

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF YPSILANTI
MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 6, 2018 WORK SESSION MEETING

Supervisor Stumbo called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m. in the Ypsilanti Township Civic Center Board Room, 7200 S. Huron River Drive, Ypsilanti Township.

Members Present: Supervisor Brenda L. Stumbo, Clerk Lovejoy Roe,
Trustees: Stan Eldridge, Heather Jarrell Roe,
Monica Ross-Williams (arrived late), and
Jimmie Wilson, Jr. (arrived late)

Members Absent: Treasurer Doe

Legal Counsel: Wm. Douglas Winters

1. CONCENTRATE MEDIA PROPOSAL.....PAUL SCHUTT, CONCENTRATE MEDIA

Paul Schutt, C.O. Issue Media Group, stated his company was based in Detroit, Michigan and was an on-line news organization that was founded 13 years ago. He said they have publications throughout the United States. He said they focus on reporting about investments being made in the community instead of reporting about the crime. He said they hired laid off journalists and assigned them to report on all investments being made in the community. He said they were introduced to David Borenstein, a New York Times Journalist, that was reporting to the community about the challenges that cities were facing. Mr. Schutt said they report on the issues but also report on the individuals who are working on the solutions to the challenges that cities are facing. He showed the board an example of looking back 10 years at Cork Town in Detroit. He said at that time there was only one business and over the years how it transformed this community into a successful business area. He said these small incremental changes accumulated into full transformation of this area. Mr. Schutt said that one of the areas they worked in was in Germantown in Philadelphia. He said they were offered free office space in a refurbished building that was vacant for 9 years. He said they went through the neighborhood talking with residents and the residents explained the only time the neighborhood was mentioned in news articles was when negative things were going on. Mr. Schutt said they decided to take their journalists and put them out into the neighborhood for a 6 to 12 month period. He said they did a pilot program in 2017 in the City of Ypsilanti and would now like to expand it to

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include Ypsilanti Township. He said they would take some of the principles they are using in journalism and apply them in an imbedded model finding people, projects and all the innovation that's happening in the Township and try to help people understand what is happening here through a lens of solution journalism. He said they have two goals with this coverage: can we get an increase in understanding in the community and could that understanding increase investment. He said they have learned that investors want transparency; they want to see what is happening in the market.

Trustee Jarrell Roe asked if it expands to the Township would it still be called, On the Ground Ypsilanti, and Mr. Schutt said that it would stay the same name but they would tag Ypsilanti Township.

Supervisor Stumbo asked if they sell advertising on their website and Mr. Schutt said they do not. He said On the Ground Ypsilanti is a brand under Concentrate. Supervisor Stumbo asked if it could be in the Ypsilanti Area and Mr. Schutt said it could.

Trustee Wilson said he works at Ford Rawsonville, UAW Local 898 and would like one of their journalist to come and do a story on the UAW Local 898 so they could get some good press coverage.

Mr. Schutt said they get story ideas by holding editorial advisory meetings. He said they would asked the township to fill a room with people who have story ideas within the township. He said they bring in their staff and other news organizations and do brain storming sessions and then they go out and research the stories.

Trustee Ross-Williams asked Mr. Schutt what the difference was between his organization and PATCH. Mr. Schutt stated that PATCH sells advertising and mainly reports on affluent areas.

Mr. Schutt stated the \$12,000.00 the township would pay to his company would be used for reporting on issues in Ypsilanti Township. He said they would come back to the Township and report on how the investment was used.

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Trustee Eldridge asked how long they had been working with the city of Ypsilanti and Mr. Schutt said it was about 6 months. Trustee Eldridge asked how they get the word out about their company because he had never heard of them. Mr. Schutt explained how they get their information to the residents. He said they have reached 300,000 people in the last 5 months. Trustee Eldridge ask how often Ypsilanti Township would have an article written about them for the \$12,000.00. Mr. Schutt stated it would be at least once a month.

Supervisor Stumbo stated that along with Clerk Lovejoy Roe they met with Mr. Schutt in January. She said Mr. Schutt explained how the journalists go into the neighborhoods and talk with residents to find stories to report on. She said he also told her that if the township had ideas for stories they could email his staff and they would investigate to see if it was news worthy.

Supervisor Stumbo stated she appreciates that this news organization was independent and they cannot be controlled.

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY....RICHARD CARLISLE, CARLISLE WORTMAN

Richard Carlisle, Carlisle Wortman, explained why Ypsilanti Township needs an Economic Development Strategy. He said with ACM opening in Ypsilanti Township there should be many businesses gravitating to the Township and we need a plan on how we can track and accommodate those businesses. Mr. Carlisle stated we need to find ways for individuals and companies to invest their time, talent and financial resources in Ypsilanti Township. He said ideally they would want someone to invest in this community in a manner that would improve the community, create jobs and create economic development. Mr. Carlisle said that when you create an environment where people want to invest in your community you need to have assets, services, and growth opportunities that would be attractive enough for them to want to invest in Ypsilanti Township. He said that is what developing an economic strategy would do for the township. He said the old way was to try and focus on attracting large companies to come into your community. Mr. Carlisle said, from his experience this approach was only marginally successful. He said his company feels a better approach is to improve the foundation for expanding

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existing businesses and attract talent who will create new businesses in your community. Mr. Carlisle said the township has the assets but the organization needs to be in place in order to do it. He said that previously the townships' economic base was primarily focused on manufacturing and when that declined it hurt the entire community and that is what you have been trying to recover from. Mr. Carlisle said an educated and skilled workforce is essential. Mr. Carlisle suggested the Township reinstate an Economic Development Director to work full time for the Township.

Trustee Jarrell Roe stated the Township does not have any places for young adults to go out for an adult beverage and they have to go into the City of Ypsilanti for this. She suggested the Township of Ypsilanti needs more businesses of this kind.

Trustee Ross-Williams stated the new signage on Washtenaw Ave. depicting the entrance to Ypsilanti Township looks very good but suggested more signage was needed throughout the township.

Clerk Lovejoy Roe questioned what they would look for in a candidate for Economic Development Director because someone who would qualify for that position in Cleveland wouldn't necessarily be a good fit for Ypsilanti Township. She said she hoped Mr. Carlisle would help with what qualifications we should look for and what should the compensation be for that position. Mr. Carlisle said they have the resources to help the township find a qualified person for this position. He said he does agree that this is not an entry-level position.

Trustee Eldridge said that when he heard Mr. Carlisle mention Agriculture and Food Innovation as potential areas in the township for growth he felt that was where the township had come from. Mr. Carlisle said that they are not talking about the food enterprises of where the township has been. He said the food movement and locally grown food is becoming an agriculture business, which is very important to many communities' economies. Mr. Carlisle said this business can become attractive to a younger entrepreneur population. He said it may not become a big component of the townships' economic picture but it may. He said the person in his office that knows the most about this is Megan. He said she does a lot of work with food hubs throughout Michigan.

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Trustee Eldridge said since this is not an entry-level position he said he would like Mr. Carlisle’s Company to look for candidates for this position and then present four or five candidates for the board to interview.

Mr. Carlisle stated that the retail market study showed that there were retail dollars to be spent on food in the Township. Clerk Lovejoy Roe asked how they could find out how many of the township residents shop elsewhere for food they cannot purchase in the township.

Supervisor Stumbo said that there had been talk of Ypsilanti Township having their own Farmers’ Market. She said that up until 2008 the townships tax base was growing by 6% and then it started to fall. She said the township fell about 35% in taxable value. Supervisor Stumbo said now they are able to try new things in the Township that she thought maybe they would never be able to do. She said its’ exciting to be able to talk about these positive changes in the Township.

3. GAULT VILLAGE PROPERTY.....DENNIS MCLAIN, ATTORNEY

Attorney Winters stated there was a court hearing last week regarding a potential sell of Gault Village from Nemdar Realty to a developer out of Louisville, Kentucky. He said the court has allowed the transaction to occur. He said the new owner would be added as a defendant to the case if the sale was finalized. He said the court would hold the developer to specific set of conditions. Attorney Winters said Judge Fink would continue as the receiver. Attorney Winters suggested that when the sale was finalized it would be wise for the Township Board and the township development team to meet with the developer. He said there was a new property manager who has met with Mike Radzik, Mr. Carlisle, Attorney McClain, and himself and has said they believe they are going to develop the property. Attorney Winters stated he believes the best way for developing would be complete demolition of the property.

4. AGENDA REVIEW.....SUPERVISOR STUMBO

Consent Agenda

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Trustee Jarrell Roe asked for a correction on the work session minutes. She said in the minutes on page 3 it states Clerk Lovejoy Roe asked if they added or changed definitions and she was the person who asked that question.

Trustee Ross-Williams stated she sent an email to Clerk Lovejoy Roe from a resident who wanted the email read and asked if Clerk Lovejoy Roe received it. Clerk Lovejoy Roe stated she was going to read it at the board meeting.

A. MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 16, 2018 WORK SESSION, REGULAR MEETING AND CLOSED SESSION AND FEBRUARY 1, 2018 SPECIAL MEETING

B. STATEMENTS AND CHECKS

1. STATEMENTS AND CHECKS FOR FEBRUARY 6, 2018 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,042,948.77

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. BUDGET AMENDMENT #3**
- 2. REQUEST APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT WITH CONCENTRATE MEDIA FOR MEDIA COVERAGE OF YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP FOR 2018 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$12,000.00 BUDGETED IN LINE ITEM #101-956-000-801-000**
- 3. REQUEST OF MIKE RADZIK, OCS DIRECTOR FOR AUTHORIZATION TO SEEK LEGAL ACTION TO ABATE PUBLIC NUISANCE DRUG HOUSES BY PADLOCKING LOCATED AT 34 JOHNSON IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000.00 BUDGETED IN LINE ITEM #101-950-000-801-023**
- 4. REQUEST OF MIKE RADZIK, OCS DIRECTOR FOR AUTHORIZATION TO SEEK LEGAL ACTION IF NECESSARY TO ABATE PUBLIC NUISANCE FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 386 S. FORD BLVD., 1478 DESOTO, AND 908 ECORSE RD IN**

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THE AMOUNT OF \$30,000.00 BUDGETED IN LINE ITEM #101-950-000-801-023

5. RESOLUTION 2018-03, RELOCATION OF YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP VOTING PRECINCTS 19 AND 20

Clerk Lovejoy Roe explained a church and a school both decided they did not want voters to come into their buildings any longer. She said they will send out new voter cards and a letter regarding the change in Precincts. Supervisor Stumbo suggested sending a postcard would be more economical. Clerk Lovejoy Roe stated people notice an envelope instead of a postcard and she said she was concerned a postcard would get lost. Clerk Lovejoy Roe said they are moving both Precincts 19 & 20 to new locations. Precinct 19 will be moved to Evangelical Friends Church on Tuttlehill and Precinct 20 to the Ypsilanti District Library on Whittaker.

6. RESOLUTION 2018-04, PROPOSITION TO AUTHORIZE THE LEVYING OF .50 MILLS TO PROVIDE FUNDING, DEDICATED SOLELY FOR THE PURCHASE AND MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLES, BUILDINGS, GROUNDS, AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT AND TO AUTHORIZE A MAY 8, 2018 SPECIAL ELECTION.

7. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION TO POST AUDIO RECORDINGS OF THE WORK SESSIONS AND BOARD MEETINGS TO THE WEB BEGINNING WITH JANUARY 2017

Clerk Lovejoy Roe stated the audio recordings for each meeting were destroyed after the minutes are approved. She said since the discussion began in November/December 2017 about the possibility of making them available on the web they have not been destroyed. Clerk Lovejoy Roe stated the board had discussion about having them available on the web but had not officially agreed upon it so this is the authorization to approve it if the Board decides they wish to

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make this available to the public. Clerk Lovejoy Roe said that having this on the web might be a better way to store the recordings since once it's on the web it stays there.

Trustee Ross-Williams stated she would like to have video but knows it wasn't cost effective. She asked if the vote tonight would be to approve putting the audio on the web.

Clerk Lovejoy Roe stated it was.

Trustee Ross-Williams would like the board to vote on how long they would stay on the web.

Trustee Jarrell Roe asked if we would need to come back again and vote on how long the recordings should stay on the web, she suggested we just wait and vote on it all together.

Trustee Eldridge stated they are making more out of this then they need to and suggested just to vote on putting them on the web tonight. He said he didn't care how long they would be on there and he knows Travis McDugald could archive them at a later date.

Clerk Lovejoy Roe stated that the board would have to vote on how long the audio stays on the web. She said that the current recordings are available to put on the web as soon as Travis McDugald has the time to do it.

Supervisor Stumbo stated we would discuss this further at the Board meeting.

Work session adjourned at 6:59 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Lovejoy Roe, Clerk