

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

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

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

**AGENDA APPROVAL:** Two additions were made to the agenda under New Business; Resolution establishing Poverty Exemption guidelines for 2015, and Friends of Wolf Lake – Dave Denton.

**MOTION:** **Motion** by Sheri Manning to approve the agenda as amended, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion approved.**

**MEETING MINUTE APPROVAL – January 14, 2015:**

There were five corrections suggested by Mark Roman. On page two, six lines down *possibly* should be possibility. On line seven the words *following their closing schedule* should be deleted. On line eighteen *the* should be inserted in between the words for and decision. On line twenty one the word *special* should be deleted, at the bottom under Planning Commission. In the second sentence under Planning Commission, the word *needs* should be changed to *received*. The Parks and Recreation report needs to be added following the Planning Commission report, stating that McKenna is currently working on the Parks and Recreation survey, and that Jerry will be contacting the previously appointed members to inquire about their interest in this committee going forward. The final correction is on page 3 under Open Public Comment, the word shard should be *shared*.

**MOTION:** **Motion** by Jerry Lentz to approve the meeting minutes of January 14, 2015 as amended, **second** by Sheri Manning. **Motion approved.**

**PRESENTATION/APPROVAL OF BILLS:**

The Clerk presented the monthly disbursements for the period of January 15, 2015 through February 11, 2015 in the amount of \$20,665.77

**MOTION:** **Motion** by Sandra Rickli to approve bills in the amount of \$20,665.77, **second** by Sheri Manning. **Motion approved.**

**REPORTS:**

**Road Commission:** Larry Hummel and Al Svilpe were in attendance; Larry Hummel addressed the board. There was much discussion in regards to roads and our current situation. *The Road Commission has always had control over primary and local road funds; the township has not had the control but has always had input. The Road Commission has no intention of actually exercising that right of control. They have the ability of taking those monies if the township does not use them in a timely fashion, however, that has never been their policy.*

**Commissioner:** Dick Godfrey in attendance to present his monthly report.

**Sheriff's Department:** Deputy Wilton reported there were 93 units dispatched into the township during the month of January.

**LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT:** Public comment was offered.

**REPORTS:**

**Clerk:** Sandra Rickli reported the following: The municipal civil infraction situation is now closed; it has been resolved with assistance by our attorney. The MTA annual conference was held in Grand Rapids January 28-30. The Clerk thanked the board for allowing her to go. A lot of new information was learned, and seeing all the new proposed election equipment at the vendor expo was very interesting. MTA is holding a seminar March 30-31 in Frankenmuth: Township Board Roles and Relations, making meetings work more effectively, and Utilizing Strategic Planning. The board should inform the Clerk if interested in attending for registration purposes.

**Treasurer:** Sheri Manning gave the following report: Tax collection continues. Keystone Bank, which we do our banking with, recently merged with Mercantile. Since the merge, we have had service charges almost monthly, which they have reversed after explanation; Sheri is researching other banks at this time. The Costco membership is in process for the fire file purchase. Costco requires a copy of the actual sales tax license of which we are requesting from the State of Michigan, which may take some time.

**Supervisor:** Bill Van Tassel gave the following report: **Fire Report:** The \$11,000 listed on the Paw Paw Fire Board Report was incorrectly listed. It should have been \$10,000. There were two calls for fire in Almena Township in January.

The Van Buren County Drain Commission held 2 meetings here at the hall January 28-29. The proposed road project designation of funds would be part of the Todd Drain road project.

Deedra Rhoa, Trustee, shared she finds it interesting that the Van Buren County Drain Commission is making recommendations in regards to drains but that The Van Buren County Road Commission will not make recommendations in regards to roads.

The dates for Board of Review to hear assessment appeals will be March 9 and March 12, by appointment only.

**Planning Commission:** Mark Roman reported on the February Planning Commission meeting. They had preliminary discussions regarding the proposed cell tower Special-Use application. The public hearing has been set for March 2, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. The Michigan Department of Transportation has indicated the tower is too tall and they are waiting for an opinion from the FAA. All of this will be discussed at the public hearing.

**Parks and Recreation:** Jerry Lentz reported on the proposed survey language as being proposed by McKenna Associates. The proposed survey is going to be sent to the board for their review and feedback prior to making it available to the public. The board is then invited to comment with any suggestions and/or changes. Contact was made with the six individuals previously appointed to the Parks and Recreation Committee. Dave and Jeanne DeRyke are very interested, Julie Courter said she and her husband would consider remaining a part of the committee but were disappointed in the lack of communication. The Klans could not be reached. Also it was added that reports should come to the board from the Parks and Recreation Committee meetings.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **ZBA Reappointments:** The terms of Ron Marvin (PC liaison), Sue Wiegand (alternate), and Rich Wyrwa (alternate) are up for renewal on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

**MOTION: Motion** by Mark Roman to reappoint Ron Marvin to the ZBA, and Rich Wyrwa and Sue Wiegand to the ZBA as alternates for a 3 year term, February 2018, **second** by Deedra Rhoa. **Motion approved.**

2. **PC Appointment:** Jim Horton - The Supervisor recommended Jim Horton for appointment to the Planning Commission, to fill the vacancy of Brian Rumsey.

**MOTION: Motion** by Jerry Lentz to appoint Jim Horton to the Planning Commission for a three year term through February 2018, **second** by Mark Roman. **Motion approved.**

3. **Friends of Wolf Lake – Dave Denton:**

Dave Denton presented a local governing body resolution for charitable gaming licenses to the board which recognizes Friends of Wolf Lake as a nonprofit organization operating in the community for the purpose of obtaining charitable gaming licenses.

**MOTION: Motion** by Sheri Manning to approve the resolution recognizing Friends of Wolf Lake as a nonprofit organization operating in the community for the purpose of obtaining charitable gaming licenses, **second** by Bill Van Tassel.

Roll call: Yeas: Roman, Lentz, S. Manning, Rhoa, J. Manning, Rickli, and Van Tassel.

**Motion approved.**

4. **Resolution establishing 2015 Poverty Exemption Guidelines:** As presented by Sheri Manning, this is established every year.

**MOTION: Motion** by Sheri Manning to approve the resolution establishing poverty exemption guidelines for 2015, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion passed.**

5. **Assessor's contract:** The Assessor's contract is up in March/April of this year. It is part of our due diligence to ~~seek outside bids~~ *open the bidding process*. We will put an ad in the Courier Leader and Flashes that we are seeking bids for a certified tax assessor for Almena Township. The current assessor should submit a bid for consideration, as well. It was the consensus of the board to inform the assessor(s) of this board decision made at the February 2015 board meeting.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. **CR 653:** It is the recommendation that the \$22,544 be allotted to repair the CR 653 drain/road issue, and the it is also the consensus of the board.

**MOTION: Motion** by Deedra Rhoa to approve the \$22,544 from the primary road fund to repair CR 653 as recommended by the Van Buren County Road Commission, **second** by Mark Roman. **Motion approved.**

**OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT:** offered.

Deb Shields, who works for Tonya Schuitmaker's office, - attended to introduce herself.

**ADJOURNMENT-**

**MOTION: Motion** by Jerry Lentz to adjourn, **second** by Mark Roman. **Motion passed.** The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Approval date: March 11, 2015

ALMENA TOWNSHIP

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