

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF YPSILANTI
MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 21, 2010 WORK SESSION**

Supervisor Brenda L. Stumbo called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. in the Ypsilanti Township Civic Center Board Room, 7200 S. Huron River Drive, Ypsilanti Township.

Members Present: Supervisor Brenda L. Stumbo, Clerk Karen Lovejoy Roe, Treasurer Larry Doe, Trustees Stan Eldridge, Jean Hall Currie and Mike Martin

Members Absent: Trustees Dee Sizemore

Legal Counsel: Wm. Douglas Winters

Supervisor Stumbo announced this was the last Board Work Session. In January, meetings would begin at 6:30 p.m. and all discussion would take place at the board meeting. She clarified that the meetings would still be held on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month with the exception of the summer meetings.

A. DISCUSS IF 63 PARCELS AT LIBERTY SQUARE SHOULD BE DEEDED TO YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP OR WASHTENAW COUNTY

Supervisor Stumbo stated Attorney Winters was running late and he requested this item be discussed upon his arrival.

SUPERVISOR UPDATE

Supervisor Stumbo said on Resolution 2010-30, Creation of the Joint Improvement Authority the public hearing date was changed to March 1, 2011.

Supervisor Stumbo explained that the Solid Waste Department did a mailing every year to provide residents information on garbage pickup, recycling, compost and other valuable services, which also included an informational magnet. Staff had researched and received quotes on a pamphlet-type mailer that would include all the previous information, departmental information and answers to questions frequently asked by residents. She further explained the pamphlet could be mailed to residents and could also be distributed to new residents. Supervisor Stumbo stated three quotes were received and she asked the Board if they wanted to proceed or have the information brought back to the meeting in January. She stated the information needed to be mailed by the end of January.

Treasurer Doe said since three quotes had been received, it would be easier to proceed now and not wait until January.

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Arloa Kaiser, Township Resident asked what the postage cost would be to mail the pamphlet.

Supervisor Stumbo said she did not have the postage cost but she explained it contained a lot more information. She further explained what was presented was a draft and still needed to be perfected.

REVIEW AGENDA

MINUTES

- A. NOVEMBER 29, 2010 SPECIAL WORK SESSION**
- B. DECEMBER 7, 2010 WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING**

The was no discussion by the Board.

SUPERVISOR REPORT

Report to be given at the Board Meeting.

CLERK REPORT

Report to be given at the Board Meeting.

TREASURER REPORT

A. NOVEMBER 2010

Treasurer Doe said he distributed the January 4, 2011, Statements and Checks. He explained the bills were pushed ahead so everything could be paid by the end of the year. Treasurer Doe asked to add this item to the agenda under Statements and Checks. The Board agreed.

TRUSTEE REPORT

Report to be given at the Board Meeting.

The Board returned to the first item on the Work Session agenda.

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**1. DISCUSS IF 63 PARCELS AT LIBERTY SQUARE SHOULD BE DEEDED TO
YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP OR WASHTENAW COUNTY**

Attorney Winters stated the Township was approached by Catherine McClary, Washtenaw County Treasurer regarding 63 units in Liberty Square. He explained the condominium development was currently in suit with the Township, which would have been filed in the previous week but because the units were individually owned, it required individual summons. Attorney Winters said the County had foreclosed on 63 units and had gone through every possible sale requirement. He further explained since there were no bidders, the units could go to the Township and if the Township declined, the units would go to the County. Attorney Winters explained that if the units went to the County, they could be used for any purpose, with no public restriction. If the Township took possession, he believed the Township would proceed with litigation in terms of obtaining total control of the development for possible demolition through grant money. Attorney Winters said it was unlikely that someone would restore the development.

Mike Radzik, OCS Director stated additional units were kicked open and required boarding-up. He said DTE had discovered multiple underground natural gas leaks, which required them to cut and cap two or three entire buildings on Morris Street.

Attorney Winters stressed that the Township would have to deal with the issues whether the Township owned the units or the County owned them. He said more control the Township had over the development, the more say so the Township would have over the development's ultimate fate. Attorney Winters reminded the Board there were no strings attached in regard to the use of the property and he recommended the Board have the 63 units deeded to the Township.

Supervisor Stumbo said she feared the County could rehab the units and put in a prisoner reentry program or something else the community would not want at that location. She said in February, there would be 34 additional units facing tax foreclosure. Supervisor Stumbo said she first thought rehabbing the development would be best but the property is an attractive nuisance for crime activity. She said she felt it would be better to demolish the units and possibly sell the property for redevelopment. If the Township allowed someone else to take the property, anything could go in the location.

Ms. Kaiser asked what it would cost the Township to take the property.

Supervisor Stumbo stated the Township would get the property at no cost.

Attorney Winters said it showed just how bad the property was, when no one would buy it at the tax sale. He said the Township was stuck with responding to the development when issues arose and added, the property was a main entryway into the Township from Rawsonville Road. Attorney Winters stressed the more control the Township had, the more resources that could be saved.

Clerk Lovejoy Roe said the 63 units did not give the Township majority control and asked if the additional 34 units would provide the majority control.

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Attorney Winters explained that 140 units would give the Township majority control but he said the problem was the 63 units were not contiguous and were spread throughout the development. Attorney Winters stated it was like a jigsaw puzzle and eventually, the Township would have the ability to do partial demolitions and partial closures. He said in the 26 years that he had been the Township attorney, there had not been one year without an issue at Liberty Square. Attorney Winters said the Liberty Square development had been a drain on Township resources and this was an opportunity to do something different with the property.

Treasurer Doe said under the assumption that the Township obtained all the units, where would funding come from for demolition and what liability would the Township have to follow Township ordinances.

Attorney Winters stated that currently there was no funding available for demolition and he thought it would be necessary to get assistance from the Federal government. He said it might require the creation of new ordinances because this undertaking would be new territory and the Township would obviously not install new windows and doors. He said it was a no win situation because if the Township did nothing, there would still be the same problems. Attorney Winters stated that residents were storing garbage in the vacant units, which would create a rat problem if one did not already exist. He stressed that doing nothing was not an option.

Supervisor Stumbo stated if the Township did nothing, then the County would do something.

Clerk Lovejoy Roe said if the Township owned the parcels, there was always the possibility of being approached by a developer.

Trustee Martin said if the County obtains the property, what they did with it would be outside of the Township's control and he did not like that prospect.

Mr. Radzik said the County had to act by the end of the year and due to the holiday schedule, the County would inquire about the Board's decision on Wednesday.

The Board agreed to place approval of deeding the 63 parcels in Liberty Square to Ypsilanti Township on the Board agenda under Other Business.

Supervisor Stumbo stated the Board had agreed to add two items to the agenda under Other Business. She said she and Clerk Lovejoy Roe had written up a motion for the printing of the pamphlet, which was to authorize the design of bid specifications, approve seeking three quotes, authorize acceptance of lowest quote and to approve mailing costs, with a budget amendment brought back to the Board at the next meeting.

Attorney Winters reiterated that if the County obtained Liberty Square, the Township would not have any control over what they did with the property.

Ms. Kaiser stated with Aerotropolis and trying to build up Willow Run, it would be prime property.

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Clerk Lovejoy Roe said there had been discussion that if there were access to the bank and to Burger King from this property, there would be direct access to Rawsonville Road.

Supervisor Stumbo asked Attorney Winters if the motion should be to accept 63 parcels at Liberty Square from the County for tax foreclosure.

Attorney Winters stated the motion should be to accept the transfer of the 63 units from the Washtenaw County Treasurer to the Township, subject to all the paperwork being reviewed by the Township Attorney with no money being expended to make the transfer. He said there might be a recording fee but nothing in the terms of back taxes.

ATTORNEY REPORT

A. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION TO INITIATE LEGAL ACTION IF NECESSARY, IN WASHTENAW COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT TO ABATE PUBLIC NUISANCE FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1231 RAMBLING ROAD

Supervisor Stumbo stated there was a fire fatality at 1231 Rambling Road. She said there was concern that the structure would fall and children were playing underneath the porch overhang area. She said the Attorney had been in contact with the insurance company and an investigation was being completed.

Attorney Winters said the next-door neighbor was adversely impacted because she had initially allowed the property to be braced but she cannot use her driveway. He said it was a rental unit and the owner lived in Arizona.

B. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION TO INITIATE LEGAL ACTION IF NECESSARY, IN WASHTENAW COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT TO ABATE PUBLIC NUISANCE FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2147 MOELLER AVENUE

There was no discussion on this agenda item.

C. GENERAL LEGAL UPDATE

Update to be given at the Board Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. REQUEST OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, WASHTENAW COUNTY CHAPTER 310 TO USE THE CIVIC CENTER FOR THE LOCATION OF THE WASHTENAW COUNTY VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL WALL 20th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

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Supervisor Stumbo this would be their 20th Anniversary Celebration and they wanted to utilize the Township boardroom.

Clerk Lovejoy Roe stated the date of the event was November 10, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.. She said they would like the Board to be there and it would be open to the public.

2. BUDGET AMENDMENT #14

Clerk Lovejoy Roe said the majority of the amendment was for the tax tribunals and increases to the rental inspection fund, golf course fund and bike paths.

3. CLARIFICATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH COORDINATOR POSITION

Supervisor Stumbo stated a detailed memo would be read at the Board Meeting. She said when it was approved, it was to be brought back to the Board in December. Supervisor Stumbo said this was an update and clarification, in light of the last meeting.

4. AUTHORIZATION TO POST AND FILL 1-2 BUILDING ATTENDANT POSITIONS AT RECREATION

Supervisor Stumbo said there was a question regarding this item because they thought a new position was being added. She explained that one of the Building Attendants was awarded the Floater III/Clerk II position, which created a vacancy. Supervisor Stumbo stated that currently there were two building attendants and a third would allow for more flexibility. She said the Recreation Department would still operate under the same budget.

Art Serafinski, Recreation Director said a one point, there were four building attendants. He said this would help to provide coverage if one of the building attendants were off, which would also provide better service to the community.

Supervisor Stumbo stated the job description would be forwarded to the Board Members.

Trustee Eldridge suggested, as a courtesy, offering the position to laid-off employees.

Karen Wallin, Human Resources stated the Township was not obligated but, out of courtesy, laid-off employees could be notified.

Supervisor Stumbo said she had contacted the employee in question about the opening in the Treasurer's office.

Trustee Currie agreed that laid-off employees should be contacted and given priority to the open positions.

5. RESOLUTION NO. 2010-31, CONNECTING COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

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Supervisor Stumbo stated this item was discussed at the last meeting and Jeff Allen, RSD Directors was following up with a resolution.

Supervisor Stumbo stated if there were no other questions on the remaining agenda items, the Board would take a short break and return for the Regular Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda L. Stumbo, Supervisor
Charter Township of Ypsilanti

Karen Lovejoy Roe, Clerk
Charter Township of Ypsilanti