

Clearwater Township Board Special Meeting  
July 20, 2020  
Minutes Approved July 23, 2020

A special meeting of the Clearwater Township Board was called to order on July 20, 2020 at 9:01 AM at the Clearwater Township Hall to vote on settlement agreement in the pending case of Stevens vs Clearwater Township, 19-13283-CH.

Roll call of board members: Jule Moore-present; Greg Bradley-present, Jeremy Morrison-present; Michael Gaylord-excused; Barb Crambell-excused  
Also present, Attorney Wierda, Mr. & Mrs. Stevens and 6 guests.

Meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comment:**

Five different residents spoke about the Old Iron Bridge.

All board members agreed that the Clerk would run the meeting today.

**Declaration of conflict of Interest:** None

**Approval of Agenda:** Motion by Bradley, seconded by Morrison to approve the agenda. All in favor.

Attorney Wierda, who was hired by the Township insurance company to represent the Township, made a statement about the settlement agreement between the Township and Mr. /Mrs. Stevens regarding the bridge. Last Friday, a negotiating team from the Township Board reached a settlement agreement with regard to this litigation. If the agreement is approved by the Board, it disposes of a potentially significant liability for the Township.

1. The lawsuit filed will be disposed of and no Township funds will be used to pay further costs.
2. The Old Iron Bridge planned repairs will no longer be paid for by the Township.
3. Pedestrian access for the general public to the Rapid River is preserved at the Old Iron Bridge. A consent judgement with a recordable interest will be filed with the Register of Deeds to ensure this is retained with the property.
4. The Stevens' agreed to pay the Township \$60,000 to install a parking area and a set of stairs down to the Rapid River. Any left over money will be held in a separate fund to preserve this site.
5. The architectural and historical nature of the bridge will be preserved by the Stevens. The iron sides of the bridge will be maintained as the Stevens' make repairs to the bridge.

Motion by Bradley, seconded by Morrison, to accept the mediation settlement agreement, case number 19-13283-CH.

Roll call of board members: Moore – yes; Morrison – yes; Bradley –yes. Motion passed.

Attorney Wierda stated that now that the agreement has been approved, additional paperwork is needed for the consent judgement. To clarify, the Township Board has agreed to relinquish jurisdiction of the "Old Iron Bridge" on Glade Valley Rd; the Township never owned the "Old Iron Bridge". After the Township relinquishes jurisdiction, by law, the jurisdiction will be offered to the DNR. When the DNR declines to assume jurisdiction, then it will go to the Stevens'.

Additional questions from the audience were addressed by Attorney Wierda.

**Public Comment:**

Residents spoke about the process taking too long to bring to resolution, the importance of open communication, thanks for resolving and that the Stevens' plan to be around the community for many years and concern about acoustics in the Township Hall.

**Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn by Moore, seconded by Bradley at 9:18 AM. All in Favor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jule Moore, Clerk