

## **Elk Rapids Township Special Meeting Minutes, August 29, 2016**

The Special meeting of the Elk Rapids Township Board was held at the Elk Rapids Government Center located at 315 Bridge St. Elk Rapids. The meeting was called to order by Supervisor White at 6:00 pm. The meeting was recorded to provide accuracy.

**Present:** Supervisor: Bill White, Clerk: Shelley Boisvert, Treasurer: Mike Szymanski, Trustee Dorance Amos and Trustee Aaron Isenhardt

**Also Present:** Bill Derman-Twp Attorney, Doug Coates-Gosling Czubak, Chuck Edwards-NW Michigan Community Health, Brad Kluczynski-Village DPW Superintendent, Andy Hogarth- Elk-Skegemog Lakes Association

1. **Pledge of Allegiance**
2. **Doug Coates: Gosling Czubak Engineering:** Presentation describing past discussions about sewer in the Maple Harbor area, the number of parcels that may be involved and a very early cost estimate for pressure sewer installation at this time.
3. **Chuck Edwards: Northwest Michigan Community Health Department:** Options for property owners through the Local Public Health Dept. currently because there is no sewer in the area. Struggles in the past for this area with issuing permits and meeting the full requirements of the code. Permits will continue to be issued but there may be variances needed. They may even have to deny a permit that would request additions to a home or anything that would impact additional water usage for an existing structure. Issues of isolation between septic or holding tanks and water wells is a main reason for variances in this area. He also explained some of the complications and expenses involved when a holding tank, as a last resort, is installed at a property.
4. **Brad Kluczynski: Village of Elk Rapids DPW Superintendent:** Explanation of the DPW's responsibilities for the existing Village wastewater treatment plant and the sewer pump station that would be utilized if sewer is installed. Brad also briefly talked about maintenance that would be performed on the individual pumps at residences and some requirements of home owners if a pressure sewer system is installed at Maple Harbor.
5. **Bill Derman: Elk Rapids Township Attorney:** A brief description of the Special Assessment process and the initial steps that will take place before this becomes a real project. It starts with a citizen petition that shows the amount of interest in the project. It would take more than 50% of the total land area in the proposed sewer district to be in favor of the project before the Township would move forward and direct their Engineer to prepare formal costs and estimates for the project. Public hearings will be scheduled over a couple of months for property owners to learn more, ask questions or protest if they'd like. After this process is completed the project will either go forward or stop.
6. **Andy Hogarth: Elk-Skegemog Lakes Association:** The Association is in support of this project. They have done some water sampling along the shoreline in front of Terrace Avenue to sample for E.coli mainly where Cladophora (a filamentous green algae) was present. He said that all the samples collected had a range of concentrations of E.coli. They did not do the more comprehensive sampling over a 30 day period that would establish a seasonal mean. Their summary concludes that the presence of Cladophora and the E.coli sampling results strongly suggests a chronic condition resulting from groundwater affected by septic system seepage migrating into the lake.

7. **Public Comment:** Questions from the audience to the presenters.

**K. Nelson**- Is there an economy of scale for these costs if we were to add on properties to the west of Cairn Hwy? **A:** Yes, more connections would help, but sometimes there is a point where you may need to up-size the infrastructure to handle more connections so construction cost could raise also. Nelson is hoping that throughout this process that extending the line west of Cairn Hwy would still be considered.

Also: Is the maintenance cost for the residential grinder pumps a part of existing monthly sewer bill of \$52.50? **A:** Yes

**Sylvia Brown**- Will turning their power off when they leave for the season hurt the grinder system? **A:** Yes. The grinder systems need to maintain power to reduce the risks of failure that could cause back-up into the home or leakage from the tank itself onto the property.

**Mary Schneider**- Can homeowners have a dedicated source of electricity to the pump itself? **A:** Yes. As long as the pump and panel still have electricity everything else can be shut down.

Also: How does the square footage of the parcel fit in to signing the petitions? **A.** By statute, at least 50% of the total land area within the proposed district has to sign the petition for the project to move forward. That is not necessarily how the cost would be spread though.

**Fred Farage**- He wanted to confirm the setback requirements for holding tanks. **A.** The District Sanitary Code states that there should be 50 foot setbacks for septic, holding tanks and drain fields between a drinking water source or surface water source and then there are also property lines setbacks. The Maple Harbor area has trouble meeting the requirements of the code.

Also: How much does it cost to put a holding tank in? **A.** Chuck Edwards did not have any exact numbers but he said they would need a professional engineering plan, they'd have the cost of the tank itself, an alarm system and an operating permit that would need to be renewed every couple of years. An estimated cost for everything could be in the \$5,000 to \$8,000 range at least. There is also a continuous cost of pumping that tank.

**Donna Fike**- Why is her home on Williams Rd. included in this district, and why didn't her neighbor get any notification of this meeting? **A.** The previous owner of the property she purchased had a recorded agreement with the Township that stated when and if there is ever sewer proposed that they will vote yes and once it is available they will connect to it. Her neighbor should have been notified too but they were not on the list.

Also: If they close up their home for the winter season do they still have to pay the monthly bill? **A.** Yes

**Jim Quigel**- He wanted to go on record that he would be interested in the sewer system if the Township were to extend it South down Cairn Hwy a bit. He said their family has owned the property for over 50 years and keeping Elk Lake clean is very important to him.

**Allan Brown**- If this project proceeds what is in place to enforce hook up? **A.** Chuck Edwards said if the people voted this through then Act 368 would dictate the connection enforcement based on the way it is written up.

Mr. Brown also had a question about Nitrates filtering into the lake from fertilizers. Any idea of current regulation of Nitrate fertilization going on at the fields across the way? Chuck had no idea on that, but he did agree that there is a potential for Nitrate fertilization to make its way down to the lake.

**Lori Anderson**- Who determines when a system is failing on a property? **A.** Sometimes it could be very obvious by smell or appearance or the Health Dept. can respond to a complaint. They can put dye into the toilet to see if it filters out to the lake but they are very careful not to infringe on the rights of the homeowner.

Also: Because they own two sites side by side would they be able to use one grinder pump between the properties for both parcels? **A.** No; each home needs a separate system.

**Dennis Irelan**- Are there grant monies available for a project like this? **A.** Doug stated that there may be but the challenge is the size of this project and in most cases the process is based on economic status of the Township. There could be local organizations that may contribute something toward the project and we can look into that.

Also: Have we approached Milton Township to see if they would be interested? They have parcels along the water that may need this too. **A.** We have not formally talked to Milton Township about this. Mr. Irelan stated that this project is needed and has been for a long time and sewer will add value to these properties.

#### **8. Township Comments:**

- Supervisor White stated that since the Road Millage passed in early August that the Township would be able to fund the re-pavement of the road which will help with the construction cost.
- Clerk Boisvert stated that she had the formal petition forms that will need to be signed to move this process forward. All names that are listed on the property will have to sign the petition to make the signature valid. The forms are available in the Township office or can be emailed to someone if necessary. This is the next necessary step so the Township will know if the majority of property owners want to move forward with this project.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:14 PM