

VICTOR TOWNSHIP BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES- May 20, 2009 (Tentative)

Call to Order and Pledge

A special meeting of the Victor Township Board was held at the Township Hall, 6843 Alward Road, Laingsburg, MI 48848. Supervisor Warren Malkin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call of Members

Members present: Warren Malkin, Michelle Wilsey, Donald McDonald, Dan Morris, Duane Ginther.
Members absent: None. Other governmental representatives in attendance: Victor Township Planning Commission members Roger Nickols, Richard Colf, Vern Stephens, Shirley Hazle, Kelly Chadwick, Duane Ginther (also on twp board). Citizens present: none.

Agenda - McDonald moved, second by Morris and motion carried to approve the agenda as printed.

New Business - Proposed Wetlands Protection Ordinance presentation. Victor Township Planning Commission member Vern Stephens described current regulation of wetlands. He explained that DEQ currently protects wetlands 5 acres or more (or less if they are contiguous to other wetlands). He noted that smaller wetlands are not protected by any existing law. The township could adopt an ordinance. Several townships have ordinances, including Meridian Township. A model ordinance is provided on the MTA website. Flood management is one of the reasons small wetlands are worth protecting. Destruction of wetlands without remediation or replacement causes significant water displacement issues. If you fill in a wetland, water has to move somewhere. The importance of the "sponge" function of wetlands was demonstrated this spring. Without the small wetlands, the flooding would have been much worse. Water displacement from filling shifts water to other areas - creating more problems down the road. While there are other reasons for protecting wetlands, the flooding issue is the most compelling reason to pursue this at this point. A typical wetlands ordinance allows one to fill but a replacement wetland has to be created. Wilsey asked how this might work operationally. She noted that this seems to be closely tied with planning, zoning, building, etc. She asked if it made sense to pursue this at the county. Stevens responded that it would make sense to work with the county. Several options were discussed. Wilsey asked about potential changes in state law affecting DEQ. Stephens noted that what will happen at this point is uncertain. However, it may be more important to look at local protection as the state considers shifting responsibility to the federal government.

It was generally agreed that the township should pursue this issue with the County. It was suggested that Vern Stephens present this at the next Clinton County Officers Association meeting. Wilsey will check to see if this can be on the agenda and verify the date. Roger Nickols will talk to County Commissioner Adam Stacey and Dan Leonard, County Planning to determine options for addressing wetlands protection in the county ordinance. He will invite them to the next planning commission meeting scheduled June 17, 2009.

Extended Public Comment - None.

Adjournment - McDonald moved, second by Morris and motion carried to adjourn at 7:40 p.m.

Michelle Wilsey, Clerk
Victor Township