many unanswered questions.
 - v. Macyauski asked what other Townships are doing regarding ownership. Graff stated that if a government agency does not take ownership, then there will be no trail. Fleming stated that Blue Star Trail could raise more money themselves.
 - vi. Graff stated that the issue of Easements could be of concern with respect to the trails, ie: a trail may have to go around trees, etc. and what effects that would have. Graff has received complaints from people in the North Shore Drain area where the engineer has asked for 50' Easements where the drains go through private property. Fleming stated that they ask for 50' to allow the equipment

access. Graff stated that Overhiser indicated to her that they always ask for more than they actually need. Campbell stated that a temporary easement, such as a 30 day easement during construction, may be a possibility.

- b. The Township Hall will be re-carpeted and repainted after the August election.
- c. The budget for the new fiscal year reflects a surplus of \$133,000.00. All approved to use this surplus to pay off the Stefan property.
- d. At the Annual Meeting, Kathy Stanton gave a demo of the new website. Graff stated that Stanton did a very nice job.
- e. The Zoning Board of Appeals has an opening on their Board.
- f. Consumers is putting in new electric meters
- g. Regarding The South Haven Hospital:
 - i. They are in the slow process of changing the name from Shoreline to South Haven Health Systems.
 - ii. The Golf Outing raised \$26,000.00.
 - iii. The South Haven Foundation gave 44 scholarships to the Wellness Center
- h. Chairman Barker asked if the Board authorized the buying of tax properties. Graff answered yes.

4. Report from the ZBA Representative – Macyauski reported that last month a variance was granted to Lila Lee Niffenegger to reconfigure the access road to the two back lots. The amount of road frontage did not change.

5. Report from Water/Sewer Representative - Adamson reported as follows:

- a. The fiscal year ended with 25 full connections
- b. Letters were sent out to those not yet hooked-up (there are still 13 in Casco Township). They are asking the Attorney to come up with a plan to bring this issue to an end.
- c. There is a constant issue with the State regarding the size of new pipes. The State does not allow for a bigger pipe to be used than what is currently needed.
- d. Campbell asked if a long term budget has ever been made. Adamson answered no, but that he is of the opinion that they should fund depreciation. Campbell asked if real numbers should be obtained so that a budget can be presented to the public. Adamson stated that there are too many variables to be able to come up with real numbers at this time.
- e. Macyauski asked if sewer water has ever been dumped into the Black River. Adamson stated that there has been an overflow at times, but that sewer water has never been dumped.
- f. Chairman Barker asked if there are grants available to help fund repairs, maintenance, etc. Adamson answered that grants are applied for often.

6. Resolutions requiring Planning Commission action: None

7. New Business-Report from Bluewater-Citizens Planner Conference – Chairman Barker stated that he attended the Bluewater Conference in East Lansing. The moderator was Julie Pioch who works out of Paw Paw, MI, but lives in Casco Township. Pioch would be willing to talk to the Planning Commission at a future time, if requested. Chairman Barker stated that professors from both Michigan State and Michigan put together a combined program and that the conference focused on the way we should look at our local resources and trails. There are many types of trails, ie: snowmobiling, biking, equestrian, walking, etc. Also, there is a Professor from Michigan State that performs subground water studies which would indicate what underground water we have and where it goes. Chairman Barker stated that our natural resources, such as the Lake, trails, parks, etc., should be looked at with a new approach; considering economic potential, costs, and what we want for our Township.

Chairman Barker stated that the upcoming Michigan Township Association Workshop dates are July 22nd, July 29th and July 31st.

8. Old Business: – Chairman Barker stated that Alfred Ellingsen has not yet provided new Zoning Book pages, but that the Township Board has approved the new Zoning Book and that same is ready for use.

9. Public Comment - none

Comments from the Commissioners:

Graff asked if there are any upcoming projects. Chairman Barker stated that there are not to his knowledge.

Campbell asked if we will be working on the Zoning District Maps soon. Chairman Barker answered that we will not be working on them yet, but when we do, it will probably be handled at a regular, monthly meeting.

Fleming asked how the Commissioners are paid when two meetings are held back to back on the same day. Chairman Barker answered that the Commissioners are paid for each meeting.

Macyauski stated that he talked to a couple of out of town motorcyclists in the Park and that they indicated that it was a lovely park with a nice, sandy beach. They were also impressed with the stairs to the beach.

Motion to adjourn by Graff, 2nd by Fleming. All in favor, MSC. Meeting adjourned at 8:19 pm.

Minutes prepared by Susan West, Recording Secretary

Next Meeting: Regular Meeting on August 4, 2014 at 7:00 pm