

**TOWNSHIP BOARD**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**SEPTEMBER 12, 2012**

The Almaena 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, and Sandra Rickli. Diane Triquet was absent.

**AGENDA APPROVAL:**

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

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:**

**MOTION: Motion** by Jim Rickli to approve the agenda as presented, **second** by Jim Manning. **Motion approved.**

**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 \$22,453.56, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion approved.**

**CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Clerk Rickli presented the following information: She will be attending a Berrien County Clerks Association informational meeting being presented by the Bureau of Elections. It will be held Friday, September 21, 2012 at Lake Charter Township in Bridgman.

**REPORTS:**

Attorney: Kelly Page gave an update on the stipulated court order by Judge Hamre regarding Koppers. It was ordered that the accessory building shall not be used for residential purposes, and any residential use shall immediately cease and desist, further that the defendants shall obtain a permit for the fencing and upon obtaining the permit shall bring the fence facing the roadway down to the four foot height requirement contained in the ordinance. In regards to Championship Construction, Viper Security is attempting to seize assets (equipment) at this time; waiting on VIN numbers.

Road Commission: Al Svilpe in attendance, gave his report. All projects have been completed for the year, including seal coating and fog seal.

Commissioner: Dick Godfrey, in attendance, presented his report. Commissioners approved a policy prohibiting public employees from engaging in political activity during hours of employment, using county equipment or any partisan activity. It was also reported that the County's Emergency Preparedness Lieutenant, Al Svilpe, secured the Commissions' approval to secure a State of Michigan grant in the amount of \$35,374.00.

**LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**REPORTS:**

Treasurer: In Diane's absence as reported by Trustee Mark Roman. Almena's share of state revenue sharing distribution of constitutional sales tax for the months of May and June, 2012 has been received. Tax collection continues with last day to pay without penalty September 14<sup>th</sup>.

Assessor: An update was given on the ongoing Parcel Review Project as reported last month. To correct some of the data reported, the following was offered: The data, photos, sketches and land have been entered into the computer for 726 parcels. This leaves 1,164 parcels left to be inputted into the computer. This transfers into 38% done and computerized.

Planning Commission: The September meeting was, again, cancelled due to lack of business.

Farmers Market: September 29<sup>th</sup> will be the last Saturday this year for the Farmers Market.

Parks & Recreation: The Farmers Market/Parks and Recreation have updates on the size and availability of the shed as requested from last month. Jeanne DeRyke has obtained three quotes for the 12' x 16' shed requested. Meyer Wood Products has a sale quote of \$2,895 (pre-built), Dr. Dan's (outbuildings) shed (pre-built) quote for \$2995, and Bommersheim Construction at \$2,825 (to be built off-site and transferred).

**MOTION:** **Motion** by Jim Manning to accept the bid of Meyer Wood Products for the outbuilding shed for storage for the Farmers Market/Parks & Recreation, **second** by Jim Rickli. **Motion passed.** Jim Rickli did want to go on record that he feels it should be a bigger building.

**Supervisor:** Doug Stiles reported that the pavement restoration company has not responded after holding their check, Doug will make a follow-up call.

In response to Ted Boyer's request for the board to consider a limited burn ban (burning ordinance), Doug has spoken with the three fire departments that service Almena Township and they have indicated that an ordinance would only increase their call volumes, and when a call is received, they must put the fire out (even if it is burning brush not out of control). Doug went on to explain that an ordinance cannot be created for 1 person alone; he suggested possibly petitioning their neighborhood for feedback and returning to the board. Mr. Boyer explained he is only requesting it in residential subdivisions in Almena, not township-wide. Mr. Boyer, again, shared that oak leaves are carcinogenic, and that Texas Township and Oshtemo Township have burn ordinances. It was shared that those townships are much bigger than Almena and their population is probably over 7,500 people. Jurisdictions that have a population over 7,500 people are not allowed to burn. Almena has around 5,000 residents.

Trustee: Trustee Rickli reported on the last fire board meeting. They will be getting 6 new doors, which will be between \$19,000 - \$33,000. The new truck is scheduled to be purchased next year but will probably be pushed back to 2015-2016 fiscal year, they will let us know. Their annual Paw Paw Fire Dept. appreciation dinner (supporting municipalities invited) will be October 4<sup>th</sup>. Arnold Harvey, who has been on the fire board for 63 years will be honored for his many years of service.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Senior Services annual report: A representative from Senior Services presented and outlined the annual report which covers July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012. They have 126 volunteers that have volunteered over 6,000 hours at a savings of \$93,000.

**They are still looking for an Almena Township resident to represent Almena by serving as a member on their board of directors.**

2. Property Tax Levy Resolution: The 2012 Property Tax Levy Resolution was prepared and presented by the Clerk. The source of Levy date was changed for the Roads and Fire Protection, due to the August primary election, which was approved by the voters on 8/7/2012. That is the only change from last year.

**MOTION**: **Motion** by Sandra Rickli to approve the 2012 Property Tax Levy Resolution as presented, **second** by Jim Rickli.

Roll call vote: Jerry Lentz-yes, Jim Manning-yes, Jim Rickli-yes, Mark Roman-yes, Sandra Rickli-yes, and Doug Stiles-yes.

**Motion approved.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

1. **Building and Code Enforcement discussion/AGS contract:**

**MOTION**: **Motion** by Mark Roman to hire Bill Henderson as Almena Township Building and Code Enforcement Officer, and to provide written notice to AGS of their 60 day termination, effective September 12, 2012, **second** by Jim Rickli.

Diane Triquet could not be at the meeting, and offered the following statement: “If this is voted on at the September Board Meeting, I am unable to vote by law since I am not in attendance tonight, but I want to go on record as giving my full support to Bill Henderson as Almena Township Building and Code Enforcement Officer and to notify AGS as soon as possible.”

**Motion passed.**

2. **Signage issue:** (Almena Woods)-There was much discussion, including why we were looking at this; it possibly originated from the rewrite of the Master Plan. The board needs much more information before making a decision.

**MOTION**: **Motion** by Jim Manning to table this decision until the next meeting to allow Doug to contact DNR and the Insurance Company to arrange for attendance at the next board meeting or provision of a written statement, **second** by Mark Roman. **Motion approved.**

**ADJOURNMENT**: **MOTION**: **Motion** by Jim Manning to adjourn the meeting, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion approved.** The meeting adjourned at 8:47 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  
AGS