

**GLEN ARBOR TOWNSHIP**  
P.O. Box 276 Glen Arbor, MI 49636  
231-334-3539 FAX 231-334-6370

Peter Van Nort, Supervisor

John Pepler, Trustee

Bonnie Quick, Clerk

Don Lewis, Trustee

Terry J Gretzema, Treasurer

**Regular Board Meeting**

August 21, 2018 Minutes

Meeting was recorded

Roll Call was called at 7:30 PM by Supervisor Van Nort in the Glen Arbor Town Hall gym. All Board members were present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Van Nort requested a moment of silence for Michael Buhler, who passed away recently.

The Regular Board meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM.

The agenda was presented with additions and modification and accepted. Van Nort stated that the regular order of the meeting has been changed slightly to allow a public discussion of the sign first, as he understands that this is currently a major issue in the community. **Motion to approve the agenda by Gretzema. Support by Pepler. Motion carried.**

Minutes were presented from the 07/17/18 regular board meeting. **Motion to approve the minutes of the 7/17/18 regular board meeting by Pepler. Support by Gretzema. Motion carried.**

**Public Comment/Discussion of Sign** – Van Nort summarized the history of the sign that has been placed in front of the township hall. Various groups requested a sign to display information about their events, and the old sign was ineffective and difficult to use. The research into potential signs was begun before the current board was in place, and the current board continued that research; estimates were received and a decision was made to install the sign. There are at least 135 events and activities in the community for which the sign can help to provide visibility. The board cares deeply about the wishes of the community, and is willing to work with the community to use the features of the sign that best match the community. Van Nort then opened the floor to public comment, and explained the limitations – 2 minutes per speaker and up to one hour of comments total.

Charlie Patton – 6600 S. Dunns Farm – He represents citizens who disapprove of the new sign, and question the design, size and cost to the community. Glen Arbor is changing; having lost many of the features of a community, such as the doctor and bakery, but still maintains a community feel. There are many means of communication with the community today, and discussion is good. There is a petition to allow the taxpayers and residents to make their concerns heard about the sign, which they feel is inappropriate for the community. Some residents were hesitant to sign, as they feared a negative impact on their businesses. He feels that the sign represents an infection in the community, and he would prefer it not become an epidemic.

Dan Semple – 6002 Oak Street – He was on the zoning board for years, and is an engineer. He thinks the design is ugly. He feels the sign violates the sign ordinance in many ways, including the substantial size, the scrolling text that can be seen from vehicles, and the illumination that can be seen from off property. There are many banners and other signs, and this just clutters the sign. He proposes either the sign be removed or the ordinance changed to allow the sign. He agrees with everything Patton said.

Nancy Mueller – 7680 West Deer Trail – She agrees with Patton and Semple. She feels it's a slippery slope to increased commercialization of the town, and doesn't fit the small-town feel. If there is no sign ordinance, the township needs one, because this sets a bad precedent. Glen Arbor can do better. (Van Nort stated that there is a sign ordinance. The Zoning Administrator has stated that this sign meets the ordinance.)

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Frank Siejeker – He read the sign ordinance, and if he put this sign in front of his business, the township would have made him take it down. He would like to hear the Zoning Administrator’s justification for how this sign meets the sign ordinance, as he disagrees, and feels that it opens the door for other signs of this type. He asked if the Board reviewed the sign ordinance before purchasing this sign.

RK Long – 7663 Day Forest Road – He appreciates the board listening tonight; getting consensus on anything is tough. He agrees with the other speakers. When he speaks to other people coming up here, he talks about the National Park, and how there are no big buildings and big billboards. He never saw the township board discussion on the sign, and thinks that it goes against the beauty of the area. It shocks him that the township itself would put this sign up, as it is exactly opposite of what Glen Arbor should be.

Gail Webster – 7176 Arbor Pines – She agrees with the other speakers, and thanked the board for listening. She asked the board if they had seen a picture of the sign or dimensions when they approved it (Van Nort said they had). She stated that there are many artists in the community, who are trying to promote this as an artistic community, and asked whether the board had solicited input from the local artist community. (Van Nort stated that D&D Signs in Traverse City based on specifications given them by the Township Board.)

John Volk – 6006 Forest Haven – He had a hard time finding the minutes from the meeting where the sign was approved. When he did, he found the motion to approve, but wonders why the township hasn’t gone forward with seeking partial funding from the groups that will benefit from the sign. He thinks the minutes should be better publicized, even if the township has to pay for them to be published in the paper. He thinks that having them available at the township hall is not good enough. He thinks this should have been better communicated with the township residents and groups.

Mike Haselback – 5868 S. Dunns Farm – He has seen a lot of changes in Glen Arbor, but also a lot of it staying the same. He knows how hard the board works, and how much they love Glen Arbor. However, he did a double-take when he first saw the sign and wonders if anyone has had a positive reaction to the sign. The park was a great idea, but the sign wasn’t such a great idea, and the board needs to work on how it can be taken down and replaced with something that better represents Glen Arbor.

Russell Meyer – River Road – If the township can put up this sign, every other business is going to want to, and the township won’t be able to stop them.

Sharon Doyle – 4945 W. Glen Eden Road – She and her family had a negative reaction when they first saw the new sign. The old sign was more like Glen Arbor, and you paid more attention to it, just because it felt more like a community sign. The board needs to rethink this sign, and look back at the bids that were received on various signs. The community is passionate about getting back the community feel that Glen Arbor had before this sign went in.

Dennis Hays – 5550 Wilderness – People are disagreeing with the aesthetics of the sign. The front of the hall looks marvelous after its remodeling, and the sign is taking away from how that looks. The sign does not have a small town flavor, and does not belong in front of the hall. He questions the need the trustees saw for the sign – the old sign wasn’t used 130+ times of year. There is no need for this sign, and it was a waste of money to put it in, but it wouldn’t be a waste of money to take it out. (Brief statement from board on cost of sign – currently between \$28,000-\$29,000).

Unidentified – Reiterated question about whether there was any positive feedback on the sign. (Van Nort stated that there has been, but he doesn’t know how many. He feels the positive number is

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approximately equal to the number here tonight opposed to the sign, but is unsure as to why these people are not here at the meeting to show their support of their sign, knowing that this is now a contentious issue.)

Linda Dewey – Arbor Pines – She writes for the Glen Arbor Sun, and is here tonight for the paper, but is stepping aside from that role for this comment. She’s talked to quite a few people about the sign over the last couple of weeks. The old sign was very difficult to work with, and those who had to use it had to spend a substantial amount of time to enter messages on it, especially in bad weather. The utility company doesn’t like the banners across the streets, they were difficult to put up, and there were an increasing number of groups asking to have them hung. She wants to commend the board for endeavoring to put the good of the community in the forefront, and is grateful to live in a community where there is no corruption and a board that puts the good of the community first. A step was missed in asking for more community input and requesting input or designs from local artists. The interest here tonight could be used to put together a committee to bring together ideas, for this and other projects. Everyone here is interested in what is best for the community, and should come together to make this a positive thing moving forward. More people need to participate in the township and help out. If some of the people here tonight had been at some of the board meetings, they would have had more of an opportunity to have public input and participation. She would like to suggest that everyone here, including herself, take responsibility, and show up in the future.

Jan Semple – 6002 Oak Street – As the tenants of her commercial properties applied for business signs, the Zoning Administrator approved the signs, and the tenants had to follow a number of rules, including not having signs that were larger than a certain percentage of the size of the building. This new sign is overwhelming to the size of the Township Hall. She has to commend the Park Commissioners who spent a substantial amount of time working with several committees to put the park together – this was professionally done. The sign would perhaps not have needed quite the same scale of committees as the park, as a lot less money was spent, but it was for the community. The sign changes the perception of the whole area.

John Volk – He wants to elaborate on the communications issue. Almost everyone has mobile devices, and those who don’t have newspapers and other ways to communicate. The township needs a more proactive approach to communicating, on its website and with an e-mail list of people who wish to receive meeting minutes. They should be in his inbox no more than 48 hours after the meeting, and then he’ll know what’s going on and be able to participate. The only way people can know about things now are to just see the little notices here and there. The township needs to communicate better, and needs a person, whose sole duty is to manage the web and electronic presence of the township, including communications. This would help tourists, as well.

Jacki Olson – 8270 Dunns Farm Road – She agrees with everyone else who’s spoken tonight. She feels that this sign is unsafe – this is the busiest section of Glen Arbor, with no stop sign in this area. The pedestrian signs have helped. However, as people drive past this sign and try to read it, while driving around bikers and pedestrians and other traffic, there is a big safety issue. This needs to be discussed. Looking at the sign from inside the building is even worse than looking at it from outside on the street.

Jeff Hamilton – 7923 Day Forest Road – He generally agrees with the other speakers, and thinks the sign is awful. He thinks the board should be talking about how and when to remove the sign. Regarding the cost, the money has already been spent on the sign – it’s going to remain spent whether the sign is kept or not.

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Cyndi Warnes – 7813 Lake Street – She thanked everyone for coming, and reminded the audience that meeting notices are posted at the post office. What struck her most about the sign is that all of the businesses who wanted to put up small signs were told they couldn't, and would be fined if they did. And then the township goes and puts up this huge sign, when businesses can't even put up small temporary ones.

Cookie Thatcher – 5863 Sylvan Ct – She agrees with the other speakers, and was shocked when she saw the sign. The sign says “Las Vegas” to her. The Township Hall is a beautiful building that is now blocked by these signs. There are other signs that say “welcome to Glen Arbor”, so the upper part of this sign is not needed. She feels the board did what they thought was right, but thinks that social media should be used more to publicize when meetings will be and what will be discussed at those meetings, and this would help with attendance.

Tom Subrasey – 4845 W. MacFarlane – The money has already been spent, but the township should remove it and try to recoup the cost by selling it to somewhere where it would be more appropriate. The township could probably recoup at least half the cost this way.

Unidentified – Asked who made final decision about whether the sign stays or goes. (Van Nort replied the township makes that decision. The board had been receiving information that they needed a new sign, and so they took that information and installed the new sign. Now they are receiving different information. The Township Board will take under advisement all of the comment tonight – that is why they are having an extended comment period. He agrees that the electronic portion of the sign probably has a substantial retail value.)

Becky Thatcher – Harbor Hwy – The issue remains that the community still needs a sign to advertise events that are important to the community, and this is a problem that needs to be solved. She heard Van Nort say that the sign is programmable, and she feels it may be possible to remove many of the bright colors currently being used on the sign. All of the excess fixed signage around the electronic sign could be removed, and the fonts and colors toned down so that it looks more like a classic, small town sign. She would prefer to have one sign, instead of the huge number of individual banners and individual event signs. The one-time use banners are expensive and don't always look good. Before the sign is returned, she thinks the township should experiment with the programming to see if they can find an aesthetic that fits better with Glen Arbor. She is not wowed by the current use of the sign, but thinks it might be able to be turned into something that fits the community better, and if not, then it can be removed.

Diane Hamilton – 7923 Day Forest Road – She appreciates the hard work of the board, and the month-to-month business they handle goes largely unnoticed by the community. However, she really dislikes the aesthetics of this sign. She appreciates the need for the publicization of events, but doesn't think that toning down the sign will help it blend better into the aesthetics of Glen Arbor. She feels that a better creative solution could be found to publicize these events, such as kiosks, which would better capture the attention of pedestrians, versus already-distracted drivers. She wants to see the sign come down, because it doesn't fit the town, but thinks there needs to be a solution found for publicizing events.

Sharon Dozal – 4945 Glen Eden Drive – She wants to know where the township will go from here. Is the Township Board taking the comments tonight under advisement? (Van Nort replied yes.) Is there going to be another public meeting, or will this be put on the ballot, or what is the process from here on? (Van Nort stated the board will discuss, and come up with a plan, and bring it back to the community. The method to bring it back to the community has not yet been decided.)

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William Niesonger – 6052 W. River Road – He was very surprised when he saw the sign. It isn't something he'd be able to install as a business owner, and so he felt it was hypocritical of the township to install it. The concept is right, but the execution is poor, both in aesthetics and sign quality. The sign is pixelated, which is low quality. He is disappointed in the discussion tonight, because he doesn't feel people are putting forth solutions to how events should be publicized. Should they just not be publicized? This was not done properly, but being able to publicize events is a useful ability to have. There has to be another solution, a better concept, that doesn't look as commercial and low quality. Another possibility is to change the location – maybe this is just not the right location. A kiosk area for better communication, without the aesthetics issue. Some automation is necessary, but it needs to be done better. The protests tonight are a little unfair because the community does need to move forward, just in a better way.

Dan Semple – 6002 Oak Street – The sign, both the electronic portion and the upper portion, does not meet the sign ordinance requirements in several ways. The township hall should not have better signage than the local businesses. The township hall is used for various functions, and needs some form of advertising. A series of uniform kiosks with smaller signs would be appropriate, and not an eyesore like the current sign.

Russel Myer – A smaller sign could be put up.

Linda Dewey – She proposes a study committee for this. In addition, the "Welcome to Glen Arbor" signs in various locations might be better locations. A study committee could look at the various possibilities and get feedback from the community, and work on this issue.

Andy Dotterweich – 6200 S. Glen Lake Road – When he lived down state and served on boards there, signs were always the biggest issue, and the biggest problem for boards. The ordinance has a meaning, and the planners who created the sign ordinance set good requirements. The sign does not meet the requirements of the sign ordinance, in several ways. Electronic signs have many capabilities, and while able to be monitored while in the hands of the township, they would provide a host of ordinance violations if they started being used by all of the local businesses. That is a major issue. The lighting is another issue, as it travels off the property, and is inappropriate. While he understands that the old sign was hard to use, perhaps the solution is a better temporary, changeable, sign, not a permanent sign.

Mimi Gass – 4411 W. Glen Eden Road – She was shocked by the sign. She feels there is a need for public sign to advertise various events, but feels the public and Chamber of Commerce should have been involved in the creation of this sign. A community bulletin board is also needed, and maybe bulletin boards on the various businesses.

Van Nort stated that the time limit has been reached for public comment on the signs. The board will now move forward with the remainder of the agenda.

Karen Van Nort asked the community who was present for the comment section to stay for the rest of the meeting. She stated that Peter Van Nort has been disappointed in the community turnout at the meetings, and would like to see the public more involved in the township business. People only seem to come to the meetings when something personal to them is on the agenda, and other than that, there are usually only a handful of people at the meetings. She thanked everyone for coming tonight to express their opinions, and she hopes that people will continue to come every month. The Township needs their opinions and participation.

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**Treasurer's Report** - Cash on hand as of 07/31/2018 is \$2,575,963.71. The Park Construction Fund is \$58,910.86. The Park Bond Fund is \$97,338.08.

A new arrangement has been made with Chemical Bank to remove the \$75 monthly fee for collateralizing assets. There is an agreement with Leelanau Schools to help with the cleanup at the recycling site, and this is a blessing to the township. For this, Leelanau Schools receives \$500 from the township and \$500 from American Waste. Bob Ihme grades the gravel entrance to the site, and the township will provide salt for between the bins in the winter.

Quick noted that there were some adjustments made in Quickbooks due to the audit.

General Fund: Expenses: \$41,117.39. Payroll: \$11,777.95. **Motion to approve and pay General Fund expenses and payroll by Gretzma. Support by Lewis. Motion carried.**

Emergency Services: Expenses \$34,632.92. Payroll: \$76,421.12. **Motion to approve and pay the Emergency Services expenses and payroll by Quick. Support by Gretzma. Motion carried.**

**Emergency Services Advisory Commission Report** – Bill Witler – Witler reported on the commission's activities. The ESAC discussed staffing; the Township Board moved forward with going to a full-paramedic department at the last board meeting. The staffing has continued to be a challenge, with departures and other changes. Equipment and dry hydrant repairs are ongoing. The budget process for next year has been started.

**Fire Chief Operations Report** – John Dodson – Dodson was not able to attend.

**Zoning Administrators Report** – Submitted in writing.

**Monthly Assessors Report** – Submitted in writing.

**Auditors Report** – Steve Peacock – Peacock walked the board through the draft auditor's report and associated documents. Once the board approves the report, final copies will be distributed to the board. Peacock summarized the numbers and comments found in the report. There are changes being made in the office that will help to improve the bank statement reconciliation process. The board asked for more time to review the audit report and associated documents before they approve it.

### **Correspondence**

- Jackie Oleson re: Sign
- Tim & Jacki Westbay re: Sign
- Charles L Patton re: Sign
- Jeanine Dean re: Ironman – Ms. Dean asked the board to take a position on the proposed Ironman competition. As none of the proposed route is in Glen Arbor Township, the township attorney advised the township to not address the issue. If the proposed route changes, the board will take the issue up.
- DEQ – Jeanine Dean Permit to place 12 cubic yards of riprap and coir log along 200 feet of shoreline of Little Glen Lake
- DEQ – Water Resources Division Policy & Procedure
- Leelanau County report on possible state wide assessing changes

- Planning & Zoning News
- Solid Waste recycle site 5 year extension
- MTA On the Road Regional Meetings
- Township Focus
- Leelanau Focus
- Leelanau Conservancy
- M-Dot Delineator Project
- Closup Survey Results
- MTA Township Incites (4)
- Short Term Rental Info
- LC RC Monthly Report
- MTA July Legislative Update
- GTB 2% Grant Program

### Unfinished Business

- Lawsuit on Accessory Buildings – Van Nort summarized the history of the accessory buildings dispute. At this point, the lawsuit has been dropped. The final adjudication of the lawsuit is still in process.

### New Business

- Road Ends – Fire Rings – Last year, the township placed fire rings, in hopes of containing the various bonfires that were being held on the beaches. However, since then, the fire rings have been being used to dump trash in, and the beaches are still being used for fires. Some beachgoers have damaged private property by removing sections of split rail fence and burning them. Gretzema recommended removing the fire rings and banning fires on the beaches. The fires are not always being put out properly, and this is both a safety hazard and a sanitation hazard. **Gretzema moved to remove the fire rings and place signs banning fire on the beaches. Peppler seconded. All in favor, motion carried.** The board may consider placing trash containers in this location, but the emptying of these does cost the township. The board and public briefly discussed the trash cans.
- Replacement for Michael Buhler on Board of Review – As discussed at the beginning of the meeting, Michael Buhler recently passed away; he was a member of the Board of Review. The board needs to appoint a new member. Van Nort recommended Andrew Dotterweich as the new member. **Gretzema moved to appoint Andrew Dotterweich. Quick seconded. All in favor, motion carried.**
- Elections Laptop – The laptop used for elections has died. This laptop is solely for the use of elections. The previous laptop was 10 years old and had been paid for by the state. Quick asked to purchase a new one, in an amount not to exceed \$1,110. Quick is unsure if she needs all of the features provided in the quote, but she is still checking on this. The state has paid for the other new election equipment recently purchased, but has not provided funds for a laptop. **Van Nort moved to move forward with the purchase of an election computer, in an amount not to exceed \$1,110. Lewis seconded. All in favor, motion carried.**

**Planning Commission Report** – John Peppler – A site plan review was conducted for a new office building at the corner of M-22 and M-109; the review passed. The PC wants to schedule a work

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session with the Township Board to review the Master Plan. The PC also began their review of the Zoning Ordinance, and covered the process for the review and looked at the Table of Contents.

Van Nort reminded the public that the PC meetings are open to the public and gave the dates and times of the meetings.

**Public Comment –**

Barb Smith – 4515 Glen Eden – Regarding property taxes, she wonders why there is a local administration fee for property taxes, especially given the surpluses currently held by the township. She wants to know what this fee is used for and why it's necessary. (Van Nort replied that the fee is used to cover the cost of assessing and tax collection.) Smith stated that there is a large surplus. (The board replied that there is a healthy surplus, but much of the surplus and taxes are already spoken for. The board discussed several programs for which the excess has and may be spent, including the park and a rainy day fund.) Smith is still concerned about the need for an administration fee, and she doesn't understand why she should have to pay this. The board and Smith continued to discuss the reasons for this fee, and the board will take her comments under advisement.

John Volk – Regarding the pedestrian signs, he wonders if they will be removed? (Van Nort replied that they will during the winter.) Volk stated that the signs make the street feel very choppy and don't deter people from stepping out into the road anywhere they please. He feels the number of signs are distracting to drivers, and he noted that the sign spacing that is currently present in Suttons Bay feels more appropriate. He asked why they were put in place. (Van Nort summarized the history of the signs.)

Nancy Mueller – Mueller questioned a line item in the bills to be paid – the board responded with details of the line item. She asked what type of interest was received on the surplus money in the township funds, and how it is invested. Gretzema replied that the money is invested into CDs. However, interest rates have been poor lately. He detailed his efforts to get the best interests rates possible. Mueller asked what the debt was. The board responded the park bond issue, the debt on the fire hall, and the debt on the fire trucks. Mueller asked for clarification on the Zoning Ordinance change with regard to accessory buildings. The board responded that there was a change in the ZO, and that the ZO could be reviewed at the township offices or by calling the Zoning Administrator. Pepler detailed the change to the ZO.

Linda Dewey – She asked about the new office building mentioned by Pepler. Pepler gave more details about the location and building.

Kim Volk – She stated that there are no minutes from 2018 on the website, and the budget on the website is from 2015. She asked when this will be updated. Van Nort stated that the website manager has just changed, and these deficiencies are being fixed. The board agrees that the website needs to be better, and reminded everyone that the minutes are also available in the Leelanau Enterprise and in the township office.

Jeff Hamilton – He asked about the review of the Zoning Ordinance, and whether there will be substantive changes to the ordinance. Pepler replied that the PC will focus on clarifying ambiguities and making editorial changes; he does not foresee any major content changes to the ordinance.

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**Board Member Comments – None**

**Supervisor Comments** – Van Nort thanked everyone for coming. He reminded the audience of the board meeting dates and times.

Meeting adjourned – 10:03 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Nash  
Glen Arbor Township Deputy Clerk

APPROVED