

Orange Township Board Meeting  
Special Public Meeting  
265 W David Hwy Ionia Mi 48846  
Berlin – Orange Fire Station  
April 18th 2016

- 1) The Special Public Meeting on April 18<sup>th</sup> 2016, pertaining to the David Hwy Bridge over Libhart Creek held on April 18<sup>th</sup> 2016 was called to order at 7pm
- 2) Present – Green, Plett, Wittenbach, First and DePotty. Also present were ICRC Representatives Dorothy Pohl and Paul Spitzley. Approximately a dozen Township Residents were also present
- 3) Pledge of allegiance by all present

4) Public Comment;

Supervisor Green reminded all present that public comments will be orderly

Clerk Plett started the comments stating that the board is very well aware of the need for a new bridge. She then continued by presenting a step-step explanation for the residents in attendance of how this Special Meeting came to be called. She started with the original Bridge Contract signed in March of 2015 for \$57,000. She showed invoices that have been paid and explained how the RC had to be contacted to find out what the bills were for, as no explanation were on them as to what the work performed was or who the contractors being paid were, that were receiving payments. That there was a second Contract for \$90,000 handed to the Board with no explanation at that time as to why an increase in costs. The Supervisor and Trustees had a meeting at the Road Commission and found out that any requests for bids for the bridgework had not even been sent out yet and they were just being sent out at that time. Then there was a third bridge work total expense given to the board and at that time the RC was set to attend the regular board meeting on April 12<sup>th</sup>, however they did not show or call to say they couldn't make it. Green and First then went to the ICRC office, and at that time they were finally able to inspect the bridgework bids. The Board then found out there was a cut-off date to get this done and agreed upon in order to receive state funding towards a portion of the cost of replacing the bridge or we would lose the funds. At that time, this special meeting was set. The Clerk also noted that there has been a lack of communication and respect towards Orange Township from the Road Commission throughout this whole process and that she didn't appreciate the comments made by someone at the RC that "Orange Township is sitting on their hands" and that alone is the holdup on getting the bridgework started. Clerk Plett concluded by saying the board has a fiscal responsibility to the residents of knowing exactly how township funds are being spent, who receives them and for what purpose and the board does their best to do accomplish this.

Trustee DePotty then spoke in regards to the situation. He explained the frustration of being excluded in the process, and spoke of just being handed different contract agreements and invoices by the RC without information and the arrogant attitude of how they expected the township to pay them without question. DePotty pointed out how that attitude leads to distrust. DePotty also explained the law stating townships are not required by law to share the

**Orange township Board Members;** *Supervisor;* Tom Green *Clerk;* Linn Plett  
*Treasurer;* Karla Wittenbach *Trustees;* Josh First and Wayne DePotty

Orange Township Board Meeting  
Special Public Meeting  
265 W David Hwy Ionia Mi 48846  
Berlin – Orange Fire Station  
April 18th 2016

costs in replacing this bridge. He also stated that the township already gives the RC 38% of the yearly township fiscal budget

Paul Spitzley from the ICRC then spoke about the bridge costs increase and explained that the original agreement cost was actually a comparison cost to the bridge on Riverside Drive. The plans on David Hwy Bridge needed to be changed due to the valley. He then briefly explained the process involved in starting bridgework and receiving bids so those in attendance could better understand the process. He apologized about the lack of communication and information given to the Township. Spitzley stated that in the future the ICRC will make a better effort to communicate and include information with invoices that are sent to the township so the board knows where the funds are going and to whom. The Township's monetary portion will stay at the current latest amount of \$86,705 with credit for the total amount the Township has already paid to the ICRC.

There were many comments and questions after this which included but were not limited to; The fact that funds already paid would be taken off the current cost of bridge. That the Federal Funding covers 95% of the David Hwy Bridge replacement costs and the Township and County covers the rest. If the Township didn't pay, the project would be put on hold according to the county policy. A discussion about David Hwy not being a Class A road and how the semi-trucks can be kept off. The discussion then turned to the Reeder Road Bridge and how there probably would not be any county funds going towards replacing that bridge. The Grand River Ave Bridge that needs replacing and if it should be considered a drain replacement, but how it would then be charged on the property tax bills. There was a suggestion for the residents of the Township to become proactive towards the township roads and consider a 1 or 2 mill millage strictly for roads

Treasurer Wittenbach stated she appreciated Spitzley coming in and the prospect of better information and communication from the ICRC

Trustee First stated the process and information really should have been explained upfront and he appreciates it being explained to everyone now for a better understanding

5) Board Members Discussion;

Clerk Plett noted that there was not a new official replacement "agreement" received by the Township as the first two agreements were, that it is just a paper with numbers on it. The Clerk crossed out and changed the old numbers on the second contract received (\$90,000) that she had, from the old \$90,000 amount to the new \$80,840 amount noting a credit of \$5865 on invoices already paid towards the bridgework

Motion to approve the agreement for \$86,705 which is now \$80,840 due to credit for invoices already paid, made by First with support from DePotty

Roll Call Vote;

DePotty – yes Wittenbach – yes First – yes Green- yes Plett – yes

Motion carried

**Orange township Board Members;** *Supervisor;* Tom Green *Clerk;* Linn Plett  
*Treasurer;* Karla Wittenbach *Trustees;* Josh First and Wayne DePotty

Orange Township Board Meeting  
Special Public Meeting  
265 W David Hwy Ionia Mi 48846  
Berlin – Orange Fire Station  
April 18th 2016

Clerk Plett then had ICRC representative Paul Spitzley initial the updated total cost changes and had Dorothy Pohl sign the adjusted agreement

Motion to adjourn made at 8:10pm by Plett with support from DePotty - motion carried

Respectfully submitted;

Linn Plett  
Orange Township Clerk

*Approved May 10th*

**Orange township Board Members;** *Supervisor;* Tom Green *Clerk;* Linn Plett  
*Treasurer;* Karla Wittenbach *Trustees;* Josh First and Wayne DePotty