

LAKE TOWNSHIP

Public Hearing for Private Roads – Meeting Minutes

December 10, 2024, 6:30 PM

Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Supervisor Pitcher at 6:30 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance recited by all

Roll Call of Board – Present: Trustee Anna Grobe, Treasurer Maryanne Goodman, Trustee Kyle Orr, Supervisor Mary Pitcher, Clerk Penny Georgevich

Approval of the Agenda - Insert correspondence as Item C and Close Public Comment as item D. Motion by Orr/Grobe to approve agenda with updates; Ayes: All.

Public Hearing opened at 6:32 PM.

This hearing is being held to receive public input on private roads and if an ordinance should be considered.

A. Overview by Josh Mills, Zoning Administrator, included:

- a. We want to hear what residence have to say
- b. What are our current challenges?
- c. Private Road history
- d. Emergency access needs

B. Open Public Input

Jimi Lee Haswell - Inquired about letters sent in on public roads.

Wilfred Swiecki - Inquired about the meeting being recorded and whether he could get a copy.

Dotty Blank - Inquired about proposed ordinance; Last meeting it was discussed that it was easier to handle as a Nuisance Ordinance vs a Zoning Ordinance.

Wilfred Swiecki – explain what is not accessible if house has certificate of occupancy. Water for fire department.

Michelle Erwin – The 22' that is suggested for private roads seems overboard. If ordinance or Police Power goes into effect, how long do residents have to comply?

Joel Quine – Would this apply only for roads that are the only access to a home? Who bears financial responsibility?

Bill Locke – How would ordinance be enforced? Woodland Drive is not owned by the residents, but by the association.

Josh Mills – We are trying to do minimalistic things to gain access to residents. We need areas where two-way traffic can occur. If there is an obstruction, we have no way to address it. We are looking to craft a soft enforcement proposal.

Madeline Bitzen-Powell – Not all residents have driveways to Deadstream Rd. Recently occurred a situation where logs were blocking the road and needed to move the log out of the way. Road does not belong to residents but is treated as if it is their own. They should be assessed taxes on the property.

Bob Powell – Snow plows have difficulty plowing.

Dotty Blank – Road is more than 15' wide. Will exemptions be made for people with access drives?

Jimi Lee Haswell – This ordinance could cost a lot of money. Platte Lakes Resort was platted 1912. She read the dedication on the plat and stated that land disputes are settled in circuit court.

Wilfred Swiecki – Is there a proposed draft ordinance now?

Kyle Orr – Yes. Our attorney drafted a police power ordinance. It has not been brought back to the board for a vote. We have taken two steps back to see if maybe we don't really need a police power ordinance, possibly there is another way.

C. Correspondence:

- a) Two letters from David Fenner – letter of November 20, 2024 read into record, per his request
- b) Letter from Gail & John Hayhoe
- c) Letter from Wilfred Swiecki

D. Public Hearing closed at 7:21 PM.

Public Comment on or off the agenda at 7:22 PM.

Dotty Blank – If all private roads are going to be considered, Fire Chief Mike Cederholm should be involved and find minimum width needed.

Madeline Bitzen-Powell – If the fire service, contracted by the township, is unable to get to a resident, is the township liable? That should be addressed with the attorney.

Michelle Erwin – There should be a study to see what type of impact the township would have with an ordinance. What are the average widths of the private roads that exist? The township should know the status quo. It was suggested to have an attorney present at all meetings to answer these types of questions. A private road ordinance would impact all private roads and could cost homeowners a lot of money.

Kyle Orr – Considering a private road ordinance started with Fire Chief Mike Cederholm traveling every road in the township to determine whether he could access these roads with the equipment.

Jimi Lee Haswell – Anyone can ask Mike Cederholm to check your road to see if he is able to access your road. Addressing private road issues is done in circuit court, by a simple petition. What is the township going to do for the roads that are impossible to comply?

Wilfred Swiecki – The Fire Truck tank is 60,000 gallons. Suggestion to get cisterns, one by the Fire Building and a couple down Deadstream Rd with hydrants.

Josh Mills – If your address is different from your access point have Equalization change your address so emergency vehicles have the easiest access in emergency situations.

Jimi Lee Haswell – Road Commission has something on their website saying that if you have access to a public road and a county road, your address needs to be on the private road.

Grobe/Georgevich motion to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

15 people in attendance

Penny Georgevich  
Lake Township Clerk