

**TOWNSHIP BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 16, 2012**

The Almena Township Board met at the 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: Mark Roman, Jim Rickli, Jim Manning, Doug Stiles, Jerry Lentz, Diane Triquet, and Sandra Rickli.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

MOTION: **Motion** by Doug Stiles to approve the agenda as presented, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion approved.**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

MOTION: **Motion** by Jim Rickli to approve the regular meeting minutes of April 11, 2012 as presented, **second** by Jim Manning. **Motion approved.**

PRESENTATION/APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Clerk Rickli presented the monthly disbursements for board approval.

MOTION: **Motion** by Jim Rickli to approve bills in the amount of \$ 37,428.48, **second** by Sandra Rickli. **Motion approved.**

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Clerk Rickli reported on the upcoming Clean Water Tour to be held on Thursday, June 7, 2012 from 5:00-9:00 p.m., which will depart from and return to Covert Township Hall at 73943 E Lake Street, Covert. The Price is \$5.00, which includes a box dinner; please see the Clerk for registration information.

Karen Hamre, introduced herself, as she is running for the position of Register of Deeds, Van Buren County as a Republican in the State Primary being conducted August 7, 2012.

REPORTS:

Commissioner, Dick Godfrey, was unable to attend the meeting but left his monthly newsletter for review. It was reported by the County Treasurer Karen Makay that 92% of the property taxes levied in the County have been paid. According to her records, 94% of the taxpayers in Almena Township have paid their taxes, which were reported, among other things.

Sheriff Dept.: Report was received which included 111 calls for service for April.

State Police: Lt. Dale Hinz in attendance to address any complaints. He will attempt to attend the monthly board meetings for Almena, or send his personnel to attend if at all possible, to address any issues. He will be attending 10 week training in July at the MPI National Academy and will be unavailable; again hoping to send a representative. There was discussion as to procedure deputies (Sheriff's Dept. or State Police) follow when responding to a complaint.

LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT:

David Arndt, CR 652, questioned how decisions are made on which roads to pave or sealcoat within the township.

Wayne Herring, 32141 Walden Way (M-43), has a complaint regarding constant barking of neighborhood dogs, junk, and un-mowed lawns. It was suggested he fill out a complaint form so this can be looked into.

REPORTS:

Treasurer: Diane Triquet reported of receiving revenue sharing on April 30 for January and February in the amount of \$57,393.00.

The County Treasurer has alerted the Almena Township Board of the opportunity to purchase two parcels, which are available for sale by the County from the reversion process; one located on 23rd St., parcel #80-01-024-011-20, and on 45th Ave., parcel #80-01-031-011-20. If a local unit purchases the property(s) they must be used for a public purpose, and the deadline for response is June 22nd. The board will review and make a decision at the June board meeting. A call has been received from Terron McLain of Mattawan Fire Department with news/updates; there are no changes in the charge amount for service for Almena Township. They are possibly looking at installing a new fire hydrant. They are also installing a new tornado siren near Hunt Drive, which Almena residents should be able to hear. It was suggested that the board look into what is involved with having a siren placed right in Almena Township (Center) and the cost for future consideration.

The Board would like to thank the Community and the Women of the Almena United Methodist Church for the extremely generous outpouring of service and community attendance held on Saturday, May 12th, which raised a very sizeable amount for the receptionist at Almena Township, as she is being treated for cancer and has no medical insurance. She is scheduled for surgery on June 7th at the University of Michigan.

Governor Snyder has signed Public Act 115 of 2012 (2011 Senate Bill 349) which will allow changes in the deadline for filing for homestead exemption. Discussions are taking place regarding personal property; bills would eliminate small amounts of commercial and individual personal property tax beginning 2013, as it stands as of this date.

Attorney Kelly Page: He is set to proceed with the second delinquent personal property tax for Championship Construction. These will be consolidated as one, and we can begin moving forward on collection. Kelly Page will check with Gary Stewart as to the status.

Planning Commission: Mark Roman, (Newly appointed Township Board Trustee) and liaison, reported on their last meeting, which was held Monday, May 14th. Mark Kruienza was welcomed as a newly appointed PC member. Mark Roman, Secretary for the PC, will take notes at the board meetings during Jenny's medical leave. He reported that there was an Almena Woods discussion, of possibly getting informational signs posted.

In regards to Parks and Recreation, a meeting date will be scheduled forthcoming. The Planning Consultant position was discussed. Professional Planner, Greg Milliken, of McKenna and Associates has left the agency and is now working directly for two municipalities; we may want to check into McKenna's replacement for him that will work with the PC.

Steve Manning is questioning where his final copy of the recorded deed for the conditionally rezoned property is, has it been recorded?

Supervisor: Doug Stiles has received a new Insurance quote from Par Plan, Western Insurance Agency, with reductions in premiums for Almena Township.

Marcia Williams of Almena United Methodist Church was in to offer Market Money bucks for the Almena Farmers Market in the amount of \$200 to be used by the Almena residents attending the market. Five dollar (\$5) vouchers will be handed out to customers to be used at the vendor booths, those vendors will then be reimbursed at the end of the day on Saturday June 16th.

It was also reported that the US Dept. of the Interior, that they will need permission to access the river of abutting property owners along the Paw Paw River to remove a larval population of lamprey that has been detected in the Paw Paw River. They are at a stage where they must be

destroyed; If they are left unchecked, it will have a detrimental effect upon fish populations that inhibit the Great Lakes. The board has given their consent.

Modernistic has given Almena Township a quote to remove the mold in the Historic Hall, from the ceiling area, which will be a total of \$1200. Modernistic is certified in mold removal. No other quotes have been received as of this date.

MOTION: Motion by Jim Rickli to go with the quote of Modernistic, unless another quote is received this week for consideration, **second** by Jim Manning. **Motion approved.**

The contract for the painting of the Historic Hall has been given to College Pro Painters by Committee.

Jim Rickli would like some feedback/follow-up in regards to the noise/nuisance issue on 38th Ave., of feeling by neighbors in the area in regards to a new neighbor riding four wheelers and shooting firearms; this had been touched on at the last meeting and was to be revisited. This will come later in the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Michigan Township Services:** Daniel Poll, Building Official, and Tasha Smalley (Administration for 10 years) in attendance to present their Services. They are based out of Allegan. They presented the basis of their company, along with their fee schedule, including availability and turnaround time, as well as land divisions, blight enforcement, site plan reviews. They are fully staffed and available. They distributed their application forms and more information for the board to review. They also fielded many questions.
2. **Cemetery Fees:** Clerk Sandra Rickli presented the recommendations by the Cemetery Board for increased fees. The recommendations include: An increase in opening/closing fees from \$350 to \$400 for a full burial and opening /closing for cremains from \$150 to \$200. Also an increase in non-resident lot fees from \$600 to \$800. The Clerk shared that she had suggested an increase of non-resident grave from \$600 to \$1000 originally. **MOTION: Motion** by Jim Rickli to approve all the recommendations of the Cemetery Board, raising the opening/closing fee for a full burial to \$400 and opening/closing of a cremains burial to \$200, with the exception of the non-resident lot fee; to go with the recommendation of the Clerk of \$1000, **second** by Sandra Rickli. **Motion approved.**
3. **Historic Hall renovations:** The Committee will present the renovations/improvements at the June meeting.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT:

Matt Bambacht, 28668 38th Ave., addressed the board and residents. He has seen a letter that has been circulated in regards to him and his activities at his new house. He would like to address some of the concerns as it is his desire to be a good neighbor and was not aware of the issues until some of his neighbors approached him. He has worked out time arrangements with them as to his riding, which will stop at 7:30 p.m., and will not target shoot until he makes a berm.

Lori Waldo, M-43, thanked the Sheriff's Department for coming out so promptly.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Motion by Jim Manning to adjourn, **second** by Jim Rickli. **Motion approved** The meeting adjourned at 9:20 P.M.

ALMENA TOWNSHIP

Sandra B. Rickli
Almena Township Clerk

cc: Township Board (7)
Planning Commission (8)

Attorney Kelly Page
Attorney Gary Stewart

ZBA (5)
AGS (3)