

DRAFT Minutes
SOUTHWEST WASHTENAW COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
Wednesday, May 10, 2006
Freedom Township Hall

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Pat Vaillencourt, Chair and all stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Township Officials Present: Pat Vaillencourt, Village President, Ron Mann, Manchester Township Supervisor; Bob Little, Freedom Township Supervisor; Ron Ellison, Manchester School Board; Tom Lavender, Sharon Township Trustee.

Absent: Karl Racenis, Manchester DDA Chairman

Others Attending: Megan Torrance for State Rep. Pam Byrnes; Carleen Nelson-Nesvig, Manchester Enterprise ; Ray Berg, Wireless Washtenaw Steering Committee; Barb Fuller, Jessica Ping Mills, candidate for County Commissioner 3rd District, Shannon Brown, candidate for 52nd House District; Sara Bassett

Approval of the Agenda: Mann moved, seconded by Ellison that the agenda be approved with the addition of the Scio Township Revenue Sharing Resolution under Other Business.

Approval of the Minutes: Vaillencourt explained that the Minutes from the April 12, 2006 meeting were not available and would be ready for approval at the June meeting.

Candidates were invited to introduce themselves and say a few words. Jessica Ping Mills – R-Lodi Township is running for County Commissioner 3rd District. Shannon Brown – R – Manchester Township is running for State Representative 52nd District.

Public Safety and Justice: Vaillencourt reported that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners (BOC) officially recognized the value of the Public Safety and Justice Steering Committee by formalizing its status as a Committee of the BOC. The PS&J Steering Committee will provide a county-wide perspective to the BOC on the jail, the Courts and Deputy over time. Vaillencourt will continue to serve and noted that their calendar for meetings will be adopted when they next convene.

CEO “Brown Bag: Mann attended and reported on the May meeting.

No discussion on coordination of sign ordinances. More police services are desired and better communication is needed between the Sheriff and the BOC.

Pat Kelly of Dexter will compile a comparison of the charges levied by the various units of government for assessments. Mann explained that charges for such services should reflect the actual cost and not be used to generate extra revenue. Mann and Little shared examples of the range in fees for similar services. Emphasis was given to the importance of record keeping as the effects of the 1987 Land Division Act start to materialize.

SWWCOG Committee Updates:

Fire Cost Recovery: Have not met.

Mineral Extraction Ordinance: Little explained that this is still being worked on.

Vaillencourt encouraged a meeting to compare ordinances and consider changes to achieve

uniformity amongst the townships. Mann and Little remarked that the State is encouraging the standardization of ordinances between townships because it is persuasive during court challenges. The Townships are in agreement that such coordination is valuable.

Little went on to describe Barrett Paving's request to expand their gravel pit and resultant lake from 35 to 140 feet in depth and from 59 to 120 acres in surface area. Freedom Township has concerns about the proposed expansion's impact on their aquifers and has retained experts to provide a hydro-geological study.

Joint Police Services: The SWWCOG has met with the Chelsea Police Department to discuss the possibility of extending their coverage area. Vaillencourt explained that as of 2008, the Village will be unable to afford to contract with the County Sheriff for police services at their current level of coverage. Vaillencourt believes that fragmentation will weaken the coordination and county-wide response. The State has made it clear that there will be no additional money to help defray the cost of police coverage. The County has outlined the contracting cost for deputies as follows:

2006	\$ 99,000 per deputy
2007	6% increase + \$10K for Overtime
2008	\$143,000 per deputy
2009	4% increase from 2008

Vaillencourt noted that citizens in the rural areas of the County shoulder a higher burden for public safety due to lower population density and lower median incomes.

Regional Planning: By May 15, 2006 there should be word about whether a grant will be awarded to Washtenaw County to promote standardization of Regional and County Plans. The SWWCOG Regional Plan was referenced in the grant as an example of the benefits of such cooperation.

Wireless Washtenaw: Ray Berg, Freedom Township resident and Wireless Washtenaw Steering Committee member, reported on the progress of bidding and recommendation for a preferred vendor. Ray continues to advocate for the rural interests, reminding the Steering Committee of the unique considerations and enthusiastic interest of the western part of the County. The most current and accurate updates are available at www.ewashtenaw.org

Election of Officers to one-year terms:

Chair: Little, supported by Mann, nominated Vaillencourt. She was unanimously elected.

V-Chair: Vaillencourt, supported by Little, nominated Mann. He was unanimously elected.

Secretary: Vaillencourt, supported by Little nominated Racenis. He was unanimously elected.

Roundtable Discussion

Manchester Schools / Ron Ellison: Ellison noted the ongoing school funding difficulties. He reported that the steel is up and block work has started on the bus garage. Final interviews are being conducted for a new High School Principal. This week is Teacher Appreciation Week.

Sharon Township / Tom Lavender: A new Sharon Township Zoning Ordinance was adopted and copies will be available at the District Library. The M-52 / Pleasant Lake intersection upgrades are underway and expected to be complete sometime in Sept. A resolution was passed to establish office hours at the Township Hall and to eliminate home based offices. The Township records will henceforth be kept at the Township Hall. Exterior upgrades to the Township Hall have been completed and the egress is now ADA compliant. In 2009, M-52 will be straightened out between the gravel pit at Peckins Road and Grass Lake Road. A new electrical sub-station will be established on the north east corner of Peckins and M-52.

Freedom Township / Robert Little: The Fredonia Grocery was robbed recently. A Trooper from the State Police reported to the Township that a suspect had been identified. A traffic study is being conducted by the Road Commission to determine the benefit of further restricting passing on Pleasant Lake Road.

Bridgewater Township: No representative was present to comment.

Manchester Township / Ron Mann: At the next Township meeting, the Planning Commission will report on the number of splits being recorded and the updating of their Zoning Ordinance.

Manchester Village / Pat Vaillencourt: On May 18, 2006 there will be a public hearing on the DDA receiving TIF dollars. More than 1000 jobs have been lost over the last 5 years. Fixed costs are being spread over fewer users and as a result water rates will be raised. The Village Master Plan is being discussed, as it is now 3 years old. A marketing CD is available to promote interest in locating businesses to the Village. A Farmer's Market is being launched on Thursdays from 3-7pm on Adrian Street in conjunction with the Gazebo Concerts.

Other Business:

Scio Township passed a resolution to point out the State's obligation to honor Revenue Sharing commitments to local units of government. A copy of the resolution was circulated.

Mann noted that full-color 2005 Aerial Photos will be available on CD or DVD the end of June or early July at no cost to local governments. Kim Wraight, Washtenaw County GIS Coordinator is the contact. The huge cost-savings on the project was made possible by collaboration between Washtenaw County and SEMCOG.

Community Septic Ordinances is another area that would benefit from standardization between Townships.

The meeting was adjourned at 9pm.

The next regular meeting will be held June 14, 2006 at the Bridgewater Township Hall.