

**Lake Charter Township
Special Meeting of Lake Charter Township Board of Trustees
Lake Charter Township Planning Commission
Lake Charter Township Zoning Board of Appeals
Monday, March 28, 2005**

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Supervisor John Gast. A roll call was taken. Township Board of Trustees in attendance were: Gast, Payne, Korcek, Carson, Eichler, Wolf, and Geukes. Absent: None.

A roll call of the Planning Commission was taken. In attendance were: Rochefort, Toth, Murphy, Wilk, and Wolf. Absent: None.

A roll call of the Zoning Board of Appeals was taken. In attendance were: Rambo, Kamradt, Reitz, and Wilk. Absent: Don Scharnowske Jr.

One guest, Stewart Beach, Lake Charter Township, Water Plant Superintendent was present.

Larry Nix and Lukas Hill from the firm of Williams and Works gave a presentation on what kinds of services they provide for municipalities. This firm is located in Grand Rapids MI, and has a staff of 46. They specialize in such services as civil engineering, structural engineering, sewer, water, and bridge inspection for MDOT. They assisted the City of Bridgman in updating their Master Plan in the 1980's. Lukas Hill is currently working with Lincoln Township as the Engineer and Planner of Record. They are currently working with the City of Niles, MI in updating their Master Plan and Zoning Ordinances.

Some of the services that Williams and Works provides are as follows:

Planner of Record Services: Assist municipalities in updating Master Plans, ordinances, SLUP, and zoning request reviews.

Site Plan Review: Provide support to the Planning Commission by reviewing applications for accuracy and completion, writing reports before the application is reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Policy and Procedure: Assist municipalities in implementing policies and organization skills in order to avoid delays in making decisions.

Provide education and training workshop for all Township Boards.

Lukas Hill suggested that zoning ordinances should be updated continuously. They are "living documents". Michigan state law requires that a community's Master Plan be reviewed every five years. The Master Plan should be an "enabling document" for zoning ordinances.

The firm does not work on a retainer, nor do they ask the township to sign a contract. They operate on an "as needed" basis and the charge is \$62.00 per hour.

Many Townships are now charging, “escrow fees” to the applicant for services incurred by the Township for the cost of review such as engineering, planning, or legal fees. This puts more of the burden on the applicant, and not the taxpayers as a whole.

QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Who is your largest client? A: Population wise, Grand Traverse County.

Have you ever done a feasibility study to project Township expenditures in the future?

A: The firm has never done a study like this, but has accountants who could do projections.

Could the firm work with neighboring Townships in order to share costs? i.e., sharing time with Lincoln Township. A: Yes, it would be more cost effective to work in that way.

What would be the approximate cost of a Zoning ordinance audit? (Lake Township’s was last updated in 1983).

A: The cost would be approximately 8-16 hours worth of work at \$62.00 per hour.

Who would be the point of contact person in the Township for requesting your services?

A: Usually, it is either the Township Supervisor, or the Zoning Administrator.

Can the Planning Commission get a written recommendation on a SLUP from the consulting firm? A: The firm would review the application and issue a report, along with any questions that may need to be asked by the Planning Commission to the applicant in order for the Planning Commission to make an educated decision.

A motion to adjourn the Lake Charter Township Board of Trustees meeting was made by Tom Carson, and seconded by Betty Korcek. A voice vote was taken. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED.

A motion to adjourn the Lake Charter Township Planning Commission meeting was made by Gaylord Rochefort, and seconded by Charles Toth. A voice vote was taken. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED.

A motion to adjourn the Lake Charter Township Zoning Board of Appeals meeting was made by Bob Kamradt, and seconded by Brad Reitz. A voice vote was taken. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Gloria Payne, Lake Charter Township Clerk

Fritz Wolf, Lake Charter Township Planning Commission Secretary

Brad Reitz, Secretary, Lake Charter Township Zoning Board of Appeals