



IN RESPONSE TO VAN ZEE'S SLANDEROUS MAILINGS

How to do a Write-in

We have brought you four newsletters with carefully documented news of serious problems, issues and crises in our township. Four highly qualified board candidates—from different parties— have come forward who have pledged to turn around the many wrongdoings by the current Board. We are grateful to **Bill Conklin, Laura Ford, and write-in candidates Sherry Baker-McCary and Kevin Willis** for offering to serve our community with higher standards, transparency, civility, polite bi-partisanship and a commitment to follow the laws of our State. **They deserve your vote. They will hold each other accountable.**

- Now it's become more obvious why the Township is in such crisis, with Van Zee's slanderous, defamatory rants and attacks on his opponent and on residents who exercise their right to express their ideas at public meetings. **He is not fit to serve.**
- We are not alone. 375 voted for **Bill Conklin** to replace him. Over 400 residents signed a petition on the gravel pit; 50 people gave comment to stop the Law boathouse and boat basin, including Bill Conklin.
- **Normal business:** It's residents who have pointed out the Township's multiple failures to conduct business properly. Everything from failure to amend a budget, failure to file audits timely, to Van Zee's terrible zoning administrator reports. It's also "normal business" to hear the residents.
- **Van Zee claims the Board is his "staff."** No, each board member is an elected public official each with specific statutory duties. But that's how they operate, covering for each other's failures to do their jobs.
- **Van Zee claims the legal costs are the people's fault. No. The fault lies squarely with Van Zee and other township officials who violated the zoning ordinance regarding excavation of the shore, obstructed ZBA hearings for 11 months, and failed to enforce the consent judgement on the gravel pit.** The Township's intentional delays also allowed the Laws to obtain a federal permit. Residents prevailed at the ZBA, confirming that our ordinance does not allow shoreland excavation. **Supervisor Van Zee—and the entire Board— allowed the legal budget to explode,** all to cover Van Zee's illegal zoning decisions. Any responsible Board would have fired him.
- **Van Zee's first controversy.** Soon after coming to town and buying a farm, he **filed for farm bankruptcy** owing Hayes Township, the landowner and other creditors.
- **Running the Township irresponsibly is why voters voted him out.**

Township	
Supervisor	
Vote for not more than 1	
William M. Conklin ●	Republican
Alexander Curley ○	Libertarian
Clerk	
Vote for not more than 1	
Laura C. Ford ●	Democrat
Kristin Baranski ○	Republican
Treasurer	
Vote for not more than 1	
Julie Collard ○	Republican
<i>Sherry Baker-McCary</i> ●	
Trustee	
Vote for not more than 2	
Stanley Boris ○	Democrat
Matt Cunningham ○	Republican
Doug Kuebler ○	Republican
<i>Kevin Willis</i> ●	



Van Zee's claim that he saw secret ballots and "would have won" the primary is false. 911 people voted. Bill Conklin won by 41 votes. Is Van Zee adding the 33 spoiled ballots (voters who re-voted on new ballots) and 11 ballots that were duplicated by election workers due to stray marks and asserting those were votes for him? Even if so, those ballots don't count twice!

***** ECRWSSEDDM**** USPS Mktg. Mail
Local Postal Customer ECRWSS
U.S. Postage Paid
EDDM Retail

Van Zee's False Claims

Documented Facts

He claims we said the Shoreline [sic] Protection Strip ordinance was being violated is a "lie."

Not a lie. The Planning Commission's approval of the Laws' boat basin and Van Zee's approval of the Laws' boathouse violated the waterfront regulations. Three residents brought cases to the Zoning Board of Appeals and argued the shoreland could not be excavated. Fifty supporters agreed and gave public comment. The Zoning Board of Appeals agreed. Van Zee **disagreed, filing a sworn statement in court** that he would issue the permit again.

He claims we "lied" that "the township is destroying Lake Charlevoix shoreline." And that the Township has restored more shoreline in the past two years than in the previous 20 years.

The Township itself does not restore shoreland, only waterfront property owners do. The Township approved the destruction of shoreland by approving the Laws' boat basin, and large event center that would be over the water of Lake Charlevoix. The residents stopped it 11 months later at the Zoning Board of Appeals. **The Township spent thousands in legal fees fighting the residents. The residents were correct: Van Zee had violated the ordinance.** Van Zee and the Planning Commission are currently trying to make changes in our good ordinance that would allow shoreland excavation on all our lakes and streams.

That we said that the Township purchased a Fire Truck from Ron Van Zee.

No, we reported that *that's what Van Zee said, that he had bought the truck personally and was reimbursed.* At the Nov 13, 2023 meeting, the Board pretended to decide to buy the truck, but Van Zee had already gone downstate with a Hayes Township check cut on Nov 1 without board approval, and bought the truck. He got the whole board to play along with a fake decision. **Later he said "So I went out on my own and purchased it. If the township didn't want it, I would have kept it for the farm."** When asked if he had been reimbursed, he replied: **"Oh, yes, I have been."** See HayesVotersForChange.org for Feb 2024 recording and fire truck article in Newsletter #1.

That it was a "lie" that we said the auditors found many problems with the accounting/books. He claims the "auditors found ALL accounts and financials in best possible condition."

No, the auditor found many, many serious problems and violations of state laws. From the 2023 Audit: "The Township Board of Trustees has not been able to properly monitor the financial condition, or compliance with regulations and laws, due to the condition of the general ledger." (p.46) And: "We encountered one difficulty in dealing with management in performing and completing our audit: delays based on the condition of the books and records." (p.43)

He claims our opinion that the Township should have sided with intervenors in trying to close the Bay Shore gravel pit is a "lie."

An opinion is not a lie. Had the Township stood with the Intervenors and Bay Shore residents when Intervenors first brought it up in 2019, we might have had a resolution to the issue years earlier, without going to court. During mediation the township sided with the company on the 5 year extension, rather than with Intervenors for 1 more year.

He claims we "lied" that the township did not enforce the conditions in the Consent Judgment by letting them [Rieth Riley] go without a fence, and that the truth is Reith Riley erected a fence at the suggestion of the township.

We gave truthful statements about the fence. The Consent Judgment for the gravel pit required proper fencing around the mine, to protect residents. Van Zee as Zoning Administrator since 2019 should have immediately made them put the fence up. The Township **sat silently during recent court proceedings**, while residents argued for proper fencing in dramatic testimony on the witness stand. When the court didn't fix the situation, residents persistently begged the Township at Board meetings for the fence. If Bay Shore residents hadn't tried to get compliance in court for this 35-year old agreement, the Township would have done nothing.

Paid for with regulated funds by Hayes Voters For Change, 09799 Townline Road, Petoskey, MI 49770. Not authorized by any candidate or candidate committee.

Did you vote absentee for Van Zee and change your mind after seeing his slanderous mailings? Before Election Day go to the Township Hall and request a new ballot and turn in your spoiled ballot. You don't have to say why you want a new ballot.