

**GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
WATER & SEWER ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES ~ May 20, 2013**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A Water & Sewer Advisory Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Tim Haagsma at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 20, 2013 at the Gaines Charter Township (GCT) Offices located at 8555 Kalamazoo Avenue SE, Caledonia, Michigan 49316.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Jan Boone, Jeff Gritter, Tim Haagsma, Don R. Hilton, Sr.  
**Members Absent:** None  
**Others Present:** Ed McDonald of McDonald Plumbing, Doug Lameyer representing Corinth Reformed Church, Mike Kortman of BGUA

**APPROVAL OF November 20, 2012 MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** By Jan Boone, supported by Don Hilton, to approve the minutes for the November 20, 2012 Water & Sewer Advisory Committee meeting as presented.  
**YES:** Jan Boone, Jeff Gritter, Tim Haagsma, Don R. Hilton, Sr.  
**NO:** None  
**ABSTAIN:** None  
**MOTION:** Carried

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None.

**CURRENT MATTERS:**

**1. Ed McDonald Variance Request – 7791 Eastern Avenue**

Jeff Gritter presented a request submitted by Mr. Ed McDonald to be allowed to connect two of the buildings he has on his property to the same water service which is not allowed by *Section 1202 (b) of the Water and Sewer Ordinance*. The two buildings are the offices for his business that he operates by Special Use on his property and an additional building where he would like to wash work trucks. Mr. McDonald has paid for his water availability fees for his entire frontage on Eastern Avenue and has connected his home to the public water system in the past.

Jeff continued that Mr. McDonald would also like to connect his home, and two of his “out” buildings to the same sewer lateral which is not allowed by *Section 1203 (b) of the Water and Sewer Ordinance*. Currently these structures are served by a septic system. Again, these buildings are where functions of his business are located and the business is operated on this property by Special Use.

Jeff recommends that the Water & Sewer Committee pass a motion recommending that the Township Board grant approval to both of the variances. Jeff stated that his recommendation is based on the business being located on the property by Special Use and that Mr. McDonald owns much of the surrounding acreage. At some time in the future Mr. McDonald is going to find that

the development value of his land is going to exceed the convenience of his business being located on the property. At the time of development the variances; if granted, will be brought into compliance with the Ordinance. Jeff added that his recommendation is based on Mr. McDonald paying his connection fees, permit fees, and inspection fees if he proceeds.

The Water & Sewer Committee discussed the request and the layout of Mr. McDonald's land.

**MOTION:** Don Hilton made a motion to recommend approval of both variances to the Township Board with the conditions as presented by the Township Engineer, supported by Jan Boone.

**YES:** Jan Boone, Jeff Gritter, Tim Haagsma, Don R. Hilton, Sr.

**NO:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**MOTION:** Carried

**2. Corinth Reformed Church Variance Request – 129 100<sup>th</sup> Street**

Mr. Doug Lameyer representing Corinth Reformed Church has submitted a request for a variance to be allowed to connect two buildings to the same water service. The buildings involved are the main Church building and the Training Center building. Jeff Gritter stated that any expansion of either building cannot occur without first improving the public water system to provide better access to fire protection (fire hydrants) for the buildings.

Jeff is recommending that the Committee pass a motion recommending approval of the request. Further expansion of the Church buildings will require improvements in the public water system which will eliminate the variance if and when these expansions occur. Jeff also noted that the Church owns a substantial area of property in the vicinity of Division Avenue and 100<sup>th</sup> Street and development in this area may assist in expanding the water system to eliminate this variance.

**MOTION:** Jan Boone made a motion to recommend approval of the variance to the Township Board with the conditions as presented by the Township Engineer, supported by Don Hilton.

**YES:** Jan Boone, Jeff Gritter, Tim Haagsma, Don R. Hilton, Sr.

**NO:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**MOTION:** Carried

**3. Mobile Home Containment Program – Brookshire Estates.**

Mr. Mike Kortman of the BGUA presented a cost estimate for a containment project for the Brookshire Estates MHP located off of 76<sup>th</sup> Street. Mike stated that much of the expense for this project is for materials and includes the expense of installing a new 6" water meter for the MHP. The total estimated expense is \$22,500.00 and includes expenses for some private contractors to assist BGUA staff with the project.

Jeff Gritter stated that this is the last containment project for the Township and will provide containment for all of the MHP's located in Gaines Township bringing this effort to a close. This improves the safety for all of our customers that rely on the public water system and helps us to continue to maintain the high quality of potable water we deliver.

**MOTION:** Don Hilton made a motion to recommend approval of the project to the Township Board with an estimated cost of \$22,500.00 to be funded by Water & Sewer Department Funds, supported by Jan Boone.

**YES:** Jan Boone, Jeff Gritter, Tim Haagsma, Don R. Hilton, Sr.

**NO:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**MOTION:** Carried

#### 4. Update on Utility Rates

Jeff Gritter gave a brief update on future utility rates. Every spring the City of Wyoming issues an estimate of the rates that it will be charging to all wholesale customers for their upcoming fiscal year which runs from July to June. Based on these new rates from the City Jeff stated that effect on Township utility rates is relatively small: the water rate is estimated to need to increase by \$0.07/1,000 gallons and the sewer rate is estimated to need to increase by \$0.06/1,000 gallons. These are early estimates of utility rates as the Township's complete their rate studies in the fall. This item is being presented as information no action is needed at this time.

#### 5. Future Water System Improvements

Jeff Gritter presented information about a possible land purchase that has been initiated by Byron Township relating to future water system improvements. This potential land purchase is in the area of the Wilson Avenue/M-6 interchange and would allow the Townships to construct a second connection to the City of Wyoming transmission watermain. Long term, staff from both Townships anticipate that this second connection will be required for reliability of the water system. In the short term, Byron Township would be able to make use of this point of connection to serve the local area with a public water supply but more important is the long term benefit to both Townships to have a redundant water supply. Currently Byron Township has executed a 30 day option for the property that can be extended by an additional 30 days at a cost of \$2,500 for the option and \$2,500 for the extension. If the property is closed on in the first 30 day period this would be applied to the purchase price. If the property is closed on in the second 30 day period the cost of the extension would be applied to the purchase price. Currently Byron has offered a purchase price of \$200,000 for the 5 acre parcel. In accordance with the 2003 Agreement with Byron Township, Gaines would have some financial responsibility as this possible purchase goes forward. During the option period soil borings are going to be taken from the site to determine if a future water tank could be located on the site as well as other supporting structures for the water system. Title work will also need to be completed etc... prior to closing.

Jeff also discussed the map from the study prepared in 2010 that reviewed various alternatives for water service to the northwest area of Byron Township and the different locations where this connection might be made. The property under consideration was identified in 2010 as a potential location for a future water connection.

**MOTION:** Jeff Gritter made a motion to recommend to the Township Board that the Supervisor and Engineer be authorized to move forward with the purchase of the property with Gaines Township paying for its share of the cost according to the 2003 Agreement with Byron Township including due diligence expenses and closing expenses from Water & Sewer funds, supported by Jan Boone.

**YES:** Jan Boone, Jeff Gritter, Tim Haagsma, Don R. Hilton, Sr.

**NO:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**MOTION:** Carried

**OTHER MATTERS:**

**a. Update on Dutton Industrial Drive Easement for Watermain.**

Jeff Gritter stated that since the November, 2012 meeting he has called and left a number of voicemails with the property owner of the area in which the watermain easement is proposed to be located. The property owner just sent an email a couple of days ago asking what the offer was for the easement. Jeff stated that he has not responded with an offer yet. Jeff also added that he has asked Mr. Jim White about valuing the easement and what condemnation proceedings would involve if this ever got that far. The Township is required to make a fair market offer and so an appraisal will be needed. Jeff has found a company that can do this for the Township and if the Committee has no issues this will be the direction in which we proceed.

The Committee discussed this issue further and asked Jeff to continue with the appraisal and making an offer to the property owner.

**b. Update on BG2 Meter Station – Meter Replacement Project.**

Jeff updated the Committee on this project. The hope was to design and construct the project before high demand season started; however, one of the pieces of equipment needed for the project has a long lead time and ordering it and installing it on the schedule envisioned was not feasible. This project will go forward in late fall.

**c. Election of Officers.**

Tim Haagsma stated that it is time again to elect officers for this Committee.

**MOTION:** Don Hilton made a motion have Tim Haagsma as Chair and Jeff Gritter as Secretary of this Committee, supported by Jan Boone.

**YES:** Jan Boone, Jeff Gritter, Tim Haagsma, Don R. Hilton, Sr.

**NO:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**MOTION:** Carried

**d. Other matters**

Tim Haagsma brought up the need for a fifth member of the Committee. Traditionally, this Committee has 5 people as members. Since Brian Tingley left the Township we have had an open seat on the Committee. Jeff stated that he thought it would be good to include a member of the general public on this Committee for more diverse input. Don Hilton stated that Committee appointments have traditionally been done closer to the end of a fiscal year. This is a while to wait for but it would be good to find a fifth person in time for the appointment to be done along with rest of the Township Committee appointments.

Jeff Gritter stated that the Township has been sued in small claims court for \$1,313.00 by a Mr. Dennis Bell. Jeff discussed this with Jim White and he recommends appearing in Court with the documentation that the Township has in regards to Mr. Bell and his water meter. The Township Water & Sewer Department has been dealing with Mr. Bell and what appears to be a leak for over a year. It appears the leak has been resolved once Mr. Bell replaced the “guts” in his toilets but Mr. Bell is claiming he needs a refund. It has been explained to Mr. Bell that he is responsible for the condition of his plumbing system inside of his home but based on his claim he does not agree with this.

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Tim Haagsma adjourned the meeting at 4:56 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted:

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Jeffrey M. Gritter, P.E.  
Township Engineer