

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF IRONWOOD  
PUBLIC HEARING/SPECIAL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 8, 2008

At 5:00 p.m. the special meeting was called to order by Supervisor Estola with the pledge of allegiance. Rollcall was taken.

PRESENT: Supervisor Rick Estola, Clerk Gayla Salmi, Treasurer Jyl Olson.

TRUSTEES: Marilyn Partyka, John Suutala, & Frank Genisot.

ABSENT: Bernie Brunello.

GUESTS: Jean Verbos Administrator for Gogebic Range Water Authority (GRWA), and Randy Scott.

ALSO PRESENT: Ken Nikula, Adolph Passint, Donald Hakkinen, Ronald Kremposki, Erik Gunard, Marilou Vincent, Clarence Fredrickson, Rudolph Cigallio, Patricia Begalle, Ray Begalle, Paulind Anderson, Don Mildren, Irene Mildren, Priscilla estola, Gerald Olson, Rhonda Mattson, John Wyssling, Janice Wyssling, Jay Kangas, Lea Kangas, Betty Flint, Kim Mattson.

A motion to open public hearing was offered by Genisot, Supported by Partyka.

The motion carried on a unanimous roll call vote.

**PURPOSE OF PUBLIC MEETING:**

To hear comments regarding the SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT for Water System 08- Water System Improvements Project, and setting second public hearing.

The clerk reported on publishing and mailing Notice of Public Hearing.

Supervisor Estola introduced GRWA Administrator Jean Verbos, and Wilcox Engineer Randy Scott to discuss the aspects of the project and the special assessment district.

Mr. Scott opened the discussion by explaining the project began in 2000 after the City of Ironwood had served a 'shut off' notice to the township. At that time, Township became a member of the GRWA. GRWA consists of 11 voting members. The Township has two votes on the GRWA board. The GRWA board establishes and negotiates water rates.

The rates will stabilize when water is received from the GRWA.

Mr. Scott further explained that the Township water lines are very old, and need replacement. In 2003 a major leak on East Jackson Road was replaced through GRWA, and USDA low interest loan.

The project currently is a water line from Grand View Hospital to the Wal-mart line/East Jackson Road, up Lake Road from East Jackson to Wildwood Apartments. At this time we do not need a well site. It would further take care of the major east/west roads, Vanderhagen Rd. which are currently serviced. There are some outlying areas that will be too far to reach with this project. This is a \$5,000,000 project, the Township has received a grant of \$2,250,000 and a low interest loan of \$2,700,000. the project is set to begin in early spring 2009 and completed in summer 2010. We are trying to get ahead of the resurfacing of Lake Road in the spring.

(Engineer go over system)

The Special Assessment is to pay the upfront costs. The cost is \$3.32 per running foot- which can be spread over three years. May be charged 4.25% over the three years. Anybody hooking up in system after the special assessment period, or during the three year period, will be charged to catch up to the assessment in a tap in fee.

Basically, we are swapping the high City water rates for the loan payment. Will receive better water, from a different source, new water lines, and stabilize water rates. The approximate charge will be \$60 per month for a family of 2 using 3300 gallons. Currently the rates are at \$56 per month. The City passed on a 25% increase in 2006, 10% increase in 2007, 9% increase in 2008. Currently the Township pays the City of Ironwood \$210,000 per year for water.

The Supervisor called for objections or comments to implement Special Assessment District.

WRITTEN COMMENTS: The Clerk read correspondence from three constituents:

1. Don Mildren "We have been paying taxes and high water and sewer and other bills over 40 years. We can not afford to pay any increase in bills." Prop No. 03-01-543-800 Don and Irene Mildren N10408 Lake Rd. Ironwood, Mi. 49938
2. Steve Thomas "I am filing a written objection to the special assessment district for water system improvements. I believe that this will entail a well and a main which will service all potential users in the township, not just those in the district. Further, the district does not include sections 34 and 35, which I believe is where the well field will be located. I also believe that this water source will also fulfill the city of Ironwood's requirement for a backup system and that they shall bear some of the cost. I am also attaching a document which states that I am not on the township system due to an easement which provides for my hookup to city water forever." Steve Thomas Prop No. 03-01-548-800 Steve Thomas N10431 Lake Rd. Ironwood, Mi. 49938
3. Marilou Vincent "By way of this letter I am objection to the contract between the Charter Township of Ironwood and the Gogebic Range Water Authority. As a recent property owner living on a fixed income, I was taken aback at the cost of water and sewage. My water bills are approximately \$85.00 to \$95.00 per month. My question is, how much higher are they going to be? I would also like to know if you have any provisions or programs for those who cannot afford to pay these astronomical fees?" Marilou Vincent Prop No. 03-01-528-500 N10585 Lake Rd Ironwood, Mi. 49938

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS: Comments were heard from various constituents:  
Asking about fire protection enhancement due to the new water system. Scott- Naturally better pressure and working fire hydrants will enhance protection.  
Will new water meters be installed? Scott- new meters would be installed on a as needed basis, the new meters cost \$150 however the deposit in place would be applied against the \$150.  
When will Sunset Rd be addressed? Scott- in the summer 2010.  
Several constituents vocalized their support for the project.

At 5:50 p.m. hearing no other comments, a motion was offered by Olson supported by Partyka to adjourn the Public Hearing, and reconvene the Special meeting. The motion carried on a unanimous roll call vote.

Special meeting:

Supervisor Estola presented Resolution 2008-9 which will direct assessor to create Special Assessment District for the Water System Improvement Project, setting a second Public Hearing for September 25, 2008 at 5:00 p.m.

A motion was offered by Genisot supported by Suutala to adopt Resolution 2008-9. the motion carried on a unanimous roll call vote.

At 5:55 p.m. hearing no other comment a motion was offered by Estola supported by Suutala to adjourn the Special meeting. The motion carried.

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Rick Estola – Supervisor

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Gayla Salmi - Clerk