

ALMENA TOWNSHIP
27625 CR 375
PAW PAW MI 49079

ALMENA TOWNSHIP BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 13, 2014

The Almena Township Board met at Township Hall. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Bill Van Tassel.

Roll call: Jerry Lentz, Jim Manning, Deedra Rhoa, Mark Roman, Sandra Rickli, Bill Van Tassel.
Absent: Sheri Manning.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL - July 9, 2014

It was suggested to change page 2, under Planning Commission, to read: Mark Roman reported that PC had an initial discussion on dog kennel language; it was also suggested to change on page 2 under PC recommendations, to read: The PC has recommended changes to the board for township road standards and self-storage as a special use in the Commercial District.

MOTION: **Motion** by Mark Roman to approve the meeting minutes of July 9, 2014 as amended, **second** by Jim Manning. Bill Van Tassel abstained. **Motion approved.**

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL - June 25, 2014

MOTION: **Motion** by Jerry Lentz to approve the special meeting minutes of June 25, 2014 as presented, **second** by Deedra Rhoa. **Motion approved.**

PRESENTATION/APPROVAL OF BILLS:

The Clerk presented the monthly disbursements for the period of July 10, 2014 through August 13, 2014 in the amount of \$190,282.95

MOTION: **Motion** by Sandra Rickli to approve bills in the amount of \$190,282.95, **second** by Bill Van Tassel. **Motion approved.**

REPORTS:

Road Commission: Al Svilpe gave an update on roads. Patching has been done and will continue until completed, along with boom mowing and brush trimming. It was recommended to place guardrails in a few locations, including the EW corner of CR 653, by Kobe Nurseries, and 42nd Ave and 32nd St. creek drop off.

Commissioner: Dick Godfrey presented his monthly Board of Commissioners report.

Sheriff's Department: Deputy Wilton in attendance to report: The award honoring Brian Matthews for Officer of the month, for his extreme bravery; he was extremely deserving of this. No report for the month as they continue to work on the new format, numbers needed to be validated. He apologized, but they will eventually have it right.

LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jim Walters, is the Democratic Candidate for Michigan's 26th District for State Senate District, he is running against Tonya Schuitmaker.

Shirley Huffman, 42nd Ave., told the board that she cannot hear anything being said unless the board talks directly down into the microphone, she strongly suggested updating the sound system. She also shared that she is working with the Supervisor as she goes through pictures that may be displayed in either hall.

REPORTS:

Clerk: Sandra Rickli gave the following report: The August Primary Election was successful with the new setup of the precincts; hoping this will also work with a larger number of people. There will be a tire collection on August 16, at which time, Virg Franks and Sheriff's Department will drop off the more than 70 tires they collected on 48th Ave. We thank you very much!

MTA is holding a seminar entitled, "Perfectly Legal: Disclosure and Lawful Expenditures," on September 18 at the Holiday Inn in Battle Creek if the board is interested.

The cemetery mapping and indexing will begin in September by PJ's Cemetery Mapping Service, we look forward to new large maps and more exact indexing of information that we will be able to use.

A violation of the Cemetery Ordinance has occurred; the Attorney is currently reviewing the situation.

Treasurer: Sheri Manning was absent, reports were received, which she had previously prepared.

Supervisor: Bill Van Tassel gave the following report. Senior Services has sent their year-end report; a Senior Services representative will be at next month's meeting. Household Hazardous Waste Center has had their busiest 2nd quarter ever, business is up 26%. We have received correspondence from our Attorney, which had resulted in a complaint/comment from a resident concerned that the potential presence of the "facility" next door would negatively impact their ability to sell their home. The home has since sold, but Almena Township has no ordinance addressing the authorized use of medical marijuana or marijuana dispensaries and has no compliance or enforcement authority over this situation. Also, it was discovered by the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (MDLRA) that information regarding medical marijuana users and/or dispensaries is confidential and cannot be disclosed by the MDLRA.

Trustee Deedra Rhoa suggested looking into potential wording to add to our Zoning Ordinance for dispensaries being located in densely populated areas to protect residents in subdivisions. Bill will check with the attorney on this, she would rather the board be pro-active instead of re-active.

Road update: Van Buren County Road Commission needed approval of the 2nd application of dust control, which has been applied to 4.55 miles of gravel roads in Almena, in the amount of \$1,842.75 which Bill Van Tassel and Jim Manning have signed. A letter has been sent to Mr. Soldano (neighbor of Rininger's) that Rininger's are very close to compliance at this time. North Shore Pest Control has been reduced to 3 outside sprays a year, which should be sufficient. Canney's water cooler water will be cancelled, we will use the rest of the water first, then possibly sell both water coolers, as Mattawan Schools may be interested in purchasing them.

Planning Commission: Mark Roman reported that the PC had continued kennel discussion; Chris Khorey of McKenna Associates presented ordinance language, but it has been returned to him for further review and clarification. The update still needs to be made to the Subdivision Ordinance, but since there is no electronic copy of this document, Mark is in the process of making the conversion on OCR software, he hopes to present the updated version to the PC soon. The PC had discussion on whether mobile homes used as a temporary structure when building a house is a variance request or a special use request; PC or ZBA. It was shared that the temporary structure has always been permissible.

Parks and Recreation: Jerry Lentz reported that there is nothing new to report, only the Historic Hall gutter decision, under upcoming New Business.

Historical: Shirley Huffman, Almena Historian, shared that she is always looking for Almena Township historic artifacts so that she can create new displays for the Historic Hall. Please contact her if you have anything you would like to loan her for about a year, as it will be returned.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Property files The Supervisor explained that we have, on site, all of the old property files permits, and blueprints. All blueprints and permits must be kept on file permanently and made readily available to the staff and public. These documents must be put into some type of file system, which is a high priority at this time. There is a need to hire a person to complete this file system project of our building department files.

MOTION: Motion by Mark Roman to authorize Bill Van Tassel, Sandra Rickli, and Sheri Manning to select and hire an office assistant for completion of this file system project of our building department files for no more than \$10/hour, **second** by Bill Van Tassel. **Motion approved.**

We have another issue of fire proof storage for documents, which we will discuss at another time in the near future.

2. Almena Woods: The Supervisor explained that we have received 3 bids for gravel for excavation of the loading spot for the timber at the Almena Woods.

MOTION: Motion by Jerry Lentz to contract with Lantz excavating to complete the gravel drive at the Almena Woods for \$5440, **second** by Bill Van Tassel. Deedra Rhoa and Mark Roman are opposed due to just receiving the information tonight. **Motion approved.**

It was mentioned that a separate fund should potentially be established for this incoming money for the logging of the woods.

MOTION: Motion by Deedra Rhoa that we table this discussion until next month to allow for the Treasurer to return, **second** by Jim Manning. **Motion passed.**

3. Historic Hall gutters: We have received 3 Proposals for gutter prices for the Historic Hall; USA Gutters, Providence Gutters, and Rice's Aluminum Gutters.

MOTION: Motion by Deedra Rhoa to approve the proposal from Providence Seamless Gutters to install 6" historical half round aluminum gutters with cast aluminum plan fascia brackets and 4" round corrugated downspouts with project mount downspout stirrups on the historic building, **second** by Sandra Rickli. **Motion approved.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. ZBA, Mike Spring reappointment: The Supervisor has contacted Mike Spring and he is interested in continuing on for another 3 year term.

MOTION: Motion by Jerry Lentz to reappoint Mike Spring to the ZBA for the intended term, **second** by Jim Manning. **Motion approved.**

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT:

Rininger, 27th St., complained about the process for complaints by neighbors. Asked the board to possibly look into potentially making it 2-3 complaints before acting instead of just 1. Jerry also wanted to request a copy of everything that he has been accused of and all the paperwork. The camera's on his neighbors' property are focused right in on all of their property, including their

house. They feel, this is an absolute violation of his and his wife's privacy; it is stalking and harassment. They will also have a conversation with the Sheriff's Department.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Motion by Jim Manning to adjourn the meeting, **second** by Mark Roman. **Motion approved.** The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Approval date: September 10, 2014

ALMENA TOWNSHIP

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