



Clinton County, MI
6843 Alward Road Laingsburg, MI
Official Planning Commission Minutes from April 4, 2022 meeting

The regular meeting of Victor Township was called to order by Chuck Nelson at 7:00 pm.

Attendance: Present: Chuck Nelson, Tammy Ashley, Dave Sell, Dave Ginther, Tom Mitchell, Julie Townsend,

Absent: Doug Marek (Planned vacation)

Public Comment: Mike Wall introduced himself to commission and announced he has taken a position on the Water Management Commission for the Lakes Association. As water quality is a major component of Victor's master plan Mr. Wall wanted to ensure a close working relationship with the PC.

Nicole Fickes commented that she has reviewed the Restorative Lake sciences report pertaining to Lake Victoria, and many lake residents do not heed the warnings or alarm bells therein. Specifically, Ms. Fickes pointed out overall pollution in the lake and drain, lack of buffer vegetation, and influx of nutrients. Ms. Fickes lamented that many other local water features in the area have Management plans, while Lake Victoria does not. Ms. Fickes has the hopes that there are some opportunities, perhaps with support from the county or state level to educate, and perhaps spur to action residents to participate in positive lake management practices. There was discussion back and forth, ultimately settling on the summation that the lake quality has several problems contributing, and perhaps continued advocacy and awareness from the township, coupled with Mr. Walls efforts will help to move the needle on lake quality issues, including more regular water testing.

Lastly It was again pointed out that Victor Townships (nor any general law township) lacks representation on the County Commission, while most of the Commission members are from Chartered Townships or Cities, this is unusual as general law townships would benefit much more from a seat at the table. Dr. Nelson commented perhaps it is time to try and elevate this concern to the board or county level.

Agenda: Ms. Ashley motioned to approve agenda with the addition of cemeteries to unfinished business, and include roads as part of master plan discission. 2nd by Mr. Mitchell, All in favor, Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve minutes by Ms. Ashley, 2nd by Mr. Mitchell, All in favor, Motion carried.

Unfinished Business:

- **Master Plan** – Ms. Townsend gave detailed summary and documentation of the March 7 Clinton County Road Commission meeting. Major takeaways – Victor Township cost share for 2022 is \$40,667.48. Projects this year to include re-graveling of multiple sections of St. Clair, Green, Litten, and Jason Roads. Additionally, some spot gravel, over band, and brush sprays. These projects are essentially all the recommendations from PC at prior meetings. It was also noted that the County has many projects scheduled for our County Primary roads, including but not limited to Chandler (north of Award), Francis, and Clark. It was also pointed out that at Alward and Hollister there is a catch basin draining runoff from the horse farm, The Road commissioner

and Drain commissioner both inspected the basin and identified it as less than efficient at stopping particulate and other containments from the creek that eventually feeds into Lake Victoria. The County is actively looking at solutions to dissipate the heavy runoff in that area.

- **Internet workgroup update**– Mr. Sell gave updates from the Guidehouse sponsored Clinton County broadband informational meeting. Highlights included Victor was specifically named as one of the 2 most unserved areas in the county, and thus likely to be high on the priority list from the County Level, there will not buildouts at the county level began before mid-year, 2023. The county is only interested in Fiber buildout as to be future proof, And the State has Created the Michigan Office of High-Speed Broadband (MIHI), however this office remains unfunded and unstaffed. Essentially the County will be pursuing Federal grants and funding opportunities on The Townships behalf, however there will be major funding shortfalls, therefore the Township should still pursue any and all Local and State level funding opportunities to bridge that gap. Mr. Sell has been working closely with Ms. Fickes watching webinars and attending informational meetings and monitoring announcements and website to stay apprised of any opportunities. Mr. Sell also pointed out that Physical Fiber strand costs are increasing at a rapid pace, estimated to increase by 20% this year, as well as becoming difficult to acquire due to supply chain issues. Mr. Sell noted that using some Township ARPA funds to purchase fiber strand may be a smart hedge against supply problems in the future. Lastly Mr. Sell pointed out that it may be wise to write a letter to State Reps urging them to immediately fund and staff the MIHI offices, as that lack of funding is the biggest issue stalling County level broadband issues. Mr. Sell motioned to recommend the Victor Township Board draft a letter urging immediate funding and staffing of the MIHI office. 2nd by Ms. Ashley. All in favor, Motion carried.

NOTE – Mr. Sell followed up with Guidehouse and the MIHI office has subsequently been funded, and in process of staffing, rendering this motion unnecessary.

- **Marijuana Issues** – Ms. Townsend updated that a proposal to administer survey from a 3rd party company came in too high. The Board wished the PC to draft a survey for residents. Dr. Nelson presented a survey for the PC discussion. There was discussion of using the term “Agricultural Cannabis” as opposed to “Commercial Recreational and Medical Marijuana” or “Commercial Marijuana growers and producers”. It was suggested that as the latter two wording were used in vote language they are more descriptive as to the end use. Mr. Sell commented that He recommends when the survey goes out the township supports a digital option for residents, similar to the broadband survey implementation. Mr. Sell noted he would be happy to assist admin staff creating a digital option. The PC is comfortable with the current language in the survey presented by Dr. Nelson.
- **Cemeteries** – Ms. Ashley, Mr. Ginther, and Mr. Marek toured local cemeteries, she noted at Stilson and Blood damaged fencing has been removed, and the signs that had been put up are starting to take a bit of weather damage, a bead of silicone at the top will likely increase longevity of the signs. The group also pointed out that there are a lot of plastic flowers and deadfall which have been blown and scattered around, creating an eyesore. It was noted that both Stilson and Blood could use some gravel on the intra-cemetery roadways. Stilson ornate fence came up once again, there was discussion back and forth about whether the Board wants the PC to get an estimate, or if that is outside the PC purview. Ultimately Mr. Sell made the recommendation that the PC gets an estimate and turn it into the Board for consideration. Mr. Marek suggested a designated stone garden for the broken headstones that are currently piled in the bushes (blood).
- **Parks and Rec Plan** – Dr. Nelson gave update the plan is to include survey in summer tax bill.

New Business:

- **Improving communication between Township and residents** – Mr. Sell mentioned that he agreed with some Board members opinion that Constant Contact cost may outweigh potential usages, meaning He is not sure that we would have enough mailings to justify, However Mr. Sell did think a lower cost email subscription service may be worthwhile. Mr. Sell volunteered to research if there were any lower cost or free municipal services. The city of Laingsburg webpage layout and flow of information was brought up as a well done and informative site that Victor should try and emulate. Mr. Sell brought up that your average resident may not normally go searching for updates and “goings on’s” at the Township level, making for diminishing returns regarding costs of highly managed website. Ms. Ashley noted that she did not feel there was so much of an issue with the website postings itself, but rather timeliness in getting items to the website in order to be posted. Mr. Sell suggested that perhaps what we need at the PC level is a “Point Person” who is responsible to send up to our web hosting company documents and postings in a timely fashion. Mr. Sell suggested that on future PC meetings we create a permanent agenda item “Uploads” near the end of PC meetings, where the PC decides what, if any additional notices or documents should be forwarded to Website host/recommended to Board for posting, in addition to the approved minutes. As Secretary Mr. Sell volunteered for this role. At the end of discussion, the PC agreed the Website could use a review for functionality, we can look at Cheaper options for emails, and We should have and Upload section and discussion at end of PC meetings. As Mr. Marek was not present, and he is the subject matter expert for website issues, The PC will revisit these thoughts next Month.
- **Commissioner Comments** – None

Action Items:

- Mr. Sell will look into cheap/free email programs
- Mr. Sell will continue to monitor grant announcements and information
- Ms. Ashley will seek out Stilson Fence refurbish estimate
- Mr. Sell spoke with Adam Smally (Guidehouse) Rendering Motion for MIHI letter unnecessary

Motion by Mr. Sell to adjourn at 8:02 pm. Supported by Ms. Ashley All in favor. Motion carried.



Dave Sell, Secretary