

APPROVED MINUTES  
GROSSE ILE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

October 26, 2009

Grosse Ile Township Hall ó Merle Solomon Boardroom 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
9601 Groh Road

Called to Order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Supervisor Loftus, Clerk O'Connor, Treasurer Van Os, Trustees Frucci, Johnson, Kantz  
and Ranka Absent: None

Pledge of Allegiance

**Presentations:** None

**Additions/Deletions to Agenda:**

Motion Van Os, second Johnson, to delete Action Item # 4, Snow Removal Equipment Sponsor Contract, from the agenda. Motion carried 7-0.

Motion Van Os, second Johnson, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried 7-0.

**CONSENT AGENDA 09-123:**

Motion Van Os, Second Johnson, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

1. Minutes of October 12, 2009 Regular Meeting
2. Check Register dated October 23, 2009

**ACTION ITEMS:**

1. **09-124** Motion Kantz, Second Van Os, to approve the Minutes of the September 28, 2009 Township Board of Trustees Meeting as presented. Motion carried 7-0.  
*Public Comment:*
  1. Gary Jones, Macomb Street, objected to limiting the publishing of statements made during Public Comment.
  2. Ron Janowski, Groh Road, commented about the recordings of board meetings.
2. **09-125** Motion O'Connor, Second Johnson, to accept with regret the resignation of Tammy Taylor from the Festival Commission effective September 16, 2009 and to appoint Sandra Chrabuszc to the Festival Commission to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Tammy Taylor with the term length October 26, 2009 to August 31, 2010. Motion carried 7-0.
3. **09-126** Motion O'Connor, Second Ranka, to authorize the attached second amendment to lease agreement between Verizon Wireless and the Township of Grosse Ile, and to authorize the Township Clerk to sign the document. Motion carried 7-0.
4. Deleted
5. **09-127** Motion Van Os, Second Frucci, to grant authority to the Township Manager to present a retirement incentive to union and non-union employees currently eligible as of October 26, 2009 to retire in the amount of \$500 per service year per employee. This offer will be directly presented to non-union employees and to union employees via the respective bargaining unit. Said offer shall be available to eligible employees no later than Monday, November 9, 2009 and said retirements shall occur on or before December 31, 2009. Motion carried 7-0.

**Board Comment:**

*Clerk O'Connor, Trustees Ranka and Johnson asked questions of Township Manager Reaume regarding potential layoffs and unemployment costs caused by any layoffs and whether this incentive program is a common approach taken by other local governments.  
Township Manager Reaume indicated that this is not a "novel approach" and that the number of layoffs required will depend on the number of retirements that take place. He commented that the township is Self-Insured and does not pay into unemployment insurance. The township is required to pay a percentage of the employees' regular wages.*

*Mr. Ranka commented that the incentives would likely cost less than the costs associated with unemployment.*

Public Comment:

1. Gary Jones, Macomb Street, told the Board that they would be setting precedent with the retirement incentives and talked about layoffs and retirements affecting services to the public. Mr. Jones asked the board to match medical insurance coverage for all employees and to prevent layoffs by finding other funding sources.
2. Ron Janowski, Groh Road, commented that a wage freeze should be considered for all employees.

Board Comment: *Trustee Ranka commented that the township isn't offering early retirements but is offering an incentive to the employees currently eligible to retire with full pension and benefits. The township doesn't have enough employees to have the same budget impact through wage freezes that retirements would have.*

3. Sean Frese, Elba Drive, asked if only two accept the incentive would it be sufficient to avoid laying off two people and whether a business analysis had been done.

Board Comment: *Trustee Ranka responded that a thorough business analysis had been done.*

4. Greg Bochenek, Burning Bush, inquired if the township pays for any employee vehicles. *Supervisor Loftus answered that there are no paid employee vehicles.*

Clerk's Report

1. Clerk O'Connor reported that her office would be open on Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup> in order to process Absentee Ballot requests between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. and all voted ballots must be returned to the Clerk's Office prior to 8 p.m. on Election Day, November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Clerk O'Connor reminded voters that the voting locations are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church, VFW Post and the Recreation Building at Centennial Farm.

The Clerk reported that all Help America Vote Grant Standards have been met at all voting locations.

2. Clerk O'Connor and Recreation Director Rooney gave an overview of the events planned for "Hooray for Halloween" on Halloween weekend including events sponsored on Macomb Street by the Recreation Department and the Downtown Development Authority.

Treasurer's Report

1. Investment Report

For the month of September Grosse Ile Township had \$ 6,615,647.15 invested in Certificates of Deposit ranging from .30% to 1.15% with terms ranging from 30-60 days.

For the month of September the balance of the MBIA Class investment pool is \$3,298,115.00, which is earned investment interest of \$1,431.36 at a rate of .27%

\$3,744,671.00 is the amount in the sweep/investments accounts as of September 30, 2009 earning interest of \$246.00 at a rate of .13 %

Preparations are in the works for the winter tax bills that will be mailed out in about 6 weeks. Watch the Ile Camera for published notices regarding tax mailing.

To date have collected **\$12,191,296\*** in Summer property taxes. Timely distributions have been made to the County and the Schools.

State School	3,655,224
School Operating	522,929
School Hold Harmless	555,568
School Debt	1,336,144
School Sinking Fund	304,593
SSES	2,375,890
County Operation	3,440,948
	12,191,296

<b>Total Levy = 13,165,053</b>
<b>Total Collected = 12,191,296</b>
92% of total levy collected to date

### **Trustees Reports**

1. Trustee Ranka: Nothing to report
2. Trustee Johnson: Nothing to report
3. Trustee Frucci:
  - Trustee Frucci introduced former Board Trustee Mr. Gray Mather who was present in the audience.
  - Mrs. Frucci noted that the Cable Commission will be combining their November and December Meetings into one meeting.
  - Mrs. Frucci announced that the Island Beautification Committee will be presenting Beautification Awards to Macomb Street businesses in the near future and the Grosse Ile Garden Club has planted a Rose Garden at Centennial Farm which has been dedicated to and named for island resident Rosie Meyer.
  - Trustee Frucci commented that Open Space Funds are being loaned to the General Fund for ten years at 2% interest.
4. Trustee Kantz: Nothing to report

### **Supervisor's Report**

#### 1. Updates:

Mr. Loftus commented on the improvements to some cable equipment and thanked Cable Administrator Ted Fournier for his efforts.

Extended congratulations to the Girls Golf Team on winning the Division 4 State Championship. Announced the property closing for the future Macomb Street Pocket Park was completed on October 26<sup>th</sup>.

Supervisor Loftus attended an informative luncheon seminar at Crystal Gardens held by Southern Wayne County Chamber of Commerce featuring Rep. John Conyers.

Transfer of property from the EPA to the Fish and Wildlife Services for the Wildlife Refuge which is expected to re-open in Spring, 2010.

DTE has replaced 2,700 gas modules since the beginning of the AMI metering program and 1,700 more will be reprogrammed. The DTE subcontractor is Scope Services and the service personnel will be driving vehicles with that name on them and carrying DTE contractor identification badges. No gas interruptions are expected and very few locations will require entry to residences.

### **Township Manager's Report**

1. Mr. Reaume reported that individual financial proposals for the Water Treatment Plant should be received for review & evaluation within the next two weeks.
2. Announced that the Waterø Edge Golf Course will remain open as long as the weather cooperates but, course maintenance will end on October 31<sup>st</sup>.
3. Mr. Reaume read a prepared statement reiterating the motion regarding payment to the Grosse Ile Bridge Company passed by the Board at their October 12<sup>th</sup> meeting in order to clarify an erroneous headline and information published in the Ile Camera following that meeting. He further read into the record the following press release on the subject:

*The Grosse Ile Township Board of Trustees would like to correct information that was published on 10/16/09 in the Ile Camera regarding the board's decision to make a payment on a judgment in the Toll Bridge Litigation Case. "We are confident that this payment satisfies any possible liabilities in this case. We will continue to appeal, unless the GIBC accepts this as a payment in full." Money will initially come from an open space fund, and will be paid back in full with interest over a time-period to be determined. We expect the appeal to be completed within 12 months and the board will make a determination at that time how to fund the outcome (if required) and pay back open space.*

*Clerk O'Connor urged Mr. Reaume to send the official statement out as a press release to the newspapers that cover Grosse Ile; including the Ile Camera, the News Herald and the Detroit News and Free Press. Mr. Reaume agreed to publish the statement as requested.*

Board Comment:

Several Board Members commented on the board's decision to use an inter-fund loan to fund the \$900,000 payment and the sound business practices used and approved by the township auditor of using idle funds to cover expenses on a temporary basis in order to get the best financial return by reimbursing the Open Space Fund at an interest rate of 2% annually instead of the .25% interest it was currently earning.

**Public Comment:** *Three minute time limit per person*

1. Michael Sullivan, Church Road, commented on the lack of timely & informative communication on issues facing the township.
2. Gregory Jones, West River Road, questioned the strategy on the Bridge transaction at the last meeting.
3. Susan Filkins, East River, commented that Open Space Millage is only to be used to purchase Open Space.
4. Gray Mather, East River, urged the Board to make the bridge transaction clearer to the public in order for voters to continue support.
5. Sean Frese, disagreed with the Finance Director's explanation of inter-fund borrowing.
6. Greg Bochenek, asked why the Open Space Committee isn't more proactive in searching for properties and lodged a complaint regarding sunken tires in the water around the toll bridge since his initial complaint two years ago.
7. Gary Jones, Macomb Street, questioned the method for repayment of the inter-fund loan to the Open Space Fund and made additional comments regarding the savings from retirements and proposed staff layoffs being used for interdepartmental loans.
8. Michael Sullivan, suggested a more aggressive approach to obtaining new open space properties and asked about the terms for repayment of the loan.  
*Clerk O'Connor explained the Open Space and Township Board policies and guidelines for acquiring new Open Space properties.*
9. Cliff St. Pierre, Open Space Chairperson, gave an overview of how the committee functions and commented that the committee is confident that the money will be repaid quickly, enabling the committee to purchase any properties that should become available. *Trustee Frucci affirmed Mr. St. Pierre's explanation.*
10. Dwayne Cooper, Rucker Road, informed the township that he recently had a deer herd run through his backyard while he was grilling and is concerned about the safety hazard the deer herds pose to children and families in the neighborhoods. *Township Manager Reaume commented that the township is waiting for the DNR review of last year's deer culling program in order to be granted more permits to thin the herd.*
11. R. Janowski, Groh Road, commented on 1) repair crews at Parkway and Meridian, 2) inquired about a the existence of a lease with the Yankee Air Force, 3) inquired how much GIYRA is paying the airport for rent (*Trustee Kantz responded they do not pay any rent*), 4) asked about car compensation for employees and 5) questioned the Finance Director about the amount of money in the General Fund.
12. W. Clark, Parke Lane, 1) asked about legal fees on the check register, 2) thanked the police department and Tony Gray and a resident for help in removing a downed power pole, 3) asked about pavement along a portion of East River, 4) urged residents to carry lights when walking dogs and jogging after dusk and early in the morning so drivers can see them better.  
*Finance Director Darzniek reported the following legal fees: Butzel Long \$295, Look, Makowski and Look \$1,552.50, John Dumasius & Associates \$500, for tax tribunal arbitration opinion and approximately \$200,000 to date, for the sewer litigation attorney.*

**Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn by Treasurer Van Os, second Trustee Kantz.

Motion approved 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.