

CASCADE CHARTER TOWNSHIP
CITIZENS PFAS COMMITTEE MEETING

January 19, 2023 at 4:00pm

Kent District Library– Wisner Center
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

Members Present: Supervisor Grace Lesperance, Ben Greemann, John Lipford, Patti Baldwin

Members Absent: Kris White

Others Present: Township Manager (TM) Ben Swayze, Engineer Aric Thorne, Management Office Administrative Assistant Jessica Stine, P Novak of Prien Newhof, K Koster of Prien Newhof, Walter Bujak of the Kent County Board of Commissioners, Resident Marcy Dean

ARTICLE 1. Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 4:06 pm.

ARTICLE 2. Approval of the Agenda

Supervisor Lesperance requested GVMC Airport Access Study Discussion be added to the agenda. Motion by Supervisor Lesperance, Supported by Member Baldwin to approve the agenda with the afore mentioned addition. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 3. Acknowledge Visitors & Public Comment

There were not any visitors who wished to comment.

ARTICLE 4. Approval of Minutes from the 10/6/2022 meeting

Motion by Supervisor Lesperance, supported by Member Baldwin to approve the 10/6/2022 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 5. Update on Public Water Extension Project

Koster from Prien Newhof explained that, for Phase 1 of the project, 95 homes were immediately able to begin connecting to the water main and 66 of them have already connected. The cost to connect service is coming out to approximately \$9800 each, matching the project budget.

The contractor didn't start the project in the fall of 2022 due to weather and their workload; they will now begin work in April of 2023. The contractor originally planned to have a speedy and intense push to have all homes connected by the end of July but the Township has requested they stretch the timeline so there will be less impact on the neighborhoods. Member Baldwin shared that the houses that have connected are reporting positive feedback and smooth connections.

Prien Newhof will soon be sending a communication to around 170 home owners stating that they'll be the next owners eligible to connect. TM Swayze is working on a draft to send out Monday and the plumbers are also asking if they can begin reaching out to residents.

Resident Dean has been in contact with Prien Newhof and Engineer Thorne about what size line is needed and asked if there will be communication sent to her neighbors so that they know they may need a different setup than the typical size line and pressure. TM Swayze stated that the communication that goes out will explain that residents will need to meet with their plumber to discuss the variables specific to each property; the plumber will then relay that information to Prien Newhof and the contractor.

Koster explained that, once they break ground, they will have 168 days to complete the work or, at the latest, they have to start by April 18th and should be done by mid-September. Member Baldwin asked if they could foresee any additional delays and Koster said that he didn't see any currently.

TM Swayze explained the multiple avenues of funding this project including the C2R2 Grant, MDEC, the Water Resource Development Act of 2022 (WRDA), and County ARPA funds. The WRDA funds have been signed into law but appropriations still need to take place and should become available around the time phase two of the project is underway. The Township is still trying to determine if the county ARPA funds will be beneficial as the City of Grand Rapids applied for the funds, which Cascade isn't currently accepting, because that would require the Township to stop pursuing the airport on this matter.

Phase two of the project is 90% designed. Koster said that they are working out the street crossing but the project will be ready for bid once the funding is sorted out.

ARTICLE 6. Project Restoration Update & Discussion

Koster shared that 20 to 30 houses had trees removed that will be addressed when remediation begins. TM Swayze said they will be reaching out to homeowners individually to determine where they want the new trees planted. They will be planting the trees at a ratio of two new trees for every one removed. Engineer Thorne will be running the restoration and follow the concept of leaving it better than it was before the water project; all of the landscaping that is disturbed will be replaced.

The City of Grand Rapids currently has the money for each phase of the project and will be writing the checks for project expenses. Residents should contact Goodwood Water with the companies they originally used for landscaping, underground dog fences, etc. They have also taken before and after photos so that they can match up the landscaping before and after the water project.

The Township will select a landscape architect and work to find out what residents want in terms of remediation. They won't be able to begin replanting and reseeding until spring because the individual homes will still be in the connection phase post-September. Some suggested landscapers were Harder & Warner, Suburban Landscapes, and Katerberg VerHage. The cost for trees and landscaping will fall under the 'other' category of the budget as the cost will be variable.

Bujak asked if the trees will be completely removed, including the stumps and Koster said they would if they haven't already; that will likely occur after the water is connected.

ARTICLE 7. Roundtable/Q&A

Member Lipford asked how many times the Township has recommended residents seek their own counsel? In 2020, EGLE sent out a letter saying the PFAS was due to the airport's practices. The timeline to enter into litigation with the airport is coming to an end for both the residents and the Township. It was suggested that it may become a class action lawsuit. TM Swayze will be reaching out to Doug Van Essen about this as he doesn't think Van Essen or the Township have suggested residents look into this; he will see if Van Essen can attend the next meeting.

Bujak said that he attended the Kent County Commissioner meeting in December (before he was sworn in) and brought a copy of the part of the Kent County Board resolution requiring Cascade release the airport of wrongdoing to receive the county ARPA funds. The paper he brought said, "\$3,000,000 PFAS Remediation – water Main Extension in Cascade Township Phase 1 and 2 City of Grand Rapids/Cascade Township. *Any agreement must include specific itemization that funds can only to be used for the waterline install, the laterals, and the abandonment of wells and releases Kent County and Gerald R. Ford International Airport from any PFAS claims from the City of Grand Rapids and Cascade Township. The contract must be fully executed before construction begins on Phase 1 or no later than 90 days.*" Bujak will stand with Cascade on this issue.

TM Swayze said it is still unknown what will be required in terms of a groundwater ordinance but there will need to be some negotiation with the airport.

Member Baldwin asked if connection will be required upon sale of any house in the PFAS project area and TM Swayze said connection will only be required if their well fails, according to policies currently in place.

Resident Dean asked if anyone had talked about recouping future city water payments for residents whose water bills increase after being put on city water. She asked if this was something the Township would pursue or would individual residents have to do so. TM Swayze said that city water bills in Cascade tend to be a third more expensive because there are fewer residents on the system in Cascade and the distance water needs to be pumped to get to the residents is greater. They will talk to the Township's lawyer about this.

Member Baldwin will have a meeting with Laurie Reminga about PFAS disclosures and will share information at the next meeting.

ARTICLE 8. GVMC Airport Access Study Discussion

Supervisor Lesperance talked about the Grand Valley Metro Council's proposed land use and additional exits to improve access as well as industrial development. She said the Township is sharing information with residents and inviting every Cascade resident to the GVMC open house. There have been multiple designs proposed and she believes four of the potential on/off ramps would negatively affect Cascade residents. They are pushing for light industrial use on the Cascade side of the airport. She asked TM Swayze to send the GVMC airport access report to all the committee members, including a link to the survey.

ARTICLE 9. Public Comment

There weren't any visitors in attendance who wished to comment.

ARTICLE 10. Adjournment

Motion was made by Member Baldwin to adjourn. Supported by Supervisor Lesperance. Meeting adjourned at 5:28pm.

Approved by the Citizens PFAS Committee – TBD

DRAFT