

REGULAR LITTLEFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING

November 7, 2019 TIME: 7:00 PM

Meeting called to order by Damien Henning, Supervisor. Present: Dean Morford, Trustee, Kim Shomin Treasurer, Katie Derrohn, Trustee, and Sondra Festerling, Clerk. Guests: Art Drayton, Brian Drayton, Rachel Reid, Kim Morgan, Kurt Hoffman, Pat Hoffman, John McGuire, Theresa McGuire, Douglas Stutesman, and Julie Peurasaari.

Consent Agenda: Items **#3** Regular Meeting Minutes 10/1/19, Special Election Committee Meeting 10/1/19, and Special Meeting 10/31/19. **#5 Budget Adjustments:** General Fund Account #566 State Grant-Recreation: Adjust +\$100,000.00, And Account #664 Interest: Adjust +\$200.00 to be added to Fund Balance. Fire Fund Account #206 664 Interest: Adjust +\$75.00 to be added to Fund Balance. **#6 Approval of Bills:** Adjusted to \$27,110.08, **#9 Blight Enforcement Report:** None, **#10 Management Authority Report:** In Packet, **#11 Assessor's Report:** None, **#13 Sewer Authority Report:** In Packet, **#14 Library Board Report:** In Packet, and **#17 Miscellaneous:** **Correspondence:** ECRC Meeting Minutes 10-7-19 and 10-18-19, Notice from FLOW-For Love of Water, Alanson Public Schools sent their Resolution for tax collection, Letter from Miller, Canfield, Paddock, and Stone dtd. 11-4-19 on Bonding were all entered into the Consent Agenda and declared Adopted.

Treasurers Financial Report: K. Shomin reported: General Fund Checking \$101,673.12, Sewer Fund Checking \$74,564.55, Fire Fund \$19,264.05, Tax Account \$6,812.03, Cemetery Savings \$9,999.99, and Oden Light Savings \$543.44. It was reported that we are down 16 parcels (mostly Real Property) from last year when K. Shomin billed the school for their tax collection. Winter Taxes will be out the first week of December.

Public Comment: None

Fire Board Report: The fire Board Minutes & Financials were received. Doug Stutesman talked about how hard it has been to get/find people for EMS. The roof repair was also brought up and how we need to proceed to be prepared for winter and to fix the damage from last year. Art Drayton stated that the pipes on the roof were fixed but the shields have not. Doug mentioned how much Brian Drayton and Rachel Reid have put into trying to recruit more EMS and Firefighters. Brian stated on record that our department is rolling with the EMS and that we are not fully shut down. It is with the understanding that CCE Central Dispatch will tone us twice and if we respond then we are available. If we don't respond than we are not available. They will not tone us past the two times and if seems to be working well. Brian talked to Chief Welsheimer and he stated Wolverine is doing the same thing and there are a few other communities that potentially would benefit from the same procedures. Brian also contacted Representative Lee Chatfield to see if there are some changes that could be made to the current law that states a First Responder Department has to be manned 24/7. Brian explained most if not all of the states around us do not have that law and they will look into what would need to be done to change it with the help from other departments.

Brian handed the Township Board a compiled report of 'ideas for recruitment and retainment for Alanson-Littlefield Fire Department' that he, along with Rachel and Art have worked on. This updated report will be handed out at the fireboard meeting but he wanted to show the township some of the compiled ideas. Brian wanted to be clear that these ideas would be for the whole department- Fire and EMS. The outlined ideas covered things like a signing bonus, longevity bonus, raise on the run pay, an hourly on call pay for EMS, pay property taxes for all personnel, automatic 2 hour call out time, quarterly incentives, pay for training and extra public relations, and a new pay scale for officers. The report also showed what type of cost would be seen if there was a pay raise from \$15.00 to \$20.00 per run based off of the past 10 months figures. If the raise was to be approved it would potentially increase payroll by \$4,380.00 plus taxes. An item that wasn't on the report was to give a quarterly incentive for staying at the stations living quarters for those that are further out in the community. When we built the hall, we made the living quarters for 10 years down the road. We are now past the 10-year mark and it might help get people interested in helping that are outside our community.

The report also gave bullet points on ideas for advertising and recruitment. These ideas covered things like purchasing banners and yard signs to place at the fire station and around town, ask for an ad to be placed on the electronic school sign at M-68/US-31, Facebook posts, posters hung up in businesses, and be added to websites: County, Township, & Village. They even thought that maybe a radio ad could be created on a county level promoting all county departments and possibly paid for by the Emmet County Firefighters Association. A job fair could be held at the fire station and having the department start holding fire prevention events at the fire hall with getting the word out on these events through the Township newsletters or sending out a post card mailing to an address list that is obtained through the township. An idea was brought up to possibly have a table at the Parent/Teacher conferences at the school that would help to get the word out.

The last section in the report gave a few ideas to help increase the department morale. Some of the ideas presented was to hold a Christmas Party when they gather to bag the Christmas candy for the cookies with Santa night. They could have a pot luck that night with a few turkeys and have everyone bring a dish to pass. Start having department game nights with cards, board games, and snacks, and possibly picnics again.

A question was asked about when the Fire Board meetings were held. K. Morgan reported that after the Special Meeting on October 31st they have decided to change the meetings to be held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month starting at 7PM. The next meeting will be held November 19th. Brian stated that they did not plan on getting the response they did from their Facebook post to the shutting down of the EMS until we can staff it properly. It was not intended to have the News Media run the story. Kim Morgan stated that what was placed on Facebook was well written and township board members agreed. Brian did state that because of the post they have received two applications -both for Fire and EMS, and there is a third person who said they would be turning in an application. There is hope that they can be interviewed within the next two weeks. There were additional questions by the Township as to whether there are additional criteria that would be required to get some of the bonuses and whether or not they were looking at implementing every one of the ideas presented. Brian stated they would not be expecting to do all ideas but to choose items that would be most appealing and there would be additional criteria to meet the bonuses. D. Morford asked if it was possible to add a separate flyer in with the tax bills that would try to get more involvement from the community. K. Shomin stated there is a per sheet charge to add to the bills. It was stated that it is great to have information about the fire department in our newsletter but the separate flyer nicely designed would make the need for more volunteers stand out. D. Morford stated that it would be a cheaper way to reach people in the community rather than doing a postcard through a print shop and the postage that would be needed for them. Julie Peurasaari said she would be happy to help Brian and Rachel create something so it can be added to the tax bills. Brian stated that they could make it around doing a job fair recruitment at the fire department sometime in December or January. They will get together to have it ready for Monday's deadline for the tax bills. The Township Board stated we all appreciated the hard work that went into their presentation of ideas and we will be looking forward to the recommendations the Fire Board would like to implement.

D. Henning brought to the Township Board a letter of resignation from Art Drayton from the Fire Chief position as of November 6, 2019. S. Festerling stated to Art Drayton that the Township truly appreciates everything he has done for the fire department, and we hope continues to do for the department because his wealth of knowledge is beyond and we really do appreciate it. After Art's departure and a brief pause by the board. Brian asked the township board what procedure they (Rachel & Brian) should follow when trying to move forward with presenting any more of the ideas or should they go through superior officers before taking it to the fire board. In the past it was reported to the chief and then it was taken to the board. Brian doesn't want to create any more -hard feelings and would like direction as to how they should proceed. D. Henning stated that right now in the absence of a fire chief, he can take it directly to the fire board. D. Morford talked about making one of the fire board members a designated go to person if something needs to go past the chief due to a conflict of interest that way it can be confidential but still have the grievance heard and dealt with. It is felt that there were a lot of things bottled up and not being dealt with and it just wasn't working. We are going to try and fix this so it doesn't get to this level again.

D. Henning stated that it would be fair to have the position of fire chief posted wherever the department posts things to make people aware that the position is open for applications and that the Fire Board be the one to post it as

soon as possible. It was asked if there was a way for the Fire Board to communicate to the Firemen and EMS personnel of the posting, where to get the application, and to send a resume. Unfortunately, there is no department record of emails to blast out the information to all, so Brian suggested to post it on the white board and give at least two weeks for any applications and resumes to come in and then set up interviews of the applicants.

Planning & Zoning:

Re-Zoning Cincinnati St, Oden: K. Derrohn reported that the re-zoning from Moore Ave to east of Luce St. and north of Cincinnati did not have the letters go out last month due to a misunderstanding. Letters did go out for the Committee Meeting on October 21st and one person did show up from the property owners. K. Derrohn did fill out the application for the Township to ask for the re-zoning and now it is up to the county to send out letters which will have the case come back to our December Board meeting. There may be some people come before the Township at the December meeting and we will need to make a recommendation and forward it on to the county. The county sent the letter out to all property owners within 300 feet of the proposed re-zoning. The property owner who came to the committee meeting was Steve Legato who owns Northwoods Restaurant and the first piece of property (#400-019) within the proposed re-zoning area. Mr. Legato would like his to stay B-1 since at one time there was a business there within the accessory building on the property. This property currently has a duplex. The Township Planning & Zoning Committee is making the recommendation to go ahead with the re-zoning of the properties outlined on the map from B-1 to R-2 except for the first property #400-019 owned by Mr. Legato. K. Derrohn talked with Tammy at the county and they are fine with this change. The Township will have to make the recommendation after December's meeting just in case anyone else comes in to discuss the case.

An application has been received to join the Planning & Zoning Committee from Fred Hollerback, Jr. D. Henning reported that Fred had multiple questions for him. He then sent over the application to D. Henning today and wanted to know what the next steps were. D. Henning let him know that he didn't see any reason why the Board wouldn't accept the application. D. Henning made the recommendation to appointment Fred Hollerback Jr. to the Littlefield Planning & Zoning Committee. D. Morford made the **Motion** to accept the recommendation of the Supervisor. Second by K. Shomin. Carried 5 Yes, 0 No. S. Festerling will swear Fred in at the December Regular Township Meeting unless there is a case and committee meeting later this month, in which case, he would be sworn in before that meeting.

Unfinished Business:

Hay Lake Marina-Update: D. Henning reported that the bond sale was last week, and the bonding rates came in under what was originally thought they would. Our interest rate was originally projected at 3.5% for 25 years but it ended up coming in at 2.73% (rounded). We will have around \$10,000.00 a year less in payments. The work on the infrastructure continues along. The contracts have been signed for the lavatory building. The foundation has been dug. The building cost came in under the estimate by \$11,000.00 and was awarded to Ironwood Construction. The well was a source of confusion on how many gallons per minute it is put out. They thought it was 70 when in fact it only had to be 36. A second well was drilled because they didn't wait an hour to get the clarification needed when they didn't get 70 gal. per minute on the first well. They now have to de-commission the original old well and the larger than needed well that was done at no additional cost to us. The floating docks and finger docks are in. The bathhouse won't be finished until spring but it was discussed that we need to be up and running before Memorial Day. D. Henning stated that we will need to let the North Condo Dock Owners know when it is ok to start putting in their boats. What we don't need to have happen is for people to start using the ramp while we are trying to finish the roads etc. We don't need anything being held up because we are waiting for someone to come back and move their vehicle. D. Henning went on to say our substantial completion day was supposed to be August 31st. They then extended it to October 31st but still didn't meet the deadline. D. Henning had the conversation with Klaus as to when we need to start looking into liquidated damages since we are now looking at it going into 2020 and when reporting on the progress it is starting to come into question. D. Henning is working on the details of how we will be compensated for this extension. Elmer's is saying that we are their first order of business after winter. The only problem is we don't know when that will be and it could push well into May if it is a long hard winter.

New Business:

Letter of Resignation- Brian Johnson: Brian Johnson submitted a letter of resignation on October 14th with his last day being October 25th, 2019. He thanked the township for the opportunity and it was a pleasure working with us, the library, LAMA, cemetery and the Village of Alanson.

With Brian now being gone, it has started a ripple effect of services no longer being attended to by an employee. D. Henning has set up a meeting with Petoskey Janitorial tomorrow for cleaning services for both the library and the LAMA Community Building. They would come three times a week at \$57.00 each time. Brian would also be the one to keep the Fire Department clean, so now they will have to figure out how to get the cleaning done there. D. Henning also stated that when he received the call from the library that no one was taking care of the cleaning and garbage for them, he pulled out the library contract for their lease. The library has done none of their own ancillary cleaning. The township employee had been doing more than we ever said we were going to provide. D. Henning will remind the library board that on the off days they need to be willing to clean up. Currently they clean nothing, not even their own computer screens or checking on the bathroom status. Their patrons are using the bathrooms more than anyone else using the building. The librarian asked D. Henning if their rent was going to go down since they don't get cleaning services. D. Henning stated this will be brought up to the Library Board now that it has been identified that we were doing more than what was in the lease agreement and there will be no decrease in the lease amount.

D. Henning did say Brian Johnson said if the Township needed to have some stuff done, he could come on Fridays for a few hours. D. Henning said that would be great and had him keep his keys for now. S. Festerling asked that the checks to pay him be written every 3-4 weeks since they will be for lower hours. The board also talked about what the rate of pay should be with him doing this on the side from his other job. D. Henning thought \$19.00 would be a good rate since that is what the Village has been paying their people. D. Henning stated that since Doug Larson has stepped into the Village of Alanson's Representative to LAMA Board, the two of them have been talking about if we can find somebody that fills the same positions that Brian and Jim Cantrell before him have filled for the Township, we may want to consider reversing how we pay an employee. Not only would we want to consider paying a higher rate but we may want to look into providing some benefits. The Village of Alanson has a benefit package for their employees so we might see if the Village would be willing to pay for the township's employee so benefits could be provided. We would then reimburse the Village of Alanson our "share" of the employee costs like they currently pay on the quarterly basis. We would still have the 2/3 Township share to the 1/3 Village share of the costs. S. Festerling will send a letter of acceptance to the resignation with regrets to Brian. A letter will be drafted to Art Drayton for his resignation as well.

D. Henning reported that the contract with Petoskey Janitorial can be gotten out of with a 30-day notice. S. Festerling asked who would be paying for the services they will be providing, and D. Henning responded that the cleaning has always been done by the township employee and paid for by the township so it makes sense to keep it that way. D. Henning made the **Motion** to appoint Petoskey Janitorial service as the cleaning agent for the Township of Littlefield for the LAMA Community Hall and for the costs to be paid out of the General Fund. Second by S. Festerling, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No.

D. Morford made the **Motion** authorizing D. Henning to sign a contract on behalf of Littlefield Township with Petoskey Janitorial Service for a period not to exceed a year. Second by S. Festerling, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No.

D. Henning made the **Motion** to pay Brian Johnson \$19.00 per hour for an incidental hourly rate. Second by D. Morford, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No.

Plat of Smoky Oaks Split: Jim Lapeer received an email from Dona Kahgee at Emmet County Equalization/GIS Department asking if he had received township board approval for this platted lot split. She went on to say that splitting one lot requires the extra approval. D. Henning reported that Jim did approve this split based on the ordinances criteria, but Dona will not move forward until she receives the minutes or motion stating the township's approval. D. Morford made the **Motion** to follow the recommendation of the County Planning and Zoning

Administrator and approve the land splits for the Plat of Smoky Oaks. Second by Kim Shomin, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No.

Clerks Agenda: S. Festerling reported that the Township will need to look into changing our Board of Review dates in March since it happens to land on the dates the State chose to have the Presidential Primary (March 10th, 2020).

It was also reported that MTA was contacted to verify if the Township Clerk can have their own Post Office Box. The main reason for needing to do this now is due to the new election laws, the clerks address has to be the township offices so it is published where the clerk can be found on election days to register voters so they can vote the same day. Since we are an unstaffed office, I do qualify for having a P.O. Box as my mailing address. MTA confirmed that as long as the Township Board has a motion of approval for the clerk to have their own P.O. Box there is no issues. Election times have a large volume of mail requesting Absent Voter Ballots that needs to be addressed daily in a timely manner. Due to where I live, the easiest point of origin for the clerks P.O. Box would be at the Conway Post Office since I usually pass it twice a day. The size that would be needed would not be smaller than the 5" x 5.5" box for \$54.00 annually. K. Shomin asked if it would only be for election mail and it was stated that would be the main priority for establishing the box but any other mail addressed to the clerk could also be directed to that box. K. Shomin was uncomfortable with her not receiving all the mail and distributing it with the exception of the election mail. D. Morford made the **Motion** allowing the clerk to establish a separate Post Office Box for the clerk's correspondence and voting needs. Second by K. Derrohn, Carried 4 Yes, 1 No.

An item to be brought before the Township Board is in regards to a motion that was made during the September 3rd Regular Board Meeting involving the Woodruff Park water fountain. The motion was made by D. Henning appropriating up to \$1,500.00 for Wade Williams to expose the piping for the Woodruff Park artesian well. The actual bill came from Williams Excavating, Inc. for the amount of \$1,907.06 due to additional work that had to be done when the fountain started to crumble apart while removing the cement walk way around the well. For the safety of the public the fountain was brought down completely and covered with gravel until next spring/summer when it can be rebuilt. A new motion is needed to cover this additional cost. D. Morford made a **Motion** amending the previous motion to appropriate up to \$2,000.00 for the Woodruff Park artesian well. Second by D. Henning, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No.

The first interest payment is due November 20th on the Hay Lake Marina Installment Purchase Agreement in the amount of \$26,143.87. We will be receiving the incoming wire transfer from the Bond sale on November 13th. It would make sense to get the payoff from Citizens National Bank so no more interest is accrued. K. Shomin will get the payoff amount and will draft the check out of the Hay Lake account for the principle and the interest payment will come from the General Fund. S. Festerling will be in contact with our Auditors to help make sure we are posting things properly within the Hay Lake Marina Account and to start talking with them on what we need to do for the future of the accounting/budgeting for the maintenance of the property and for when we establish the lease of the marina and the operations of that. D. Henning stated that since we have paid so much in up front costs, we will start to get those costs back from the grants and it will come back into the General Fund.

Public Comment: K. Morgan asked how they should let to firemen know of the posting. D. Henning stated that if there is not a way to do mass email out to everyone (lack of email addresses), then to go along with the posting of the notice and applications, phone calls should be made. It is suggested going forward to get everyone's email addresses for communication. K. Morgan provided thoughts she had after the Special Meeting on creating employee surveys that might help with the morale issues the department is experiencing. She made a list of 35 questions and is looking for feedback on what she has so far. Once the initial feedback is done, she will draft a more complete survey that will get sent out to everyone for final approval.

No other comments or information was brought before the Township Board.

Regular Meeting was adjourned @ 9:34 PM by D. Henning