

FREEMAN TOWNSHIP BOARD CLARE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

At a meeting of the Freeman Township Board of Clare County, Michigan, held at 7280 Mannsiding Road, Lake, Michigan on

Special Board Meeting, Saturday, the 13th of July, 2019

Present Board Members: Supervisor Housler, Treasurer Lackie, Clerk Lightfoot, Trustees Barnett & Sable.

TIME: 10:00 a.m. Call to Order and Pledge to the Flag

Roll Call was taken with all members present, along with 59 citizens. (7 more coming in later for a total of 66 citizens.)

Supervisor Housler noted we start the regular meeting then go into the Public Hearing. Once the Public Hearing is completed, we will return to the regular meeting.

He also noted he will go through where we've been and where we are headed, along with the rules that should be followed during public comment.

HISTORY: Years ago, we had a 40 yard open container for some period of time. As the volume increased, then we went to garbage trucks in at the transfer site. They would compact the garbage and then the garbage trucks would leave. After the volume continued to increase, the Board went to the current system with a permanent compacting unit. About 18-24 months ago, the volume of refuse started to dramatically increase, perhaps doubling. It has become an inefficient operation gauged by the compactor at the end of the day being some degree of full – (frequently it is sent back $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ full because it won't leave enough room for the next trash day). Being highly inefficient, a second compactor would help solve this. That way we could wait until the first compactor is full and then switch over to the second one. Another problem is lack of employees to man the transfer station. Employees have to be willing to work in extreme hot/cold temperatures, holiday weekends, etc. Due to this the Board has been looking for ways to solve this as we believe the volume and inefficiencies are going to get worse. So where do we go from here? (1) Do nothing and get out of the business, letting people contract on their own with a trash company. Supervisor Housler received information from someone in Isabella County that does this and their price is around \$300/year comparable with all the different carriers around. This is the more expensive way because there is not a central coordinating agency and not a guaranteed payment. (2) upgrade the existing station with a second compactor being installed, upgrade paving, concrete slab under 2nd compactor. Between the equipment, paving, concrete, engineering services, bonding attorney costs, etc. we would be looking at approximately \$385,000 to do it right. (3) curbside pickup. We set up a special assessment district in April where we estimated the cost at that time to be \$150/year. We received a bid from American Waste. The estimate of \$150/year ended up being correct as the bid was for \$141, plus we would need to add on administrative costs.

No matter what happens, with each option it is going to cost more than we are currently paying. One of the big differences with the curbside pickup is only those with a residence will

be assessed. Vacant properties will NOT be assessed and currently they are. If we stick with the current system, everyone will be assessed.

At the current time recycling is not included with curbside pickup.

One of the issues we have is if we stick with the current system, do the updates and we can't get employees to work, we still have a problem. If we used contract labor, the labor costs would be a lot more.

Public comment section will be open soon, however before that Supervisor Housler wanted to read a synopsis of the comments from the letters we received. (Letters received from: Michael and Evelyn Aliotta; Timothy Bargo; William Batz; Timothy & Nancy Beckett; Steve, Rob & Martin Benda; Veronica Bohannon; Phillip Borawski; Lawrence Bova; William Brinkmeier; Steve & Angela Burzynski; Frederick Coyle; Robert & Diane Dennis; H.J. Doss; Mary Eskola; Laura Fuller; Donald Johns; Shellie Kelly; Bryan Kimbel; Madonna LaVerge; Josephine Leaman, Josephine & Daniel Maltese; Gordon Masson; James & Joanne Mindorff; Wilton Morris; Jeff & Christine Nestlehut; Ilene Ortwine; Leslie & Scott Schmidt; David & Kelly Seelbinder; Richard Sliwa; Elizabeth Smith; Robert & Sheila Smith; Todd Snyder; Sue Thrushman; Marco Vitale; Joseph Zdanowski.)

Synopsis of comments: Likes current system – only part-time residents – container furnished by contractor? – heavy trucks on roads – garbage containers left out for extended time – just don't want it – bear and varmit problems – live on private road – second home in LOP, not convenient – township is creating problems for non-residents – does not need service, takes trash home – current system is low cost and very effective – likes the cheap price and doesn't want to change.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Supervisor Housler set forth the rules for the public comment time. One person is allowed to speak at a time and should come up to the podium. You need to state your full name and address. Comments will only be received about the special assessment district. Comment time will be limited to 3 minutes and will be timed. The Board is not here to argue with folks or to debate this issue, but to hear your comment in opposition or support of this proposal.

JOHN HAINBECHER – 2399 Leaman Trail – Private Road – closest road Cedar – 1/8 mile from home – bears on property – big objection – large item at curb once a month – likes current system – only see full recycling – little ones caused backup then go to compactor.

AARON HOFFMAN – 6400 Tamarack Trail – against – 4-5 inches of ice last year – older can't drag to curb – 1 day per week – animals – people won't take barrel to garage – Canadians can't take trash across border – how much raise rate.

SUSAN MEYER – 2120 Grass Lake Avenue – How much money assessed to reimburse home owners – part-time is there a discount – resident raccoon – can knock container off – underground containers or metal ones locked – against..

LINDA MCCAFFREY – 11245 Cedar Road – against – containers heavy – large and msall compactor – put own garbage in – drastic change.

NANCY BECKETT – 3520 Pinehurst – against – City of Detroit – squirrels and raccoons eat thru – non-homestead taxpayer – consider lower amount – end of street how do I know they'll come – use seasonal compactor – why special assessment vs millage.

BILL BETTIS – 871 Norway – I wouldn't show up to work for \$10/hour – experience at non-monitored dumpster – other people dump at my place

ED NOVAK – 2070 Grass Lake Avenue – in favor of current system – penny wise pound foolish – garbage cans at side of road – underpaying people at dump – not complaining about cost – willing to pay more – idea foolish one – can't tell animals to stay away.

JACK KUDANIAN – 2200 Grass Lake – 2nd homeowner – don't use very much – maybe 30 days – minimum garbage and take home – drastic increase volume of garbage – against – don't want garbage cans on road – access on Wednesday and Sunday – 1 day a week and don't make garbage sit longer – does board make final decision? You should send letter asking everyone yes or no whether they want curbside or not – (Supervisor Housler noted we are following the procedures put out by State Law).

ROBERT MANNOOCH – 881 Norway – part-time – people will leave container out - what happens when snowplow comes out – large items attract animals – key pads for compactors – against.

DEBRA COBURN – 10640 Ashard Road – transfer station might need tweak – need different plan – got bears and saw bobcat – coons and skunks – I build cage – big haul to take down road – winter plow comes thru the township maybe 3 times a winter – what to do when they don't come – against – more plans for transfer station.

JOSEPHINE LEAMAN – 2200 Leaman Trail – (Already sent in letter against) – animal issue – can't get blue container to road – can't leave big container on other persons property at end of road – need another compactor – pay employees more money – I can dump my own trash.

STEPHANIE KEPLER – 2400 Leaman Trail – dumpsters by bear – garbage out there – DNR says put trash away – get out at dump – we put our own – trucks trash road – against.

WALTER POCKEL – 771 Norway – against – on hill – be in lake with a good wind – don't live here – we don't come back for weeks – old transfer station was in bad spot – new place is good – pay employees more money – not other company work there.

LAVONDA KUDANIAN – 2200 Grass Lake – once a week – no recycling – seasonable – cost going down in winter – take recycling home – plow trucks aren't going to be able to plow roads – raise hourly rate – take recycling away – winter should be lower costs – better plan.

CAROL BEDNARKIEWICZ – 7190 Oak Hollow Trail – against – private – animals – pay more money to employees – 1 day a week – like recycling – tweak what we have.

BILL BLAIN – 8771 Monroe – blight – tires on road – trash all over the place – trash all over state land – against.

STEVE BENDA – 460 & 480 W Windover Lake (Already sent in letter against) – opposed – seasonal – asset in transfer station – controls trash – detour from community – not pretty.

BARRY REYNOLDS – 700 W Windover Road – not opposed or for curbside – have questions – the property transfer station is on – revert back to owner? – equipment taken off? – need another compactor? Lots of questions how played out - \$150/housing unit.

GARY MAAS – 7601 Monroe – against – winter plow trucks – where do you put it? – enough trash on roads – irresponsible not to recycle – larger compactor - \$40 plus assessment? (no - \$40 falls off) – Losing money? (Supervisor Housler noted breaking even, but inefficient system.)

HOWARD DOSS – 4076 Lake Station Avenue – (already sent in letter against) against – part-time – living unit on it – here on weekends – Monday thru Friday pickup a problem – pickup on weekends would work – concerned about owner classification – living unit – what to do if don't have living unit – website – cost analysis – like to see.

PHYLLIS KOCK – 2130 Grass Lake Avenue – against – summer to move large container – bad weather its hard to drag to end of driveway – point that road commission trucks come thru 400 mph and take out mailbox.

STAN WARNER – 510 Grass Lake Avenue – Deer camp with cabin – would assessment apply? (yes) – haven't used in 20 years – 3 parcels side by side - \$40 on each contact the Assessor – he can combine – against it – same names on slip on tax bills.

LARRY GIBSON – 3170 Pinehurst – vote again.

VERONICA BOHANNON – 10738 Cedar – (already sent in letter against) – opinion property could be relooked at – do away with recycling – great but if not done correctly – why push for October 1? – against proposal – did you contact DEQ – (Supervisor Housler hasn't heard back yet) – Public forum in August? (Supervisor Housler noted the board received comments and board will make a decision – 2nd public hearing is for assessment roll.)

BILL BATZ – 10758 Cedar – (already sent in letter against) – 2012 brought up before – (Supervisor Housler noted it was not brought up in 2012) – against

ANN BENDA – 480 W Windover Lake – (already sent in letter against) – Thanks for sending letter – helpful – letter to help what was talked about – is paving necessary expense – if we proceed – can you layout private contractor service – current works well – make adjustments.

JOYCE MARTIN – 6021 Tamarack Trail – Not for or against – current footprint of Ashard Road site - limited to fenced area? (Supervisor Housler noted yes, we can't expand past fence) – paving part now that's gravel with rain is rough – recycle left bags of trash outside gates – going to be fined.

MARCO VITALE – 10638 Cedar (already sent in letter against) – 1 with residence and 1 without – against – I'll pay more for service I like – curbside not answer – we're taking in information – if we get 20% of area who don't want – you would respect.

THOMAS BLAIN – 962 Lafayette Trail – own 4 properties and 3 are residences – am I paying \$450/year? – 3 have houses – (yes) – I'm against.

BILL MCNERNEY – 760 WINDOVER LAKE – against

BOBBIE GIBSON – 3170 Pinehurst – against

ALICIA TWORK – 9595 Cadillac Drive – against

CINDY KLEIMAN – 910 Windover Drive – against

RONALD RODGERS – 7393 Mannsiding Road – against

WILLIAM WILTSE – 3560 Lake Tahoe Trail – against – don't use but a few times – eliminate recycling – feel good thing – not a profitable avenue

Supervisor Housler asked if there were any other folks would like to be heard.

CHARLES SIMS – 6001 Tamarack Trail – against – have downstate – animals get in – roadside decent – township downstate in 2 months there were issues – snowplow issues – pay guys more.

Supervisor Housler asked again if there were any more comments.

NOVAK – approve of board trying to save money, but keep current system.

Motion by Trustee Sable, seconded by Trustee Barnett to close the public hearing. Ayes (Housler, Lackie, Lightfoot, Sable, Barnett.) Nays 0.

A citizen asked whether there will be a follow-up meeting and when. Supervisor Housler noted the board will consider comments and there could be a hearing in August but will only be to set up the special assessment district.

Plans were original to hear public comment and then approve resolution #1. Supervisor Housler noted his personal opinion after hearing from audience, (we anticipated and are not surprised by opposition), that we should take a look at other plans. We might not change our minds, but will take a look. If we want to proceed, we don't want to slow down and are still aiming for October 1.

Citizen: Don't let timetable push you to make a wrong decision. Supervisor Housler noted we are flexible.

Gary Maas – overwhelming amount of people don't want, what is decision.

Supervisor Housler noted the board has studied this, and after receiving information today, he feels we should take a further look at solutions. There are valid issues for us to take a look at. We will put a worksheet together. We're a small unit of government and a mass mailing is expensive. We will try to do through the website.

John Phillips, who noted he is neutral on curbside asked if the board would think about no recycling at the transfer station.

Veronica Bohannon said to do away with recycling and purchase new compactor. Can you put new compactor where recycling is now.

Donald Kowalske informed those present that Lake George has a recycling unit that anyone can put their recyclables in. It is there once a month in the parking lot across from the Swiss Inn.

Citizen – go to one day a week.

Citizen – why do we send compactor back ½ full. Supervisor Housler noted when the dumpster is ½ full on Wednesday, we can't afford to have it full BEFORE Sunday shift is over.

Citizen – How many residents? Supervisor Housler noted there are approximately 2200 properties and 985 residences.

Joyce Martin asked how many men usually work? Supervisor Housler noted that typically we have 2 during normal times. During times when we have the open top or during extreme heat, we have extra personnel for safety reasons. Our crew is older and we don't want to take any health risks. Do you have a reserve list? We have 3 backup employees. Where do people apply? At the Township office with the Clerk.

Citizen – have the transfer station open 1 day for 7 hours per week and pay the people more.

John Phillips wanted those in attendance to know that these workers volunteer to do this, but get paid. It's not a fun job.

Gary Maas noted that curbside service has been presented before, but it wasn't in 2012 and it was shot down.

Supervisor Housler thanked everyone for coming out and closed the public comments.

Clerk Lightfoot, after hearing different things mentioned during public comment, mentioned the following. (At this time she is not stating for or against curbside). Some mentioned they don't use the transfer site or not often...how are we to tell whether someone uses it or not and how many times. People are leaving items in front of the transfer station. People from other communities are coming in. We are having issues with recycling. People mentioned removing their own trash but as stated earlier there are older people in this community and they wouldn't be able to get it in the compactor.

Supervisor Housler asked for consideration for Resolution #1 and asked for a motion. There being no motions, resolution #1 was not adopted.

Supervisor Housler noted that the Board will be considering the different options put forth today.

Adjourn: Motion by Trustee Sable, seconded by Trustee Barnett to adjourn the meeting.
TIME: 8:29 p.m.

Alan Housler, Supervisor

Julie Lightfoot, Township Clerk