

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN
Environmental Commission
Wednesday, February 21, 2024
MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at **6:04 p.m.** in the Denton Room by **Vice Chairman Ross**.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Vice Chairman Ross, Commissioner Gibson, Commissioner Merritt, Commissioner Yob

Absent/Excused: Chairman DeBuck, Trustee Boynton

Staff: Director Akers, Director Lockett, Secretary Zantop, Account Clerk Price

Audience: One (1)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion Commissioner **Gibson**, Second Commissioner **Merritt**, to approve the agenda of February 21, 2024, as presented.

(4) AYES – Ross, Gibson, Merritt, Yob

(0) NAYS

Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion Commissioner **Merritt**, Second Commissioner **Yob**, to approve the minutes of January 17, 2024.

(4) AYES – Ross, Gibson, Merritt, Yob

(0) NAYS

Motion Carried.

COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Commissioner Gibson asked if there was an update on the email he forwarded to Director Akers from US Ecology. Director Akers stated the only email he found was a quarterly inspection update from the State and no violations were found.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Various Environmental Related Issues Update

Director Akers stated there are openings on the Board of Zoning Appeals. If anyone is interested in joining reach out to Director Akers or Luckett.

Denton Road Bridge

Director Akers gave an update on the Denton Road Bridge. An endangered species of flower was identified near the Bridge. Fishbeck received quotes from environmental firms and went under contract for the management plan, relocation, and the 3-year annual inspection reporting. This allowed the Township to submit revisions for the EGLE permit. The EGLE permit is moving along and is under the 30-day public comment period. The intergovernmental agreement between the Township and Wayne County went before the Board of Trustees and was authorized. The agreement identifies the roles and responsibilities of the Township and County. The Township is doing the design engineering and Wayne County will bid out the project and manage construction engineering. This includes the mechanisms for the County to reimburse the Township for the design engineering. The Township had meetings with DTE regarding the high-pressure gas main that is on the Bridge. DTE evaluated different options and decided on a directional bore underneath Belleville Lake with a duct liner gas pipe. The Township is meeting with DTE every 2 weeks for coordination to move the project along. The Township is still on track to submit a completed set of construction plans and bidding documents to Wayne County at the beginning of March. Wayne County is committed to getting the project bid out as quickly as they are able. Director Akers discussed the design of the bridge and should have drawings to show soon. Commissioner Gibson asked what the timeline was and if the plan was to still start in the Fall. That is the hope but it will depend on DTE, the permitting time, and material lead times.

Do Not Eat Fish Signs

The Township put in an order to the State for do not eat the fish signs.

Grant Application

The Township had a meeting with the Wayne County Land Bank regarding the grant to demolish and clean up the property in Denton Village on Denton Road. There will be an RFP for phase 1 and phase 2 environmental. After the assessment, the Township will Bid out for construction work. Commissioner Gibson asked if we found out if there was anything in the tanks. Director Akers stated we do not know but neighbors stated that they are empty. The property has been abandoned for more than 50 years.

MS4

The Township is working to renew its MS4 stormwater permit application.

Cadillac Asphalt

Commissioner Gibson emailed Director Akers regarding Cadillac Asphalt barrel drums and odor control. Cadillac Asphalt informed the Township that they were replacing the counter flow drum with an exact duplicate. They introduce odor solutions in the asphalt liquid to reduce odor and there is a filtration system to continue to reduce odor.

Other

Director Lockett stated in the event there is more snow this year the Township will be putting up a snow fence where the trees were removed. There were complaints that the snow was drifting across the road.

Director Lockett passed out a flyer from the Alliance of Rouge Communities that explains how watersheds work and pollution prevention. The flyer will be put out for residents on the brochure rack.

2. Renewable Energy New Law Update

The Township is meeting with McKenna and Associates to make a determination to see what needs to be changed and look at recommendations.

3. Volunteer Opportunities

Director Akers sent an email to the Commission with volunteer opportunities through the Huron River Watershed Council. The HRWC has a training on March 23rd for water testing and other programs throughout the year.

The Environmental Commission can implement its own clean-up day around the lake/parks or adopt a road program. In the past, the Commission adopted Tyler Rd between Belleville and Morton Taylor. Director Lockett stated the Township has been working to get the roads cleaned up where they can. The Township does not own the roads but wants them to look good. The Township has been working on Tyler and is getting ready to do Ecorse and Haggerty. Belleville Road was done before the winter but will need more work. The Township is working with a Church group and the 34th district court to get volunteers to help out. Commissioner Merritt suggested enforcing littering fines.

The Commission agreed that adopting a road/highway would be a good option. Commissioner Gibson stated there is an application process through the State to adopt a highway and would have to see what roads are available. The Township has supplied bags, gloves, and vests for volunteers and picked up the bags.

4. US Ecology Tour for Environmental Commission

Director Akers reached out to US Ecology for a tour of the Republic Services Landfill. US Ecology asked for a few dates to look at. Commissioner Gibson asked if the tour would take place in lieu of the meeting. Director Akers stated they will follow the proper guidelines to cancel the meeting or schedule the tour on another day.

5. Recycling Events or Campaign Ideas

Environmental Account Clerk Price gave the Commissioners flyers regarding trash, recycling, and yard waste guidelines. Account Clerk Price updated the Commission on recycling and education efforts from the Township. The recycling guidelines for plastics are 1, 2, and 5. The Township uses social media and the website to educate residents. Communications and Environmental are working on quick tips, did you know, and video posts regarding recycling for

social media. The Township is working on an email list to send out trash/recycling information to residents. Some new packaging will have multiple boxes to show if items are recyclable when there are different materials within the packaging. For items like Clorox wipes or coffee creamer, the plastic label on the outside should be cut off before the container is recycled. Any film plastic like bags or wrappers can be taken back to Meijer or Walmart. There is a drop off in the front of the store. Contamination in recycling is a big issue and film plastic can get stuck and break the machines. Last year Van Buren recycled nearly 1,000 tons. Last year US Ecology was not able to keep an accurate count of the cars for the household hazardous waste day due to the weather and staffing. US Ecology informed staff that it was a similar number to the previous years of about 564 cars. There is an upcoming hazardous waste day through Wayne County on April 6th at the Wayne County Community College. Account Clerk Price asked for any ideas or recommendations to help with recycling education.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS:

Director Luckett recognized the work of Account Clerk Price and staff.

Commissioner Merritt stated the Supervisor listens to comments and ideas from the Community and does a lot of good things.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to Adjourn **Merritt**, Second **Gibson**, Meeting adjourned at **7:36 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kendyl Zantop
Recording Secretary