

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
WHITEWATER TOWNSHIP EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE
May 25, 2010
6:00 p.m.
Whitewater Township Hall
5777 Vinton Road
Williamsburg, MI 49690

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Boyd, Galligan, Kuncaitis, Blakeslee, Emerson, Miller, MacLean

Members Absent: Goss, Stewart

Others Attending: Recording Secretary Akers, Planning/Zoning Administrator Meyers, Supervisor Lake and 1 other.

1) Rural Affiliation

Boyd read letter from Supervisor Lake that described the need for another Emergency Services Committee meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to identify the specific grievances between Whitewater Township and Rural Fire and to identify how the committee feels about the size and location of a new emergency services facility.

Boyd invited Supervisor Lake to attend the meeting because he felt that Lake would understand the committee ideas better in person rather than a report.

Supervisor Lake gave a report of the happenings that have come to pass since the joint Emergency Services Committee and Township Board meeting. Lake stated that the intergovernmental agreement has been forwarded to the new attorney and he has reviewed the document, but he does not have a response from him. Lake described that he wanted the Emergency Services Committee to decide what are the grievances are to put them in a formal document to forward to the Township Board.

Kuncaitis asked what was driving this request.

Lake described that the Rural Fire Board reacted favorably to a request from Long Lake Township to cover a portion of the cost for a full time fire chief. Whitewater Township requested this last year and was denied by the Rural Fire Board. This brought complaints to a head and now there will be a special meeting on June 2nd to address some of these concerns. The attorney stated that every avenue you need to address grievances and remove ourselves from Rural Fire is address in the contract. Lake's concern is what Rural Fire can do for Whitewater Township.

Lake stated that each Township is starting to develop its own fire department due to Rural Fire not covering their responsibilities. The Rural Fire assessment for Whitewater Township is only 43% of the Township's Fire Budget. Several Townships have grievances with Rural Fire. There may be an opportunity for them to help us still if they meet their contract requirements. We do not have to leave them if they can still help us.

Kuncaitis stated that there is a need for us to bring a list to the table. What was the reaction of the list of grievances brought by Long Lake?

Lake stated that they reacted favorably to this list. He also stated that ambulance is the highest priority of Whitewater Township.

Kuncaitis stated that he spoke with Metro Fire and they responded that upon realizing how much money we are allocating to Fire they are willing to take a look at the Township for membership.

Lake stated that he has been approached by Acme Township to partner on ambulance.

Lake stated that the important thing for the committee to do is to define what Whitewater Township wants to do. Do we want Fire/EMS under one roof? A lot of places will help us put this together. There are people waiting ready to help if we decide what we want to do.

Kuncaitis stated that after the tour of the existing emergency services facility and it was the consensus of the committee that we will need a new facility.

Galligan stated it was consensus of the committee that we wanted both departments in the same building to save costs.

MacLain asked if the Emergency Services Committee should attend the Rural Fire Board meeting on June 2nd.

Lake stated that it would be fine.

The Emergency Services Committee listed their list of grievances with the Rural Fire Board. The grievances are as follows:

- No business plan for Rural Fire that describes where they want to be in the future.
- A lax in administrative oversight
- Training is subsidized by Whitewater Township
- Need for more reporting from Rural Fire s
- Public Relations: Rural has a bad image
- Vehicles not passing inspections
- The working relationship needs to be more transparent
- Unfair allocation of resources
- Their mismanagement has caused 8 other Townships to subsidize Fire
- Failure to adhere to the contract & agreements.

Motion by Miller, seconded by McLean, to recommend to the Township Board to use the site on the corner of Cram and Elk Lake Road for building of an Emergency Services Facility.

Motion carried.

Boyd asked Supervisor Lake if this response satisfied his memo.

Lake stated that it did.

MacLean stated that we would need to start the dispute resolution process immediately so we have the opportunity to leave Rural Fire if the problems are not resolved.

Kuncaitis stated we need to talk to the attorney and have him put together a formal document to start the dispute resolution.

Meyers stated that per her understanding from the attorney, if the Township wished to prepare an exit from Rural Fire, the schedule of events for departure would be as follows:

- 1) Present dispute resolution to Rural Fire at their June 2nd special meeting.
- 2) If it is not resolved Township Board (on June 8th) could initiate a special meeting of the Rural Fire Board and itself to address the issue and possibly activate withdraw clause.
- 3) If this is not completed by June 30th, the Township cannot withdraw from Rural earlier than January 1st, 2012.

Motion by Kuncaitis, seconded by Miller to recommend to the Township Board to begin the dispute resolution process by creating a list of grievances to be formatted into a presentation for Rural Fire by the Township Board.

Discussion:

Boyd stated that we should push the issue to be in front of the board

Kuncaitis stated that we need to get the paperwork in immediately because we are under a deadline.

Boyd stated that he did not believe that it is the opinion of the committee that we should necessarily leave, but that we should put in the grievance to let them know we are not happy.

Motion carried.

Supervisor Lake reported on his tour of the water and sewage facilities at the casino. Water will be running down old M-72 soon and we are getting ready to have a meeting to let the public know what is going on.

The Emergency Services Committee would like to remind the Township Board of a request made to evaluate the property at the Fire Station to inventory what Whitewater Township owns and what Rural Fire owns.

MacLean stated that she will attend the June 2nd Rural Fire Board meeting.

2) Set Next Meeting

It was decided that a future meeting may be scheduled in which case Chairman Boyd will call a meeting if it is deemed necessary.

3) Public Comment

None

Respectfully Submitted,

Ronald Akers
Recording Secretary