

Elk Rapids Township Special Meeting Minutes, October 18, 2021

The special meeting of the Elk Rapids Township Board was held at the Elk Rapids Government Center located at 315 Bridge St. Elk Rapids. The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Amos at 6:00 pm. The meeting was recorded to provide accuracy.

Present: Supervisor Dorance Amos, Clerk Shelley Boisvert, Treasurer Mike Szymanski, Trustee Richard Hults and Trustee Matt Soper

Also Present: B. Derman, A. Nordman and B. Muma: Performance Eng., M. Zimmerman: Varnum Law, L. Nix and 13 members signed in as audience.

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Amos who then recused himself because he and his wife Julia own property in this district and may be involved in an easement for the sewer main. The meeting was turned over to M. Szymanski, as acting Supervisor.

1. Engineer's Presentation: Aaron Nordman: Nordman summarized the project stating that this is mainly a pressure sewer with individual pump packages at each property pumping sewage up to the wastewater treatment plant.
2. Attorney – Matt Zimmerman: Correspondence submitted to the Board opposing the special assessment district.
 - D. Hutchens- 7867 Cairn Hwy: Poses the question, is sewer better than septic? What group proposed this project? His concern about the financial impact on some families.
 - T. Stites – 8056 Cairn Hwy: Suggested the hearing be postponed because he believes the Twp did not have sufficient plans of the system for the public to view.
 - M. McKellar: Kuhn Rogers Law Firm: Also stated the public hearing should be postponed alleging the notice was defective because the Twp did not have sufficient plans available for the public.

Cairn Highway Sewer Public Hearing: Open Public Hearing 6:10 PM

3. Public Comment:
 - T. Stites: Read his history, as he understood it, of the informational meetings, and the information provided to the property owners, and stated that the Township should have never started the process to establish the sewer district.
 - M. Pollister: T. Stites time was cut off so Pollister read the rest of his history and his conclusions.
 - L. Prentice: Objected to the hearing itself because he believed there were not efficient sewer plans available to the property owners.
 - N. Veliquette: Supports the district as proposed. Believes this sewer project is planned for the long haul and thankful the Twp is pursuing it.
 - B. Redman: (letter read by L. Nix) Mr. Redman feels the sewer district is unjustified because there is no proof that Elk Lake is being polluted. He named other sources that may be polluting the lake.

- K. Fletcher: (letter read by L. Nix) Her family has lived on the lake for a long time. They have seen the bottom of the lake gradually change from a clear sugar sand bottom stating now there is vegetation with brown colored algae coating the bottom. After seeing and hearing about the change in the water at Maple Harbor after the sewer was installed, she was happy to pass around the petition for sewer. She listed several positive outcomes of installing sewer at this time.
- C. Standerfer: Asked if there were any updates on the stimulus money, because if we were able to utilize that toward the project that may help some folks. Szymanski stated that the township did apply for the money and we should probably get half of it soon. Once it is in the bank the Township Board will discuss what that can be used for. One possibility is for sewers. Standerfer also stated that they have a failing septic right now and have had to pump five times this year. They support the sewer.

There were no other speakers so Szymanski closed the public hearing.

Cairn Highway Sewer Public Hearing: Public Hearing Closed at 6:32 PM

Township Board Discussion:

- Boisvert stated she appreciates the comments. Installing sewer is a long process so if there are failures or signs that this should have been looked at earlier there will be no quick fixes. Individuals will have to pay large amounts of money up front without an opportunity to amortize their cost. The Township Board has stated that we want to keep the water clean. Problems were not documented but why would you wait until the lake is in trouble? We are trying to be proactive. We are giving you the opportunity for this because we have the benefit of a wastewater treatment plant. Many areas do not have that. What you are saying is wait until there is a problem and I don't believe we should do that.
 - Soper stated that it is code when you install a septic system that you have to have it at least 50 feet away from your well. It's about the drinking water. Septic systems leach whether its into the sand or goes into the lake. Being proactive as a Board is really important for all of us, now and years down the line.
4. Resolution 2021-15: Determination of Necessity and Sufficiency; Direction to Township Acting Supervisor to Make Special Assessment Roll: Resolution was read out loud by L. Nix. **Motion/S: Hults/Soper** to approve Resolution 2021-15. Roll Call Vote: Hults, Soper, Szymanski and Boisvert all voting Yes, 0 No, Amos is recused. **MOTION APPROVED.**
5. Resolution 2021-16: Resolution Establishing Hearing To Confirm Roll: Resolution was read out loud by L. Nix
Motion/S: Boisvert/Szymanski to approve Resolution 2021-16. Roll Call Vote: Soper, Szymanski, Boisvert, Hults all voting Yes, 0 No, Amos is recused. **MOTION APPROVED.**

The meeting was turned back over to Supervisor Amos who adjourned the meeting at 6:58pm.