

TOWNSHIP BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 13, 2013

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: Mark Roman, Bill Van Tassel, Doug Stiles, Jerry Lentz, Sheri Manning, and Sandra Rickli. Jim Manning participated telephonically.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

Additions were made to the agenda, including the following: Under Unfinished Business four items were added; 1)Employee Issue; 2)VBC PC Recommendation; 3)North Lake Weed Control, and 4) Letter from Natural Resources Grant Project.

MOTION: **Motion** by Bill Van Tassel to approve the agenda as amended, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion passed.**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:

Mark Roman had a few corrections, on page two, under the clerk's report, the third sentence should read, "The Clerk will request this. The next word and letter to be deleted, they are typos. Also on page three, under Unfinished Business, seventh line down, add the word he after place.

MOTION: **Motion** by Jerry Lentz to approve the meeting minutes of January 9, 2013 as amended, **second** by Sheri Manning. **Motion approved.**

PRESENTATION/APPROVAL OF BILLS:

MOTION: **Motion** by Sandra Rickli to approve bills in the amount of \$34,070.66, **second** by Mark Roman. **Motion passed.**

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: The Clerk shared that there may be an election coming up on May 7th, for school millage renewals. We have not received confirmation. She also thanked the board for allowing the Treasurer and herself to attend the annual MTA conference in Detroit in January, it was found to be very educational and helpful.

REPORTS:

Road Commission: Al Svilpe in attendance, addressed complaints of snowplowing not done on the weekend.

Commissioner: Dick Godfrey, submitted his report for review, in his absence. Michigan Legislature approved two bills regarding drug use. One is a list of over the counter or prescribed items which, as of March 31, 2013, will be illegal for a driver to operate a vehicle with these in their system. The second law involves additions to the medical marijuana law.

Sheriff's Dept.: Deputy Wilton reported of receiving 86 calls for service for Almena Township for the month of January.

LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT:

Kristen Garceau, Chairman of the Almena Township Zoning Board of Appeals had a few questions/concerns to place before the board in regards to the ZBA.

MOTION: **Motion** by Jerry Lentz for the Township Board to utilize the services of Bruce Dean/AGS for this one ZBA Variance Summary Review only, not to exceed 2 hours for this issue only, **second** by Sheri Manning. **Motion approved**

REPORTS:

Treasurer: Sheri Manning presented the following report: Property tax collections have been slow for the month of January, but beginning to pick back up for February as deadline approaches.

Constitutional revenue sharing estimates from State of Michigan project a 4.1% increase for the 2013-2014 budget year and a 4% increase for the 2014-2015 budget year. Statutory revenue sharing remains the same as in past years, essentially eliminated for almost all townships.

Transportation funding increases have been proposed by the governor. Plans for raising revenue are to increase the gas tax from \$0.19 to \$0.33 per gallon and diesel tax from \$0.15 to \$0.33 per gallon. Additional revenues would come from an increase in vehicle licensing fees of approximately \$120 per vehicle. Governor signed PILT law, meaning State must now pay its property taxes in full at current millage rates. An update on the ID badges, information is needed from each employee, including name and a picture to be taken. There will be an expiration date that will be renewed every voting cycle. The Mattawan Fire Board contract needs to be signed and returned if agreed upon. As far as agenda distribution, the policy manual says that items should be given to the Supervisor by Friday to be placed on the agenda for Monday and distributed. The policy will need to be changed to read the agenda will be distributed by Friday, before the meeting. Board members agreed that too much information is preferred, in order to properly prepare for the meeting; they can never have too much!

Website update: The Treasurer has offered to manage all the updates to the website. The minutes will be added by the Clerk. It was discussed to add the menu to the top of each page.

MOTION: **Motion** by Jerry Lentz to amend the policy manual, page four (4) to read agendas are to be distributed by Friday before the Township Board meeting, rather than Monday, **second** by Mark Roman. **Motion approved.**

Sheri will work on putting together a replacement member on the policy committee, to establish a full committee.

Trustee: Bill Van Tassel, attended the PPF meeting on February 4, 2013; the 1207 new unit Grass Rig is proving to be very helpful. It was discussed to possibly reduce the areas that Paw Paw and Mattawan Fire Departments respond to, in order to make the response time quicker. The Paw Paw Fire Department agreement has been signed.

Planning Commission: The February Planning Commission meeting was cancelled; no business.

Parks and Recreation: Doug shared that when the survey of the Almena Woods property is completed, the township will be notified.

Supervisor: Doug Stiles reported that hot water will be installed in the restrooms to prevent the spread of germs.

Kalamazoo County Hazardous Waste usage update was received; nine (9) residents from Almena Township have used the service in the last quarter.

Senior Services will be here March 6th from 10am-2pm for tax services, and again on March 22nd from 9am-12pm for a meeting.

Doug and members of the Board of Review will be attending a training session February 18th at the Radisson in Kalamazoo.

NEW BUSINESS

1. New member for Board of Review: Sue Wiegand
Sue will also serve as an alternate on the ZBA
MOTION: Motion by Doug Stiles to appoint Sue Wiegand to the Board of Review for a two (2) year appointment, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion approved.**
MOTION: Motion by Jerry Lentz to appoint Sue Wiegand to the Zoning Board of Appeals as an alternate, **second** by Sandra Rickli. **Motion approved.**
2. Board Renewals:
BOR: Rich Wyrwa and Bette Zawacki for two (2) year renewals,
MOTION: Motion by Jerry Lentz to reappoint Rich Wyrwa and Bette Zawacki to the Board of Review for a two (2) year appointment until 2/2015, **second** by Doug Stiles. **Motion approved.**
ZBA: Ron Marvin, Rich Wyrwa (alternate) for three (3) year renewals,
MOTION: Motion by Doug Stiles to reappoint Ron Marvin and Rich Wyrwa (alternate) to the ZBA for a three (3) year appointment, **second** by Mark Roman. **Motion approved.**
3. Board Adoption of Federal Poverty Exemption Guidelines:
MOTION: Motion by Mark Roman to approve the Resolution to adopt Poverty Exemption Guidelines and Asset test for 2013, **second** by Sandra Rickli:
Roll call vote: Bill Van Tassel-yes, Mark Roman-yes, Sheri Manning-yes, Jim Manning-yes, Jerry Lentz-yes, Sandra Rickli-yes, and Doug Stiles-yes. **Motion approved.**
4. Letter from Natural Resources Trust Fund Board re: Grant Project:
A copy was received by the board members from the Supervisor, it was reviewed, it will be revised and sent; it was the consensus of the board for approval with revisions.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Van Buren County Recommendation, PC Wireless Ordinance Amendment:
Van Buren County Planning Commission has sent their unanimous recommendation to concur with the amendments of the Almena Township Zoning Ordinance, Section 23.11 Wireless Telecommunications Facilities. The next step will be approval by the Township Board. The Clerk will confirm with the Ron Marvin, Chairman of the Planning Commission and McKenna Associates.
2. North Lake Weed Control, Craig Yaple: Craig of North Lake was in attendance. He reported that Pine Grove Township has held both of their public hearings for the North Lake Weed Control Special Assessment District Renewal. They have approved a five (5) year contract. Almena will schedule the next public hearing to approve the tax roll for Almena Township for North Lake, which will be published and property owners will be noticed.
3. Employee Issue: Brief discussion ensued in which it was consensus of the board that the Receptionist position at Almena Township is no longer needed. It was also decided, after discussion, that Jenny Parish would not continue on as PC/ZBA Secretary.
MOTION: Motion by Sheri Manning to eliminate the receptionist position as of February 28, 2013 with notification to the employee that there will be no work for her between now and the elimination date of February 28, 2013, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion passed.**

MOTION: Motion by Mark Roman to place and ad in the paper to fill the PC/ZBA Secretarial position, **second** by Sandra Rickli. **Motion passed.**

ZONING ADMINISTRATION was discussed.

The Board inquired of the Supervisor if fee schedules were ever received from Kevin Cardiff, and it appears a fee schedule has never been received by our office.

There is concern among the board members that we have no zoning administrator in place to handle any incoming applications/situation, and or land divisions. Discussion continued, it was the consensus of the board that we need names and references, and some potential administrator names with references by the next board meeting at the latest; a decision will be made no later than the March board meeting. In the meantime, the board would like someone in place to handle applications in the interim.

MOTION: Motion by Mark Roman that the Planning Commission has the authority to hire McKenna Associates or Bruce Dean of AGS (his rates would be \$75/hr.) on a case by case basis to handle any issues to come before the board until we have something in place with another individual or entity; this will be handled on a case by case basis, **second** by Sheri Manning. **Motion approved by a 6-1 margin, with a no vote by Jim Manning.**

Sheri shared that she has received two (2) land division applications that need attention. These two (2) pending land divisions will be given to McKenna Associates to review. Potential Land Divisions options were mentioned, which included the following: Texas Township, Antwerp Township, and Greg Milliken at Oshtemo Township. Doug will contact these and look into other possible resources.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT: Offered

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Motion by Jerry Lentz to adjourn, **second** by Mark Roman. **Motion passed.** The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

ALMENA TOWNSHIP

Sandra B. Rickli
Almena Township Clerk

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