

Alpena County Chapter Meeting

Ossineke Township

February 18, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7pm and we said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call of all the townships was taken with the following townships present: Long Rapids, Ossineke, Sanborn, Wellington, Alpena and Green. Maple Ridge and Wilson were absent.

There is one correction to the October 2012 minutes. Ken Gauthier stated he doesn't have a new website, but MTA has a new website meaning they now have one for the public and one for the members. Motion made by Lynda Vandusen and seconded by Tammy Bates to approve the October 15, 2012 minutes. Motion carried. Stan took a minute to read a line from our very first MTA chapter meeting on 2/18/91; exactly 22 years ago today. The very first meeting was also at the Ossineke hall.

Financial Report: Stan Mischley reviewed the financial report showing we have a balance of \$1,811.00. Lou Baker made a motion to accept the financial report with Dale Himes second. Motion passed. Lynda Vandusen made a motion to pay the bill to send out meeting notices for this meeting and Ken seconded it. Motion passed. Stan mentioned he will be sending \$25 township fees out soon to township clerks.

Peter Pettalia, our State Rep, spoke first so he could be on his way to Lansing and beat the nasty weather we will be receiving. Peter explained he is chair of trust fund grants of the northern corridor and last year only Wilson received \$78K. He strongly encouraged everyone to apply for these grants as there is lots of money out there. Peter also explained the various other committees he asked to be a part of such as: energy and tech (Peter is hoping for better fiber optics here and if you have something in the community you feel you are short changed on please mention it and he will see if he can help), government affairs which includes township (he stated he will conduct town hall meetings on road tax) and funding of transportation.

Committee Reports

Road Commission: Larry Orcutt updated us on road projects and thanked the townships for their participation. The townships contributed approximately 500k toward our roads last year. This year they have one major paving project in Long Rapids (Bolton to Haken – 4 ½ miles long). They will put 1 ½" overlay on it. This section could use a total overhaul but there is not enough money to do so. The road commission budgeted 2 miles of primary for gravel surfacing and they plan on 8 miles of seal coating on primary roads. As far as dust control they spent \$200k last year and of that money approximately \$120k was contributed by townships. Larry explained this year will look similar to last year. They will try some equipment replacement. They budgeted for a new dump truck and grater which total \$385K and they will grant with fish and wildlife for partnership. Dust control agreements will go out once opening bids out this Thursday. There are lots of proposals out there for increase of money for transportation. A

study shows the need to increase transportation funding 6 billion a year to keep up with road conditions so they are looking at increasing gas tax, sales tax and/or vehicle tabs.

County Commissioners: No one here from County Commissioners.

911 County Dispatch: Stan mentioned there was a meeting a month or so ago. They came up with a dispatch procedure for records including how you get called etc.

MTA: Ken Gauthier has been newly re-elected!!! Everyone congratulated him.

Ken stated there were nearly 300 bills passed. There are three big areas for townships 1.) personal property tax reimbursement (phase out on industrial equipment 2016-2022; wind turbines remain taxable; in 8/2014 if vote yes shift portion to reimburse local units, if voted down 40k less on small parcels would go away) 2.) PILT – package was funded, 3.) swamp tax will go from \$2 to \$4 a year per acre.

Ken stated the PA 420 passed which allows supervisors to give oath of office. Ken went over the trainings held and upcoming ones for him. Ken went over issues he learned at the January conference with the theme “chart a new course”. We had some change in directors. MTA is looking for more money for transportation. The last gas tax was raised in 1997 and something has to be done. Ken’s committees he sits on are finance, conference, assessment and tax, PAC committee and executive committee.

Target: No one here from Target.

A letter was read from Lyle Vanwormer stating we need to appoint a 911 county dispatch volunteer tonight. Stan volunteered and therefore Lisa Timm made a motion to reappoint Stan as our 911 county dispatch with Jerry Lesinger seconding. Motion approved.

Donna Hardies from Catholic Human Services stated they are asking for proclamation which all townships should have received a letter. If you didn’t receive one please call 619-1259 or email at dhardies@cathlichumanservices.org. April is social host awareness month. They are offering training on serving awareness. For example how not to be the cool parent and not have a keg at a graduation open house because the kids are underage. How to recognize someone who has drank too much. There are breaks you can get on insurance for having this training and they can bring this to your community. She stated 4/28/13 is take back days at the state police post in Alpena. They will take any unused medicines. They will also have big red barrels which will be permanent structures to get rid of old drugs at any time of the day or night. The Alpena City police and sheriff stations will have these tamper proof barrels where drugs can be dropped off at any time. Donna asked that we do not flush meds in the toilet as there are other opportunities. She is concerned with controlled substances – you can take to police stations now and the receptacles are coming. She explained deaths from controlled substance abuse (prescription drug abuse) has now taken over deaths from car accidents. She explained the “Be the Solution Program”. She has a video (either a 20 minute one or an hour one) on how to monitor, secure and dispose of meds. The training is wonderful for anyone who wants to participate. Catholic Human Services can train two people or 200 people.

Rick Deuell from NEMCOG gave us an update on the hazard mitigation plan he is working with the county on. Each community needs to take a look to give feedback to see if we missed anything. He sent a cd out last week as a draft to each community. Chapter 9 is the big chapter to look at. A full rough draft will be sent to the state and feds (FEMA) before local approval (first commissioners, then each community to act on plan). They want 100% participation on plan. In six months a copy of the plan with request to adopt will be sent.

Bev Bodem asked everyone to contact Senator Moolenaar if you have any questions or concerns.

Stan reported the 2012 year end review of the Alpena Resource Recovery Program will be available on the Alpena Township's website tomorrow. As a brief summary in 2011 we had 311 roll offs. In 2012 we had 513 roll offs and in 2013 we probably will have 600 roll offs! We have bins at the high school now and at the county parks. We took in 30 tons of electronics last year and we sent out 2k batteries. Howard mentioned we take batteries for free in the Alpena Community and we take box spring and mattresses too because Gaylord recycles everything on them. We are still working on glass project recycling. Last year we were 13K ahead and so we are doing real well. The recycle board meets once a month.

Brent Holcomb, Superintendent of Alpena Schools, gave an update on the upcoming millage. He gave information as to where the school used to get money from to where we get money currently because of the tough economic times. He explained that we used to get 340 million from the state general fund but as times got tough we don't currently get that much. Two years ago when the crunch first hit, he trimmed a lot out of budget (closed two schools, did 80/20 with insurance, reduced staff in Brent's office from 5 to 3etc) and that year they had a balanced budget. But in the last two years they have burned through 2 million in savings and can't seem to get a grip on things. Proposal A which worked well in the past, was never designed to handle less kids that we are seeing now. He explained that the student decline rate is usually at 11% and we are declining at 22% rate. Another hard whammy was our new governor gave us an approximate \$300 per student cut after we had a balanced budget. So with 4k kids at a \$300 per student loss that equaled a 1.2 million loss. Then we lost 181 students at \$7k per student is another 1.2 million loss and they have another 1 million hit on retirement costs. Brent explained he has nothing to do with how the retirement funds are set up, this is the State controlling this. He stated generally the school system is not in the millage business, but before any more cuts are made, it made sense to ask the voters what they want. The law states we can do an enhancement millage only if we ask the region for a millage; therefore, we can only do this through the ESD. Brent was asked why the millage is asking for 10 years and he responded by saying they picked the middle ground by consensus. Instead of 20 years, they thought they would go for 10. If the millage passes they plan on fixing the debt. Brent stated he understands we are all trying to balance our resources. Brent stated the school system has not mismanaged things it is just a sign of the times. He stated up until 2003, we put 10 million in savings, which wasn't a good thing but that 10 million has kept up alive. We have put off buying buses, etc but we can't cut our way out of this. In 1981 we had a monopoly and we could say if we don't get the votes, we will cut busing. What changed now is in proposal A we now have competition. We can't cut sports because we will lose kids to other districts. Brent announced that the Chamber has endorsed the millage and he hopes that we will too. He stated if we lose 400k in kids you

lose 3 teachers and you always take your youngest teachers because they are the cheapest. The APS system has approximately 500 employees and 9 buildings with 12 principals and he doesn't feel this is too many. He again stated they have no local control over the budget; Lansing is controlling the purse strings. He stated it is a minimal burden to hang on to the two schools (Sunset & Long Rapids) that closed two years ago.

Ken Lobert stated his daughter, with the help of Target, bought a canoe and kayak business on the Thunder Bay River and now runs a campground. He distributed a pamphlet on it. He explained they got the money from Target to buy the business and stated this is what Target can do for you. Target will be discussing details of how they can help individuals at the May Intergovernmental meeting at the Alpena County Library.

A motion to adjourn was made at approximately 8:45 pm by Lou Baker and seconded by Jerry Lesinger. Motion passed.

The next meeting will be on Monday, April 15, 2013 at 7pm at the Alpena Township Hall.

Stan reported Cindy Davis from MTA will be coming to the June 17, 2013 meeting at Long Rapids Hall and yes, Long Rapids will have their annual picnic at 6pm with their famous chicken and the regular meeting will be held at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Wendy Johnson