ALMENA TOWNSHIP
27625 CR 375
PAW PAW MI 49079

TOWNSHIP BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 8, 2012

The Almena Township Board met at the Township Hall. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Supervisor Stiles.

Roll call: Marv Flick, Jim Rickli, Jim Manning (telephonically), Doug Stiles, Jerry Lentz, Diane Triquet, and Sandra Rickli.

Jim Rickli requested a closed session at the conclusion of this meeting to continue discussion of the last closed meeting. There will be a closed session at the end of the open public township board meeting tonight.

AGENDA APPROVAL:
There will be a closed session at the conclusion of the meeting.
MOTION: **Motion** by Doug Stiles to approve the agenda as amended, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion approved**.

MEETING MINUTE APPROVAL:
Diane Triquet made a correction at the end of the first page, under Reports, Treasurer. The first statement of 8 more businesses with personal property tax to be added, should have said that they were added by the State Tax Commission, not the Van Buren County Treasurer.
MOTION: **Motion** by Jerry Lentz to approve the meeting minutes of January 11, 2012 as amended, **second** by Doug Stiles. **Motion approved**.

CLOSED SESSION MEETING MINUTE APPROVAL:
Jim Rickli made a correction to the minutes.
MOTION: **Motion** by Jim Rickli to approve the closed session meeting minutes of January 11, 2012 with a correction, **second** by Diane Triquet. **Motion passed**.

PRESENTATION/APPROVAL OF BILLS:
Clerk Rickli presented the monthly disbursements for board approval.
MOTION: **Motion** by Sandra Rickli to approve bills in the amount of $22,955.46, **second** by Jim Rickli. **Motion approved**.

COPRRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS:
The Clerk announced there will be a Presidential Primary election on Tuesday, February 28th. Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

REPORTS:
Sheriff Dept.: Report was given which included 92 calls for service in January.
Commissioner: Dick Godfrey, in attendance, presented his report. Included in his report, Public Transit was granted approval for the purchase of two new buses at a total cost of $260,000, which will be covered by grants. Also, Emergency Management completed a winter exercise at

the Fair Grounds form January 30 through February 2nd, which included the erection of hospital tents along with an emergency room, food facilities, etc.

LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT – was offered.

REPORTS:
Treasurer: Diane Triquet gave the following report. Attorney Kelly Page will be in contact with Diane to set up delinquent personal property tax judgment for Championship Construction. Announced for the Assessor, Assessments will be mailed out very soon.
BS&A, Software Company, which provides our software and support service, has provided a list of totals for the amounts of hits on our website for people accessing the tax and assessing information, in the last 6 months. Tax has had 1056 hits and Assessing has had 1286 hits, which indicates that more and more people are accessing our website for their needs, which is the intent.
Budget work meetings will begin this month; resolutions must be adopted for salaries of the elected officials prior to March 1st.
Senior Services: A report was given by Skip Hamilton of what services they are currently offering to seniors.
Planning Commission: Marv Flick reported that there will be a public hearing on March 5th for an update of the Master Plan, which is to be reviewed/updated every 5 years. It will be added that changes will be made in the next 5 years in improvements in high-speed internet/wireless services. Van Buren County Planning Commission gave some recommendations that the Planning Commission has not decided to act on.
Attorney: Kelly Page suggested waiting until the end of the 2011 tax collection to begin new judgment action and include all delinquent personal property in the new judgement.
Marv Flick, Trustee has submitted his letter of resignation which will be effective April 11, 2012, the board will accept his resignation, officially, at the March meeting. The newly trustee will be appointed at the April meeting and will become effective, active, at the May meeting. Any person interested in fulfilling the remainder of a a Trustee position until December should submit a letter of interest to Almena Township. The position will be posted in the local paper.
Trustee report: Jim Rickli recently attended that Paw Paw Fire Board Meeting; he received and distributed a report showing the total number of fire runs for 2011. Almena is serviced by three fire departments, Paw Paw, Mattawan, and Pine Grove, depending on location.
Farmers Market: Bill Van Tassel gave a report. He shared that he recently received a certificate from MSU Extension for food safety, in regards to food laws and protection for farmers. He reported that the balance in the Farmers Market checkbook is $1728.25 which will cover advertising to begin the year and the portable toilet for on-site. He suggested possibly receiving additional financial support from the Township in the new budget.
Parks and Recreation: Bill Van Tassel explained that there are objectives and strategies in the Master Plan for the next 5 years in the area of parks and recreation. He, personally, would like to see the basketball backboard repaired and to repair and paint the back of the historic hall. It was suggested he should submit his suggestions for budget in these areas in writing for review at future budget meetings.
Supervisor: Doug Stiles gave the following information in report:
Kalamazoo County Hazardous Waste submitted their quarterly report, for resident use, to the township. There were 64 Almena Township participants, and there remains a balance of $1730.00

A road tour was recently conducted by members of the road committee. Seal coating is consistently needed throughout the township. The committee will put together a report by the next meeting and submit their estimates to the Van Buren County Road Commission.
The township office would like to hire a new cleaning service, as there have been some problems over the years. Jeanne DeRyke already cleans the historic hall, when in seasonal rental time, does the landscaping, and lives in very close proximity. The Supervisor would like to hire her to clean the hall bi-monthly, as is presently done. She has been approached in regards to this and is very interested and would be willing to clean for the same price as the current cleaning company. We do not have a contract with the present cleaning service. A rebuilt vacuum cleaner with 1 year warranty has been ordered. An agreement has been provided by our Insurance Co. that would be signed by Jeanne stating the township would not be liable in the event she is hurt on the premises. The Attorney would like time to review the agreement as provided by the Insurance Co. and will report back next month. Attorney Kelly Page will give us an opinion as to if this service should be put out for bid.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Resolution Establishing Poverty Exemption Guidelines:
   The language of the resolution was shared, which resulted in a motion.
   MOTION: **Motion** by Diane Triquet to approve the Resolution Establishing Poverty Exemption Guidelines, **second** by Sandra Rickli
   Roll call vote: Marv Flick – yes, Jim Rickli – yes, Jim Manning – yes, Jerry Lentz – yes, Diane Triquet – yes, Sandra Rickli – yes, and Doug Stiles – yes.
   Motion approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Vote on the Manning Rezoning property:
   Ordinance number #107, along with the Statement of Conditions was presented for approval.
   MOTION: **Motion** by Doug Stiles to approve ordinance #107, along with the Statement of Conditions for Property (Manning), **second** by Jim Rickli.
   Roll call vote: Jim Rickli-yes, Doug Stiles-yes, Jerry Lentz-yes, Diane Triquet-yes, and Sandra Rickli-yes.
   Motion approved

This had previously been recommended for approval by the Van Buren County Planning Commission. This will be published and the original filed with the register of deeds.

2. Budget meeting date scheduled: The first budget meeting/work session will be Friday, February 17, 2012 at 2:00 p.m.

3. Bloomingdale Communications: To establish or not-establish franchise fees:
   MOTION: **Motion** by Marv Flick to not charge a franchise fee to residents with a wireless provider, **second** by Jerry Lentz. Motion passed.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT: Was offered.

ADJOURNMENT: **MOTION**: **Motion** by Marv Flick to adjourn the regular meeting, upon which, to enter into a closed session, **second** by Doug Stiles. All voted in favor. The regular meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m. to enter into a closed session.

MOTION: **Motion** by Marv Flick to enter into a closed session; the closed session is being called pursuant to Section 8(H) of the OMA to "consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute." A **second** to the motion was given by Jerry Lentz.
Roll call vote: Jerry Lentz-yes, Jim Rickli-yes, Marv Flick-yes, Diane Triquet-yes, Jim Manning-yes, Sandra Rickli-yes, and Doug Stiles-yes. Motion unanimously approved.

The Township Board reconvened after the closed session ended at 8:51 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:
MOTION: **Motion** by Marv Flick to adjourn the regular township board meeting, **second** by Sandra Rickli. **Motion passed**. The meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

ALMENA TOWNSHIP

Sandra B. Rickli
Almena Township Clerk

cc: Township Board (7)
Planning Commission (8)
ZBA (5)
Attorney Gary Stewart
Attorney Kelly Page
AGS