

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ELECTORS

Minutes of Burt Township
March 23, 2006 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order: Lee Durrwachter called the Annual Meeting to Order at 7:00 p.m.

Electors: 33

Minutes of the Last Annual Meeting: Motion by Evelyn Morrison and seconded by Lois Leavenworth to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Electors held on March 28, 2005, as presented. 29 – aye; 0 – nay

Correspondence: Letter from Karen Brzys concerning her wish to see a reduction in township paid hospitalization coverage; Letter from Virginia Minor concerning her desire to have secret ballots for votes at the annual meeting. Durrwachter explained that secret ballots can not be used in a public meeting per the Michigan Open Meetings Act, Public Act 267 of 1976.

Supervisors Report: Durrwachter explained that costs to the Township continue to rise, however, local millages have not increased. Durrwachter said that the Headlee Act of 1978 decreases millages. The Headlee Act of 1978 (along with Proposal A) limit the amount of tax revenue that can be raised by a municipality. Durrwachter stated that even though revenue is limited and expenses are increasing, the Township has tried very hard to keep the same level of services to the community.

Durrwachter explained that street lights are an example of this - some had to be turned off this year. The Township only has \$10,000 allocated for this service. As the price of each street light increases, the Township needs to look at the total amount that can be paid for?

Street Lighting:

Durrwachter asked the electors for their opinions.

Are there any lights that you would like removed?

Evelyn Morrison said that the light on Agate Beach could be removed.

Durrwachter asked for all in favor of turning out the light on Agate Beach?

31 – aye; 0 – nay; 2 – no answer

Evelyn Morrison also said that a light needs to be added behind Lake Superior Brewery because children hang out by the back door and drink at night? Fire code requires that entrances and exits from commercial buildings be lighted. Durrwachter will check to see if the business owners are providing lighting.

Another elector suggested a light on the corner at Whaley's house because it is very dark? The elector wondered if the light on the other side of the street could be moved over to Whaley's corner. Durrwachter said that Whaley's had requested that it be removed – the electors said that it isn't their choice to make.

Mike A. Beek, Alger County Road Commission, said that the State of Michigan should be paying for lights on M-77 because it is a state highway.

Edna Jean Johnson would like the street light behind Vern Kirken's house on Bell Street across from Senior Apts. removed. It can't be seen – brush is grown up all around it. No objections to any of the suggestions.

Dust Control:

Durrwachter explained that under the heading of Road Repairs, the Township needs to pay for dust control. Dust Control is very expensive (approximately \$7000 per year) and doesn't leave much money for road improvements. Durrwachter asked if there are any streets that we can reduce or discontinue dust control?

No suggestions were made.

Sidewalks:

Durrwachter asked what sidewalks need to be replaced in the Township?

Don Soldenski said that when Mike Beek, Water Mgr, moved a fire hydrant in front of his house on Grand Marais Ave. last year, the sidewalk was torn up. Don would like it fixed. Mike said that he is waiting for better weather to do it.

Virginia Minor suggested that the sidewalk on the south side of H-58 going toward Sable Falls by Bryer's house be replaced.

Gee Petruske stated that the sidewalk in front of his house on the Randolph Street side needs replacing or repairing also.

Some other locations stated as needing repairs were:

In front of JC Ogden's Alger Ave. house, the sidewalk between the General Store and the Township Office Building along the south side of H-58, the sidewalk on the south side of Brazel street between Bennett's house (McMillan Street) and Carters (Alger Ave.); and a section of sidewalk that was taken out along Carpenter Creek needs to be put back.

Christmas Decorations:

Durrwachter asked Mike Beek, DPW Mgr., if he needs more money allocated to Christmas Decorations. Mike said that \$1000 is fine. This amount of money covers commercial grade replacement bulbs each year. JC Ogden and Mary Capogrossa suggested that families donate decorations. They asked for a list to know how much certain types of decorations cost to determine what a family could afford to do. They also stated that they would like to see decorations continue further out of the downtown area and down H-58 to the east.

Durrwachter asked if the electors wanted the Township to continue to provide Christmas decorations? 33 – aye; 0 - nay

New Truck:

Durrwachter explained that the Township got a good rate on the insurance for the new Township Truck by calling it a pickup truck instead of a dump truck. Savage asked if changing it's description in the policy could make it ineligible for coverage if a claim needed to be made. Durrwachter said that it would not.

Building Additions:

Durrwachter explained that the Township Board is looking at a new septic system for the office and medical buildings.

Clean Up Day:

Durrwachter explained that the cost of Clean Up Day was very high and suggested that the Township only hold one clean up day per year. He polled the electors for what time of year would be best:

Fall? 8 – aye; Summer? 13 – aye; Spring? 11 – aye; 1 elector did not vote.

Mike Beek, DPW, explained that scrap steel is very expensive to get rid of. The Township has to pay to have it collected.

One elector suggested that Deb Hoffenberger pick the date of the Clean Up. Sandee Sibbald said that anytime in the summer is fine with Deb. Deb recycles some of the items put out on clean up day as pieces of art.

Durrwachter asked the electors if the 7th and 8th of July would be a good date?

30 – aye; 1 – nay; 2 – did not answer.

This information will be presented to the Township Board for a decision.

Changes and Upgrades:

Durrwachter asked the electors what changes or upgrades to the township are needed?

Public Bathrooms: Sandee Sibbald said that public bathrooms need to be built in the downtown area. Sheri Shafer agreed. Durrwachter explained that the Township may be able to put bathrooms and showers at the marina this year due to approval of a DNR grant.

Walkways and Bike Paths: Evelyn Morrison said that the walkway down to Coastguard Point needs to be better defined so that people can see it. Mike Beek, DPW, said that he painted the roadway with special paint that has glass beads in it last year to make the walkway/bike path more visible. One of the electors said that educating tourists to use the walkway might help. Someone suggested designating signs. Virginia Minor said that the Township should add a walking/biking sidewalk that extends on the left hand side of Lake Ave. that goes on down to Agate Beach.

Stand for Donated Bell: Gee Petruske stated that he would like to see the bell stand erected this year to be placed to the north of the flag at the Marina. Durrwachter suggested that the Township might be able to use the income from the sale of the boat to construct the stand.

Snowmobiling on H-58: Don Soldenski asked if it is legal for snowmobiles to travel on H-58. Durrwachter said he would find out. Norm Geiger said that snowmobiles can travel on the unplowed shoulder of H-58 – all county roads are open to snowmobiles and ATVs. He also stated that snowmobiles and ATVs can not ride on M-77 at all because it is a state highway. Don Soldenski said that Ed Bowen was sworn in to be a law enforcer officer and to patrol snowmobiling in Grand Marais and he wants to see that done.

Durrwachter said he would check into it. Marva Overland said that the Burt Township Snowmobile Ordinance needs to be updated.

Mike A. Beek, Alger County Road Commission, said that snowmobilers have to be able to go back and forth to the accommodations. Lois Kinlaw lives on H-58 and says that since the trail route changed - it is so much nicer now than it was a few years ago when it was hard to get out of the driveway because of the snowmobile traffic.

Sandee Sibbald stated that she has complaint forms at the Township Office that can be filled out and sent to the Michigan Snowmobile Association (MSA).

Norm Geiger said that snowmobile complaints should also be called into 911. Marc Oglevie said not to call 911 for non-emergencies use the Munising number 387-4444.

Advertisements in Woodland Park:

Virginia Minor said that there is a big yellow commercial sign in the park. It advertises North Shore Lodge. Virginia said that it looks awful and should be removed. The Township did not authorize this sign. Durrwachter said that it would be removed.

Trees:

Mary Capogrossa suggested that on Arbor Day the school kids could plant trees in Woodland Park. Norm Geiger said that the Michigan Snowmobile Association will donate and plant trees along a snowmobile route. He suggested contacting Don Reed in Seney, MSA President, for more details.

Law enforcement:

Durrwachter stated that the county sheriff quoted \$6000 for additional sheriff patrols in Burt Township. He asked the electors if they would be interested in contracting with the Alger County Sheriff's Dept? and if so, how many times per week would you like them to show up?

The majority felt it should be at our disgression not theirs. During snowmobile season AC Sheriff's Dept gets a DNR grant to cover snowmobile patrolling - \$46,000. Norm Geiger said he has only seen them in town once during this snowmobile season. He doesn't count the times the DARE officer has come to visit with the school kids. According to Durrwachter, Luce County said we could contract with them and they would be there when we needed them. If the Alger County Sheriff's Dept. only comes 6 times per year that \$6000 means they get \$1000 per trip. Some felt that the majority of the time they give to Burt Township gets used up during the Music Festival. Norm Geiger said that the Chamber shouldn't have to pay extra to have them come to the Music Festival.

Sewer System:

Would you like to see a sewer system for all existing water users?

The projected cost to each household will be \$34 for sewer and \$34 for water – total projected monthly cost per household will be \$68. Businesses will be more and everyone will have to be metered for water use.

Aye – 7; Nay – 5; no answer - 21

Alternative forms of Energy:

Should the Township pursue wind power?

Aye – 33; Nay – 0

Public Comment:

Mike A. Beek, ACRC, said that the budget shows \$10,000 for road improvement. He asked if that used to be \$15,000. Durrwachter explained that money needs to be re-allocated as expenses grow and income doesn't. Durrwachter also said that the Headlee Act cuts income and other income is reduced as well – so the Township doesn't know the exact numbers for income. Numbers can be adjusted within the budget throughout the fiscal year because the budget is approved by cost center.

Sandee Sibbald asked if any extra was allocated for rising electric and gas prices. Durrwachter said that he is working with Bowman Gas and Alger Delta to try to keep costs manageable. Sandee Sibbald also stated that the Airport insurance is going up. Durrwachter explained that all insurance coverage is increasing partially because of Katrina.

Evelyn Morrison said that she submitted a written proposal to the Township board regarding a fitness center and she wanted to address it. Evelyn stated that a donation of \$10,000 has been made for exercise equipment. She is looking for location to create a fitness center in memory of Harold "Andy" Bailey. Evelyn said she is working with a trainer downstate to buy the correct equipment. She requested that a budget for this be set up to help pay for additional utility and maintenance. A fitness center membership fee will help defer some of the costs. The Township will need to look at liability. Durrwachter to contact insurance agent.

Jack Roberts stated that he would like Board to follow up on police service in Burt Township so that at least something is accomplished this year.

Marva Overland asked why the policy on the website states that the Board members get no benefits. How do you have health insurance when you advertise no benefits.....? Durrwachter explained that the Township Group Health Insurance policy was cancelled last year due to the rising cost of coverage. The Supervisor, Treasurer, Clerk and the two full time employees were able to pick up individual policies which they pay for themselves. The Township reimburses for premium payments. Lois Kinlaw asked why Mike Beek's insurance is so much cheaper? Durrwachter explained that Mike is younger and single. With an individual policy, you can select the type of coverage that you need. As Mike gets older or becomes married, he will not qualify for the inexpensive insurance.

James Seibert mentioned that at the 1996 level the township would get additional \$65,000 of CFR money and the school would get another \$100,000. Norm Geiger asked if the State of Michigan pays taxes. Jim Seibert answered that they do pay taxes on a few pieces – most of it they don't.... and the Township doesn't collect an admin fee from them. UP Timber pays \$1.10.

Salary breakdown explanation

Durrwachter explained that each elected official has duties besides the statutory duties of their office.

Salary Resolutions:

Supervisor:

Motion by Janna Baker and seconded by Janie Dowe to accept the salary of \$13,200 for the Township Supervisor. Aye – 26; Nay - 0

Clerk:

Question by Gee Petruske if this salary is for the current clerk or the new clerk.

Durrwachter answered that the salary would be for the new clerk.

Motion by Stan Powers and seconded by Sheri Bates to accept the salary of \$13,000 for the Township Clerk. Aye – 25; Nay - 1

Treasurer:

Motion by Sal Brooks and seconded by Lois Leavenworth to accept the salary of \$13,000 for the Township Treasurer. Aye – 23; Nay - 0

Trustee:

Motion by Gee Petruske and seconded by Sheri Shafer to accept the salary of \$2400 for the Township Trustees. Aye – 15; Nay – 7

Motion by Lois Leavenworth and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Time recorded: 9:22 p.m.