

ALMENA TOWNSHIP BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 10, 2014

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

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

AGENDA APPROVAL:

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL – August 13, 2014:

There were 2 corrections noted by Mark Roman as follows: page 1, Sheriff's Department report, the award honoring Brian Matthews for Officer of the month, for his extreme bravery, of which, he was well deserving of (corrected sentence); page 2, under Clerk's report, the should be inserted between Virg Franks and Sheriff's Dept.

MOTION: **Motion** by Jerry Lentz to approve the meeting minutes of August 13, 2014 as amended, **second** by Jim Manning. **Motion approved.**

PRESENTATION/APPROVAL OF BILLS:

The Clerk presented the monthly disbursements for the period of August 14, 2014 through September 10, 2014 in the amount of \$28,263.01, **Motion** by Sandra Rickli to approve bills in the amount of \$28,263.01 **second** by Bill Van Tassel. **Motion approved.**

REPORTS:

Sheriff's Department: Deputy Wilton in attendance to report. They are still working on the monthly activity reports in relation to the new layout, they probably will, unfortunately, not be available again until after the first of the year. ~~They~~ Residents have been reporting much more crime activity in the area of recent; Wilton will inquire with the patrol lieutenant to effectively understand; he explained that patrol patterns haven't changed nor has staffing. Jim Manning questioned a report that the police were too busy to go to his house recently when the alarm was activated and he was out of town; he would like to know why no officers would investigate a possible break-in.

Commissioner: Dick Godfrey presented his monthly Board of Commissioners report. He reported that during the months of September and October a Homeland Security Issue will be tested in the County.

Road Commission: Al Svilpe in attendance; also the Director of Homeland Security Lieutenant with the Sheriff's Department. In the event of a nuclear disaster, the plan for evacuation would be 10 miles away; DEQ would test the radiation levels up to 50 miles away.

It was shared by the Clerk that the Van Buren County Office of Domestic Preparedness is updating the County's hazard mitigation plan. Local municipalities wishing to remain eligible for hazard mitigation project funding from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program will be required by FEMA to create an approved local mitigation plan. The township only received the papers on

September 2nd and they were due back on September 8th. Svilpe doesn't understand why we would have received them so late, but urged the township to complete and return them ASAP. Under Road Commission business, guard rails were, again, discussed.

LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT:

Charlie Porn, Trestle Creek, suggested a possible email system to alert the township residents of emergencies.

REPORTS:

Clerk: Sandra Rickli reported on the following: The annual audit reports were received and have been distributed to the board, questions can be directed to the Treasurer or Siegfried Crandall. MTA classes are being offered; the board should let the Clerk know if interested.

Treasurer: Sheri Manning reported that the Township has received the state revenue sharing check for \$64,117. There are a few days remaining in which residents can pay their summer property tax; September 15th will be the last day to pay summer property tax without penalties, the office will be open until 5:00 p.m. on that day.

The last census numbers were checked from 2010, population for Almena in 2010 was 4992; the next census will require the township to increase their ZBA members from a 3 member board to a 5 member board; something for the board to be thinking about for membership.

Supervisor: Bill Van Tassel gave the Paw Paw Fire Department report. Saturday, September 27, 2014 will be the last Farmers Market Day for this season. Canney's bottled water system has been cancelled as it is not cost effective; Mattawan Schools may be interested in purchasing it. October 18th will be Township Clean-up day from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the historic hall parking lot for Almena Township residents.

Mark Bahnon, Bloomingdale Communications will be holding an open discussion and conversation regarding broadband in Almena at the Almena Township Hall on September 17, 2014 at 7 p.m.

Planning Commission: Mark Roman reported that the PC met on September 8th, at that meeting they discussed potential wording for kennels, hopefully they will reach a decision at the next meeting. They have passed wording changes for temporary dwellings for housing if permanent structure is being built but have tabled this until kennel discussion is finished. In regards to the Commercial Overlay Committee, Joe Leduc has agreed to join the committee if needed. The Township Board needs to decide to meet again, or not; if meeting again, elect a chair, if not then disband. It was suggested that one thing to do to make improvements will be to make suggested changes to the Site Plan Review form. Changes have been made to the new electronic format of the Subdivision Ordinance; copies are being reviewed by the PC for accuracy prior to further distribution. The red ordinance book will need to be scanned and sent to Mark so that a digital copy can be created.

Parks and Recreation: Jerry Lentz would like to *look to our Professional Planner to potentially revisit the recreation plan, and to, possibly, reactive the Parks and Recreation Committee.*
~~possibly reactivate the Parks and Recreation Committee to potentially revisit the Parks and Recreation plan.~~

NEW BUSINESS

1. Senior Services: Noreen Miller, Activity Coordinator for Senior Services was in attendance. She distributed copies of the last year in review to the board. There was a brief explanation. She also shared that there is now a vacancy on their board; a representative for this township, which can also be a resident representative.
2. Property Survey: The Supervisor explained that the property to the west of the cemetery and to the south of the store has generated a lot of arguments and complaining recently as

to who owns it and where the property lines run. Research will be done first, there will be no survey done for now.

3. New Township Hall gutters: The Supervisor explained that there are problems with this buildings gutters, they are residential and should have been commercial for a building of this size. Problems have developed due to water not being moved away from the building. The Fascia is rotting around the building due to this water problem; there is no drainage system and a sink hole has been created. Something will need to be done. Estimates are needed for the south eaves troughs; these will be reviewed at the next board meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Almena Woods: The gravel drive and parking lot has been completed at the Almena Woods; Lantz did a nice job. A tube was not needed, they will lay the cut logs in the ditch and will then drive over them to get the logging trucks out; the logs will be taken back out when finished. This has been cleared with the Road Commission.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT:

Debbie Hurst, Finch St. wanted to confirm that the Town Hall meeting regarding Broadband was going to be held here, at the Almena Township Hall.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Motion by Mark Roman to adjourn the meeting, **second** by Jim Manning. **Motion approved**. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Approval date: October 8, 2014

ALMENA TOWNSHIP

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