

**ALMENA TOWNSHIP BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

(Approved 6-11-14)

MAY 14, 2014

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

AGENDA APPROVAL:

One addition was made, under Unfinished Business, item #2 Intergovernmental agreement with Texas Township.

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

One correction was noted, on page 3, item number 4 under New Business. The last line should read: *He is very knowledgeable from the perspective of working for a utility provider.*

MOTION: **Motion** by Mark Roman to approve the meeting minutes of April 16, 2014 as amended, **second** by Deedra Rhoa. **Motion approved.**

PRESENTATION/APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Sandra Rickli presented the monthly disbursements for the period of April 17, 2014 to May 14, 2014 in the amount of \$49,652.95.

MOTION: **Motion** by Sandra Rickli to approve bills in the amount of \$49,652.95 **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion approved.**

REPORTS:

Sheriff's Department: Deputy Wilton presented the monthly report for Almena. For the month of April, there were 25 incidents in Almena Township. He again warned citizens to be careful about picking up any roadside bottles, cans, or 2 liters as the potential is very real for one pot meth labs to explode. He urged the residents to not touch them.

Commissioner: Dick Godfrey could not be in attendance tonight, but dropped off his report for distribution earlier in the week.

LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT -

Haley Porn, 26000 Stone Bridge, in attendance to question the status of the Trestle Creek Farms Subdivision roads now that spring is here. She questioned what the next step is. There were many questions and there was much discussion. This will be discussed later in the meeting under Unfinished Business-Roads.

REPORTS:

Clerk: Sandra Rickli reported that her new Deputy Clerk, Ronda Babik, is very knowledgeable and is working hard; it is going well! The May 6th Gobles School Election went well, very slow

day with 114 total voters, which included absentee ballots as well. MTA has 2 upcoming seminars if the board is interested.

Supervisor: Bill Van Tassel reported on the following: The burned house on M-43 has been torn down and cleaned up. The house in Sandy Ridge Circle has also been torn down and sold. DEQ is satisfied with the clean-up done at the Rininger property. The Special Assessment Road Commission bill for Rose Lane for winter 2013-14 was more than double what it was last year. The Santora ZBA appeals case will be heard May 16th.

The first Almena Farmers Market this year will be held June 7th from 9am to 1pm and every Saturday thereafter through September 27th.

PP Fire Board Meeting: Jim Manning attended the May Fire Board Meeting. The new fire truck is still on hold while they investigate more on pricing for a new fire house or an addition to the current station. The new proposed fire truck is 3 ft longer than what the current fire station would hold. They are currently requesting bids on their options for improvement/replacement of their fire station, exploring all options and meeting with consultants at this time.

Planning Commission: The PC held a public hearing on May 12th in regards to revisions to the Land Subdivision Regulations, which passed unanimously to recommend the changes to the Township Board. This will be passed on to the Township Board for a decision at the July board meeting, at which time the Clerk will have received the recommendation/opinion back from the VBCPC. The replacement of the member on the Commercial Development Committee will be determined after the vacancy is filled on the PC. The committee will not meet until after the vacancy has been filled and a determination is then made from among all the PC members.

Parks and Recreation: Trustee, Jerry Lentz, reported on the status of Parks and Recreation. A Power washer, water hoses, measuring wheel, keys and shed lock hardware have been purchased. The storage shed security was improved. Questionnaires were distributed at the Spring Clean up Day with not much response returned. This is a work in progress.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Remonumentation Program: Members of the Committee in attendance, Paul DeYoung-Register of Deeds, and Don Gilchrist-County Surveyor. This committee of remonumentation is made up of 9 volunteers. They are in the process of establishing the corners in all townships. Almena Township is the closest to being completed. If Almena wishes to budget for purchasing a corner, the County will then match that with 2 more corners with grant monies received. If this will possibly be considered at next years' budget planning, the board is to let the committee know by November of this year so that they can place it in the grant program for the following year. Once this project is completed it never has to be done again. It will possibly take 10-15 more years to complete this project. This will establish all corners of Almena Township, and all corners of each township in Van Buren County.
2. Planning Commission Candidates:
There were originally 3 interested candidates, but one candidate has withdrawn their name.
Jeff Starret, 29160 42nd Ave introduced himself. He previously worked for Consumers Power, but is now retired. He has lived in Almena Township for 21 years.
Greg Babik, 25900 Stone Bridge. He is a Process Engineer at Pfizer and has been for 11 years. He has lived in Almena Township for 2 and ½ years. He finds planning very interesting.

Discussion was then held, as there are 2 excellent candidates before us. Mark explained the possibility that Nina may be interested in stepping down as alternate; she repeatedly says that she should let others into the position as she has been on the PC for many years.

MOTION: **Motion** by Deedra Rhoa to appoint Greg Babik to the Planning Commission as a member, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion passed.**

The alternate position will be researched with Nina.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Roads:

Jim Martemucci, resident and road committee member, began by presenting his report as prepared by the road committee. He welcomed the assistance of Haley Porn on the road committee. The road committee traveled around the township for about 5-6 hours establishing the roads that need immediate attention or yearly maintenance. There are no projects scheduled for this year as the budget will only allow for maintenance of existing roads in their present form. Jim suggested the township offering some type of education session on roads to the residents so that the residents of Trestle Creek might regain trust in the board again, and/or the Road Commission. Jim Manning explained that a guard rail must be placed along 32nd St. by the creek, it is a wide open drop off.

MOTION: **Motion** by Jim Manning to accept the bid for the proposed yearly maintenance projects as proposed: contract gravel, dust control, sealcoat, boom mowing, and misc. ditching, **second** by Sandra Rickli. **Motion passed.**

2. Intergovernmental agreement with Texas Township:

The proposed changes have been incorporated in to the agreement. Building inspection fees will now be 60% of the permit fee, and Mechanical and Electrical will be 75% of the permit fee. Office hours will still be \$50 per hour, as will ZBA prepared notices and reviews.

MOTION: **Motion** by Mark Roman to approve the intergovernmental agreement for Building Inspection Services between Almena and the Charter Township of Texas after it is signed and returned, **second** by Jim Manning. **Motion passed.**

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT:

Deb Hurst, Finch St., questioned why Almena is talking so much about Paw Paw Township, when the Mattawan Fire Department covers such a large vicinity also.

Jim Martemucci, Woodfield Subdivision, urged the township to get the public relations out to the community.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

ALMENA TOWNSHIP

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