

# CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF FLUSHING

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## ***PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES***

DATE: FEBRUARY 13, 2012

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

WEB ADDRESS <http://www.flushingtowship.com>

### **MEMBERS OF PLANNING COMMISSION**

Mark J. Newman, Chair

Jerome Doyle, Vice Chair

Richard Buell, Secretary

John Cuddeback

Ronald Flowers

Robert Gensheimer

Mark Purkey, Board of Trustee Representative

Julia A. Morford, Recording Secretary

**PRESENT:** Mark J. Newman, Jerome Doyle, John Cuddeback, Ronald Flowers, Robert Gensheimer, and Mark Purkey

**ABSENT:** Richard Buell

**OTHERS PRESENT:** None

**I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER** at 7:03 p.m. by Planning Commission Chair **MARK NEWMAN** with Roll Call and the Pledge to the American Flag.

**II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: FLOWERS MOVED**, seconded by Cuddeback to adopt the Agenda as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**III. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: DOYLE MOVED**, seconded by Flowers to approve the Minutes of January 9, 2012 as amended. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**1. Continued Update of Master Plan**

**NEWMAN** felt that great progress has been done. The main subtopic to be discussed tonight was to continue to discuss the "Survey". Most of the work has been completed but waiting for the most update status of the various departments, agencies, and other municipalities. The one part that can be taken care of by the Planning Commission is the "Survey". The "Survey" has been under the guidance of **BUELL**. More suggestions are requested in order that **BUELL** can continue working on the "Survey" while he is out of the area.

## RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS:

1. **CUDDEBACK:** (a packet was handed out by **CUDDEBACK**): 1) “*Guiding Principles*” – could go through and delete some of the items which the Planning Commission doesn’t feel is important. 2) “*What Residents Will Pay For*” - gave his opinions he thought about the data. 3) “*City of Flushing Survey*” – reviewed and condensed some of the questions from the City of Flushing Survey; there could be a change of opinion or someone could read the questions differently; open for comment on any of the items which **CUDDEBACK** printed.
2. **PURKEY:** very interested in the road survey questions:
  - a. “How would you rank the township road system”
  - b. “How would you rank the township roads in your area”

The township residents don’t understand how the township roads are taken care of; there are no township roads only roads that run through the township; the roads belong to the Genesee County Road Commission; the township doesn’t have funding for roads:

- i. *Primary Roads:* major roads that run through the township and funded one hundred (100%) percent by the County
  - ii. *Secondary Roads:* local township roads (partially funded by the Township and partially funded by the Road Commission – the township pays for the material and the Road Commission pays for the labor)
  - iii. *Subdivision Streets:* the County doesn’t take any responsibility on the funding of the streets; if the residents would like to have their streets repaired and would be willing to pay for the streets and be assessed for the repairs, the township then goes to the County and is given a price to repair the street; Example: the township cannot go to “Lois Kay” (or some other company) because the township doesn’t own the street or ditch. It is similar to an unfunded mandate.
3. **DOYLE:** opening up a situation to ask people a question and you don’t have the where withal to answer the question.
  4. **FLOWERS:** the Master Plan growth was supposed to be on the East Side of the Township; the County has control over the maintenance of the roads and the township can’t tell the County when and what they are going to do; the County contracts with the State to do all the State highways which are Number 1; Primary Roads are done next; the local roads, and then the streets are last.
  5. **PURKEY:** did some investigating last year and all townships don’t work on the same system; it has nothing to do with State law. Conclusion: there are no township roads.
  6. **NEWMAN:** the whole point of the Survey and getting input was to show trends; the survey was to not only have feedback to the community but to give direction to future Planning Commissions as to how the trends and attitudes in the community are changing. Perhaps there could be a way to “tweak” some of the questions to make them clearer. Don’t want to delete topics but do not want to mislead, but want to be honest and if they complain enough, it will change the road system. At the same time, if one subject is a hot

topic, don't want to avoid the topic or stir up trouble. Don't want residents to think that if there are enough complaints, money will be channeled to the "hot" topic, but don't want to avoid a topic because it is a difficult topic for the Planning Commission or the Board of Trustees. The topic could be changed to:

"How would you rank the County road system within Flushing Township?"

7. **GENSHEIMER:** with any of the questions, would the survey give the Planning Commission the ammunition to go to the Road Commission and state what the residents thought of the roads in Flushing Township. Would you please help!
8. **DOYLE:** the way the question is ask sometimes determines the way the question will be answered; the questions are misleading and direct an individual to answer in a certain direction.
9. **NEWMAN:** the preamble may be a very important part of the question.
10. **DOYLE:** can put out the same questions and pretty much would receive the same answers back; Rowe Engineering put the questions together for the Master Plan, in the first place; if want to have a survey, put the question out so that it makes sense and then you have individuals making a rational view point on the answer.
11. **CUDDEBACK:** how is the road money generated? **FLOWERS:** gas and weight tax monies.
12. **PURKEY:** the township receives their share of revenue sharing and the monies for roads come out of the revenue sharing money which is generated from sales tax.
13. **CUDDEBACK:** on one (1) gallon of gas, there is a Michigan tax, a federal tax, and a sales tax, where does the sales tax go? **FLOWERS:** it goes to the State of Michigan which goes out to other governmental units. **CUDDEBACK** stated he heard it went to education (K-12).
14. **NEWMAN:** a good portion goes for education but not all; that was the reason the sales tax was increased from four (4%) percent to six (6%) percent.
15. **DOYLE:** isn't there a situation where the government decides how they want to use the money at different times? The government reviews their budget and decides how much they are going to use for each item.
16. **PURKEY:** the director of the Genesee County Road Commission gave the following facts:
  - a. When divided between cities and roads – thirty-nine (39%) percent goes to the County Road Commissions; approximately twenty-two (22%) percent of the monies goes to the cities.
  - b. City of Flushing gets own road use money because they are not in the County system, but they also have to maintain their own roads.
17. **FLOWERS:** at one time the budget for Genesee County was \$21,000,000 for the year; \$2,000,000 covered the cost of labor.
18. **PURKEY:** the budget for Flushing Township, not including the Police Department, is \$1,000,000.
19. **FLOWERS:** the wages have gone up with the Road Commission so instead of having a large number of employees, the Commission has reduced the personnel in order to have more funds for the roads. The Township doesn't have any control over the roads. When

complaints come in, the Road Commission informs the individual to contact the Township Supervisor. Streets have always been assessed through the subdivision association.

20. **CUDDEBACK:** had received a survey from the Township years ago; one of the questions was “would you be willing to pay more to the Township for the road system”; **CUDDEBACK’S** reply – “yes”, if his rod would be one of the rods that would be fixed.
21. It was recommended to just insert the word “County” with the road questions.
22. **DOYLE:** the questions should be “generic” questions instead of pointed questions.
23. **NEWMAN:** felt the questions should be unbiased survey questions. There are two (2) types of polls – one an advertisement and you are leading the question; and the other a more objective question such as “are you or are you not satisfied with the conditions of the County road system in Flushing Township” where you can answer a “yes” or “no” to the question.
24. **PURKEY:** liked the suggestion from **FLOWERS** to make Carpenter Road a primary road.
25. **CUDDEBACK:** Genesee County Road Commission Director John Daly recently attended a Board of Trustees Meeting and the idea was brought up to make Carpenter Road a primary road. Director Daly stated that in some cases the decision does happen.
26. **PURKEY:** it wouldn’t hurt to have a joint formal letter from the Flushing Township Planning Commission and the Board of Trustees sent to Director John Daly recommending the change of Carpenter Road to a primary road.
27. **FLOWERS:** when the frost laws go on, the school buses, garbage trucks, etc. all go down Carpenter Road; the weight is awful.
28. **NEWMAN:** the school buses are a funded program through the Federal Government.
29. **DOYLE:** everyone in the country pays taxes for the use so everyone should have the opportunity to use the service. (The discussion concerned Flushing School Buses picking up St. Robert’s Students – instead of building more schools, bus the students).
30. **NEWMAN:** it was decided to definitely use the word “County” in the road questions and then get the information to **BUELL** so the questionnaire can be completed.
31. **DOYLE:** wanted to know if going to keep the format that had been used for the questionnaire? **NEWMAN:** will keep in the format for discussion purposes because it is a good set of organized questions, but will decide as a Commission the format to use.
32. **CUDDEBACK:** on “What Residents will Pay For” inserted “resident taxes” verses “property taxes”; also passed out to the Commission an article reproduced from the Flint Journal entitled “*Your Voices*”.
33. **DOYLE:** what is the difference between “resident taxes” verses “property taxes”.
34. **CUDDEBACK:** the Founding Fathers felt the best form of taxation was to tax someone for the use of something, not just arbitrarily tax on items such as property taxes; anyone eighteen (18) years and older can vote to raise taxes for a program they want; “resident taxes” is where anyone eighteen (18) years and older who wants to use something would actually pay for it; it would make individuals more responsible and makes taxation more reasonable.

35. **DOYLE:** the Planning Commission don't have the ability to change the taxation program.
36. **NEWMAN:** Proposal A (late 1980's) was a good example of a tax change where it shifted and resulted in the homestead exemption.
37. **FLOWERS:** produced an updated "*Traffic Count of all the Roads in Flushing Township*" map which he obtained from the Genesee County Planning Commission; would like to see the roads designated as "Red" for main trunk lines; "Blue" for primary roads; "Green" for the local roads; and the remaining would be the streets.
38. **PURKEY:** how many questions will there be on the survey? If something is too long, individuals won't complete the survey.
39. **NEWMAN:** the original survey had thirty-one (31) original questions. There will be a final review and determine if some of the questions need to be eliminated, etc. due to economics, no authority to control the issue, etc. **NEWMAN** will help **BUELL** compile the survey. **NEWMAN** would like to be placed on the Board of Trustees Agenda at some point and give a brief history of the Master Plan survey including the cost supplies, mailing, materials, etc.
40. **PURKEY:** has informed the Supervisor and Treasurer (the Clerk can see the results of the work) that with the Planning Commission doing most of the work on the Master Plan, the township will be saving a lot of money.
41. **NEWMAN:** when he worked in Lansing for the Senate, there were Political Science students that would come in to assemble "statistics." Perhaps U of M, Baker, Davenport, etc. could be contacted and it could be used as a class project. The students could also use the help from the director. Random samples could also be determined.
42. **DOYLE:** if left up to him, he would not have that many questions, have generic questions that don't lead people, and in order to get some decent answers don't put questions such as "what would you do with our Township road system".

**CONCLUSION:**

1. Continue to work on the Survey with the questions and get the information to **BUELL**.
2. **PURKEY** will take the information to the Board regarding printing and mailing costs for the survey.

**V. NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**8:02 P.M. – OPENED TO THE PUBLIC FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**8:03 P.M. – CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

**VII. BOARD COMMENTS:**

1. **PURKEY** appreciates everything the Planning Commission has done; he will report to the Board of Trustees.
2. **DOYLE** felt to complete the Survey should be almost the last thing to do; the Planning Commission should go through and let **BUELL** know all the questions for the Survey by April then will know the number of Surveys to be sent out.
3. **FLOWERS** attended the “Sign Ordinance Workshop” at Frankenmuth MI; some parts of the ordinance can’t be enforced; there is a thirty (30) day period for political signs but can’t determine the number of days an individual can keep a sign on their lawn. Great Workshop!
4. **CUDDEBACK** will not be in attendance at the March Planning Commission Meeting; there is a possibility he also will be absent from the April Meeting.
5. **BUELL** also will not be in attendance at the March Planning Commission Meeting.
6. **NEWMAN** appreciates all the work that is being done; started talking about the Master Plan when he first came on the Planning Commission; everyone brings something to the table; has used the Planning Commission resources to save money for the township; would like to have the whole Master Plan complete by May.

**VIII. NEXT REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 12, 2012 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**FUTURE REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING DATES:**

APRIL 9, 2012 AT 7:00 P.M.  
MAY 14, 2012 AT 7:00 P.M.  
JUNE 11, 2012 AT 7:00 P.M.  
JULY 9, 2012 AT 7:00 P.M.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT:** Due to lack of business matters, **NEWMAN** adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

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MARK J. NEWMAN, Chair

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JULIA A. MORFORD, Recording Secretary

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RICHARD BUELL, Secretary

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Date of Approval