

ALMENA TOWNSHIP BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 9, 2014

The Almena Township Board met at the Township Hall. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Jerry Lentz, in the absence of the Supervisor.

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

Absent: Bill Van Tassel

In the absence of the Supervisor to run the meeting, it was the consensus of the board to have Jerry Lentz chair this board meeting.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

It was suggested to table item #2 under new business, ZBA Mike Spring reappointment, until the August meeting as Mike Spring has been on vacation, unable to be reached.

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

MOTION: **Motion** by Deedra Rhoa to approve the meeting minutes of June 11, 2014 as presented, **second** by Mark Roman. **Motion approved.**

PRESENTATION/APPROVAL OF BILLS:

The Clerk presented the monthly disbursement for the period of June 12, 2014 through July 9, 2014 in the amount of \$29,054.27

MOTION: **Motion** by Sandra Rickli to approve bills in the amount of \$29,054.27, **second** by Sheri Manning. **Motion approved.**

REPORTS:

Road Commission: Al Svilpe in attendance. There was discussion as to the Road Commission keeping us apprised of the status of the "complete streets project."

Sheriff's Department: Deputy Wilton in attendance, he apologized that the report was not yet prepared to be able to present at this meeting. He urged voters to vote in support of the Sheriff's Department millage renewal at the August 5th primary.

Commissioner: Dick Godfrey was unable to attend the meeting but left his report for the board.

LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT:

Kristen Garceau, 30th St., left a small animal auction 2014 letter and coupon to attend and receive a meal; Auction to be held July 16 at 4 p.m. (registration at 3:00 p.m.) at the Van Buren County Youth Fair.

Bob Parshall, questioned the status of the Santora appeal. It was answered that Almena won the Court of Appeals case. He feels Santora should be out of business, he feels he is doing business illegally.

REPORTS: Clerk: Sandra Rickli reported of upcoming Primary Election to be held August 5th, prep is being done at this time. The annual township audit has been completed; it was successful. Upcoming Meetings include the following: the Van Buren Conservation District annual meeting summer farm day and picnic to be held on July 30, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. at Lake Cora Vineyard, Bill and Ruth Johnson’s Farm, 43856 60th Ave, Paw Paw. MTA is holding a workshop on July 31 at the Fetzer Center at WMU, Kalamazoo, “Hot Topics in Planning and Zoning.” BS&A Software is offering many user group meetings in July and August.

Treasurer: Sheri Manning reported on the following: Summer tax bills have been sent out. We have received the state revenue sharing check for \$62,020 and the metro act check for \$4,181.28.

Supervisor: In Bills absence, it was shared that the cracks in the parking lot need to be repaired before the August election.

Planning Commission: Mark Roman reported that the PC ~~made a recommendation to the township board for kennel language.~~ *had an initial discussion about kennel language.* Carol Himes agreed to take the vacant position on the commercial committee, and there was discussion about possibly adding a 5th member.

Parks and Recreation: Jerry explained that he needs help on the Parks and Recreation Committee; it was shared that Rob and Julie Courter and Jeff and Theresa Klan are members of the committee and should be contacted for assistance in decisions. Jerry also shared that bids are needed for the gutters.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. ZBA – Kristen Garceau, Chairman of the ZBA came forward to share some concerns. She feels that she should be compensated for typing up the last 3 sets of meeting minutes, as she had to prepare them herself. The Chair is currently paid an additional \$40 more than the regular members of the ZBA. She prepared them after feeling that the former ZBA secretary was inadequate and unable to do a good job; Clerk shared that it was only her first set of meeting minutes. Kristen also feels that she had to spend much time with the attorney explaining the details of the ZBA variance that was being appealed in Circuit Court. It was shared that possibly, due to our population that the Zoning Board of Appeals should be increased to 5 members plus 2 alternates. This would solve the problem of one member of the ZBA being the secretary, which was previously done. Kristen shared that she asked each of the other 2 members if they would take the notes for the meeting and both declined. The election of officers names a Chair and a Vice-Chair currently, but in the past one of the 3 members was a Secretary, giving each member a job. This would be an option to make this a 3 officer-named board. The Deputy Clerk position was mentioned as an option, by Kristen, to take the notes... the Clerk shared that the Deputy Clerk position is too involved with the Clerks job at this point, she is still learning the job having only been here 1 month; adding that she is doing the noticing and publishing for both the PC and ZBA as well. It was suggested to possibly pay Kristen a per diem amount until the board decides what direction they are able to go with the larger member board consideration.

MOTION: **Motion** by Sheri Manning to pay the ZBA Chair, Kristen Garceau, \$60 for Campbell ZBA minutes, \$180 for the Santora appeals process consultation and \$60 going forward pending a potential ZBA Secretary hire or additional member placement, **second** by Deedra Rhoa. **Motion passed.**

Kristen Garceau urged the board to think carefully before expanding the ZBA board to 5 members.

2. ~~PC Recommendations: The PC has recommended changes to the County Road Commission standards for road prep in Alma Township, and Special Use Standard in Article XXIII, the list of Special Uses in the chapter for each Zoning District (Articles IV-X), for township road standards and self-storage as a special use in the Commercial District.~~

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT: Was offered.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Motion by Jim Manning to adjourn the meeting, **second** by Jerry Lentz. **Motion passed.** The meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Approval date: 8-13-14

ALMENA TOWNSHIP

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