

**ALMENA TOWNSHIP
27625 CR 375
PAW PAW, MI 49079**

**ALMENA TOWNSHIP BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
November 11, 2015**

The Almena Township Board met at the Township Hall. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Supervisor VanTassel.

Roll Call: Jerry Lentz, Sheri Manning, Mark Roman, Jim Manning, Deedra Rhoa, Sandra Rickli, and Bill Van Tassel.

AGENDA CHANGES/APPROVAL: Under New Business add: “3. Richard Comi review of Faulk and Foster Application, 4. 32nd Street Project.” Under Unfinished Business add: “2. 30th Street Project.” **MOTION: Motion** by Jerry Lentz to approve the agenda as corrected, **second** by Sheri Manning. **Motion passed.**

MEETING MINUTES CHANGES/APPROVAL – Regular Meeting October 14, 2015, Special Meeting, November 4, 2015 and Closed Session October 14, 2015.

October 14, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes: Under Sheriff Report: remove “is purchasing” and add “purchased” and after “each township” add “and the county is currently working with the vendor to get it implemented.” In the Parks and Recreation Report, remove “will get” and replace with “requested.” Under Adjournment to Closed Session, add a period after closed session and remove “without.” After “legal counsel” add “did not attend and abstained.” **MOTION: Motion** by Sheri Manning to approve the minutes of October 14, 2015 as corrected, **second** by Bill Van Tassel. **Motion passed.**

MOTION: Motion by Jerry Lentz to approve the special meeting minutes for November 4, 2015 as written, **second** by Jim Manning. Sheri Manning abstained. **Motion passed.**

Bill Van Tassel presented the closed session minutes from October 14, 2015. Jim Manning and Sheri Manning abstained. **MOTION: Motion** by Sandra Rickli to approve the closed meeting minutes, **second** by Deedra Rhoa.

Roll Call Vote: Mark Roman – Yes, Deedra Rhoa – Yes, Jerry Lentz – Yes, Sandra Rickli – Yes, Bill Van Tassel – Yes. Jim Manning – Abstained, Sheri Manning – Abstained. **Motion passed.**

PRESENTATION/APPROVAL OF BILLS:

The Clerk presented the monthly disbursements for the period of October 15, 2015 through November 11, 2015 with invoices to be paid, \$40,409.44, checks written October 23 through November 2 \$9,656.37, \$405.75 on November 4 for the election, and payroll of \$9,412.62; for a total of \$59,884.18. The large amount in cardholder services was the cemetery markers and the \$6,000 was one half of the insurance money for the Dustin Krueger fire damaged residence. **MOTION: Motion** by Sandra Rickli to approve bills in the amount of \$59,884.18, **second** by Bill VanTassel. **Motion passed.**

REPORTS:

Road Commission: Not available.

Commissioner: Dick Godfrey, Chair of the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, was in attendance to present his monthly report. Trees for the troops is scheduled for November 30th and volunteers are needed, Veteran’s Affairs is going well with Sue Weirs, nine coal power plants have closed in Michigan, Palisades will refuel to provide energy, and a large Homeland Security Grant was received as Van Buren County manages two nuclear plants.

Sheriff Report: Deputy Wilton gave his report for the month of October. Reports have not been generated off the new 911 software as of yet. The department has started property checks for snowbirds and kill permits for a deer hit on the road are not needed in Michigan.

LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT:

Fred Cramer of 25495 County Road 653 in Gobles informed the Board how unhappy the residents that live on County Road 653 are with the road condition after the road was ground down to gravel. Mr. Cramer feels the road will introduce safety concerns and affect property values. A copy of the questions the Fish Lake Neighborhood Association asked at the November 5, 2015 Van Buren County Road Commission was given to the Board.

Linda Wayne of 26458 County Road 653 in Gobles was concerned as to what happened and why the township did not inform the residents of the grinding.

Connie Selles of 26516 County Road 653 in Gobles had previously submitted a written report about her concerns of money spent to repair winter damage on the road and six months later it becomes gravel.

REPORTS:

Clerk: The election resulted in 51 absentee ballots and 68 voters. Received an estimate from Lantz for snowplowing and the salting fees have increased by \$5.00 per application. Hanley's Tree Service is done with the trees at Covey Hill.

Treasurer: A state revenue sharing check was received for \$66,306. Summer taxes unpaid are around \$68,000 but can still be paid at the township until the end of February with interest and penalties added. Special assessment for the North Lake Weed control should remain the same for next year. Winter property tax bills will be prepared at the end of the month. Bills introduced in Lansing consisted of a \$0.15 increase in the state's gas tax to raise money to fix Michigan roads and a bill aimed at stopping reduced assessments for large retail establishments.

Supervisor:

Fire Board Report: There was not a Fireboard Report as Bill did not attend the meeting this month.

Supervisor's Report: The gutters, fascia, and underground drainage pipes are complete at the town hall. For the next township trash day, a quote will be obtained with the option of having three garbage trucks with drivers on site to remove the dumpsters as soon as they are full. The overhang gaps were repaired to hopefully help deter the nesting birds. The Board is invited to the annual township meeting with the Van Buren County Road Commission for 2016 projects to be discussed on December 2. The Board is invited to attend

Planning Commission: The Planning Commission is working on a revision of the township site plan application and were informed of the need for future discussion on creating a process to follow for cell tower application review.

Parks and Recreation: The Parks and Recreation committee met with Chris Khorey of McKenna and Associates and Jerry Lentz does not know the details.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Senior Services:** Mistelle Smith of Senior Services presented her report with a review of senior services and accomplishments achieved by the organization this year.
2. **Household Hazardous Waste Agreement:** The Board was in agreement to cover an additional \$800.00 if necessary to cover the hazardous waste disposal costs for Almena Township residents.
3. **Richard Comi Review of the Faulk and Foster Application:** Due to the complexity of telecommunications applications, Dick Comi of The Center for Municipal Solutions was asked to review the Faulk and Foster application to modify an existing telecommunications tower.

MOTION: **Motion** by Mark Roman to approve the agreement with Richard Comi of The Center for Municipal Solutions to review the Faulk and Foster Application, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion passed.**

4. **32nd Street Project:** The crack seal is complete on the 32nd Street and the funds have previously been approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **McKenna Agreement:** Information about Chris Khorey’s promotion was received from McKenna and Associates. The Board agreed to have Bill Van Tassel call for more information including fees and the amounts to be charged in the future.
2. **30th Street Project:** The request for the 30th street programed cost from 48th Avenue to County Road 653 was presented. **MOTION:** **Motion** by Mark Roman to approve the 30th Street programmed cost as defined in the request, **second by** Bill Van Tassel. **Motion passed.**

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comment.

ADJOURNMENT TO CLOSED SESSION: The members of the Board will go into a closed session. Jim Manning and Sheri Manning, as advised by legal counsel, did not attend and abstained from the vote. **MOTION:** **Motion** by Sandra Rickli to go into a closed session under Section 8E of the Open Meetings Act to consult with our attorney regarding the pending litigation and the federal lawsuit recently filed by Verizon Wireless, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion passed.** Adjourned to closed session at 8:16 p.m.

The Supervisor re-convened the regular meeting following the closed session at 8:42 p.m. Upon returning to the board room to re-convene, it was discovered that Jim Manning and Sheri Manning had left the premises. There was no further discussion.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: **Motion** by Jerry Lentz to adjourn, **second** by Mark Roman. **Motion passed.** The meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Approval date: December 9, 2015

ALMENA TOWNSHIP

Lia Will, Deputy Clerk – Recording Secretary for Clerk, Sandra B. Rickli

CC: Township Board (7)
Planning Commission (8)
ZBA (5)
Attorney David Lewis