

**GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
WATER & SEWER ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES ~ JUNE 26, 2012**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A Special Water & Sewer Advisory Committee meeting was called to order by Tim Haagsma at 3:34 p.m. on Tuesday, June 26, 2012 at the Gaines Charter Township Offices located at 8555 Kalamazoo Avenue SE, Caledonia, Michigan 49316.

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Tim Haagsma, Jeff Gritter, Jan Boone, Don R. Hilton, Sr.  
Members Absent: None

Others Present: Guy DeVries, Realtor; Deb Doehring, Realtor; Dave Waligora, Township Planner; Rhonda Gonzales (via telephone) owner of property at address 6205 Hanna Lake

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**CURRENT MATTERS:**

**Telephone Conference Call regarding 6205 Hanna Lake – Sewer Connection Charges**

Tim Haagsma introduced himself and the members of the Water & Sewer Committee and opened the floor to Mrs. Rhonda Gonzalez who joined the meeting via telephone. Mrs. Gonzalez was invited to explain her situation with her home at 6205 Hanna Lake to the Committee in regards to the sewer connection charges.

Mrs. Gonzalez stated that she had sent an email to Supervisor Hilton the evening before this meeting that explained some of her situation. She further stated that she and her husband had purchased the home 4 years ago and due to job loss for both of them they had to move away and are working on selling the home. Mrs. Gonzalez stated that she had no idea that the Ordinance was in place and only found out after it was determined that the septic system had failed. The failure of the septic system was only discovered recently with an inspection of the home by the potential buyer of the property. Mrs. Gonzalez stated that she cannot afford the connection charges and stated that the connection fees were not disclosed during a title search. To sell the property Mrs. Gonzalez stated that they had put a new roof on it and made other improvements to make it saleable. The buyers requested an inspection of the septic system and it was found to be failed. If this had been known 4 years ago it could have been dealt with at that time. This home has sold 4 times and the sewer charges have never shown up in any of the title searches. Mrs. Gonzalez stated that she hopes that by addressing this issue that she can help inform others in similar circumstances before it becomes an issue.

Jeff Gritter explained that the sewer charges for this property are *connection charges* and are not a deferred assessment. The title work that was submitted to the Township requested information about special assessments that were owed on the property to the Township. Jeff

further stated that it was disclosed on each request for title work for the property that this property was not connected to sanitary sewer and connection fees were due according to the Ordinance but the connection fees are not an assessment.

Discussion took place regarding the process of disclosure and how the Township communicates connection fees on title work requests.

Tim Haagsma explained that to all present that the Committee makes recommendations to the Township Board.

Don Hilton stated that he has had many conversations with Mrs. Gonzalez over the past several days and he is not sure what we can do to resolve the situation.

Rhonda Gonzalez stated that she hopes something good will come out of this situation. She would also like to receive notice of anything that does happen in response to this.

Tim Haagsma thanked Mrs. Gonzalez for bringing her issue to the Committee's attention and stated that if the Township can make improvements to the information we provide as a part of a request for title work we will make an effort to do this. It is in the interest of all parties; including the Township, to have a clear understanding of these items at the time of a property sale/purchase.

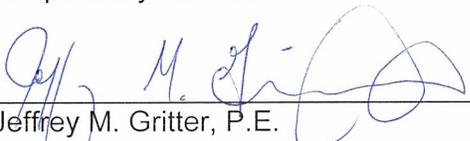
**OTHER MATTERS:**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Tim Haagsma adjourned the meeting at 4:39 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted:

  
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Jeffrey M. Gritter, P.E.  
Township Engineer