

REGULAR LITTLEFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING

Held Electronically by ZOOM

December 17, 2020 TIME: 7:00 PM

Meeting called to order by Damien Henning, Supervisor, and announced it is being held by Zoom. S. Festerling explained that Roll Call under the new electronic guidelines needs each board member to state where they are participating from. **Roll Call all by Zoom:** D. Henning, Supervisor (Littlefield Township, Michigan), K. Shomin, Treasurer (Littlefield Township, Michigan), D. Morford, Trustee (Littlefield Township, Michigan), K. Derrohn, Trustee (Participating absent member due to medical conditions at Venice, Florida-Sarasota County), and S. Festerling, Clerk (Littlefield Township, Michigan). Guests participating through Zoom: Kim Morgan, Brian Drayton, Joel Wurster, Jim LaPeer, and Scott Lauer.

D. Henning stated that prior to the meeting each board member was provided a copy of **Procedures for Electronic Participation in Meetings Under the Open Meetings Act**. D. Henning made the **Motion** for the Littlefield Township Board to adopt the Procedures for Electronic Participation in Meetings Under the Open Meetings Act. Second by K. Shomin, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No. **Roll Call:** D. Henning, Supervisor (Littlefield Township, Michigan), K. Shomin, Treasurer (Littlefield Township, Michigan), D. Morford, Trustee (Littlefield Township, Michigan), K. Derrohn, Trustee (Participating absent member due to medical conditions at Venice, Florida-Sarasota County), and S. Festerling, Clerk (Littlefield Township, Michigan).

Consent Agenda: Items **#4 Minutes:** Regular Meeting 11-5-20, **#6 Budget Adjustments: General Fund:** Account #101-956 Oden Parks: Adjust to \$15,700.00 and Account #215-727 Twp Clerk Office Supplies: Adjust to \$4,100.00 both from General Fund-Fund Balance. **#7 Approval of Bills:** \$36,373.48, **#10 Blight Enforcement:** None, **#11 Management Authority Report:** None. **#13 Planning & Zoning:** None. **#14 Sewer Authority Report:** In Packet. **#15 Library Board Report:** Will Forward, and **#18 Miscellaneous:** **Correspondence:** Alanson Schools- Tax Collection Agreement, ECRC- Road Allocation-2021, ECRC- 5Year Plan PASAR, ECRC Minutes, Letter-Ann Billiard, and EGLE- Notice of Authorization were all entered into the Consent Agenda and declared Adopted.

Treasurers Financial Report: K. Shomin reported: General Fund Checking \$135,987.91, Sewer Fund Checking \$61,894.91, Fire Fund \$4,039.39, Tax Account \$16,538.74, Cemetery Savings \$11,080.64, Oden Light Savings \$1,311.71, and Hay Lake Marina \$207,550.97.

Fire Board Report: Minutes and financials were received. K. Morgan reported their last meeting was 12/15/2020 and it was held outside the Fire Hall in the parking lot in order to follow the COVID Meeting Guidelines. The roof repairs have been completed by Hunt Roofing. The Fire Board will still need to address the issue that caused the damage in the first place but the roof should be good for this winter. Chief Lauer got a quote from Solutions Electric to change the inside night lights, driveway lights, and the parking lot lights to automatic lights instead of the current timer system that is being used. The timer system takes a lot of manual adjustments to get it right for the different seasons, and if it is forgotten to be adjusted it is a problem. The cost quoted from Solutions Electric is \$1,800.00. Kim said Bob Wurst thought they would need the Township's approval to do the change in lighting since it is the Township's building but after a brief discussion it was stated since it is an upgrade it would be no problem to go ahead and do.

K. Morgan also reported that Chief Lauer accepted two resignations from Derrick Shearer and Amber Madden and has two new applicants already. The two new applicants Kevin Phillips and Alexis Knapp are interested in being on EMS. Chief Lauer stated that Kevin Phillips is also interested in obtaining fire fighter I and II, and he is

already a licensed paramedic. He has started taking the fire fighters classes in Topinabee since they currently not being offered here in Emmet County's RTC this year. Alexis Knapp has just completed her EMT basic training and needs to take her national registry so she will be certified. S. Festerling made the **Motion** to approve both new hires, Kevin Phillips and Alexis Knapp, for Littlefield Fire Department's EMS and Kevin Phillips continuing to train for Fire I and Fire II also. Second by K. Derrohn, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No.

K. Morgan stated that S. Lauer has taken care of the insurance for the new truck but they need to get new plates for it once the title is transferred. The old truck never had plates so there was nothing to be transferred to the new one. S. Festerling stated that an appointment would have to be made with the Security of State and when going in they will want to take the bill of sale to get the title changed over and order a plate.

Assessor's Report: Jim LaPeer reported the Equalization Department has the reports in and once they send out the full report with the factors it will be shared with S. Festerling and the Board. Basically, the ratios are supposed to be close to the 50% true cash value and the Tentative Ratios report came in at 47.87 for Agricultural, 49.23 for Commercial, 47.90 for Industrial, and 48.05 for Residential. Jim will be working on getting them between the 49 and 50%. The cost of living came in at 1.4%. Currently the market is going up faster than the cost of living so people are getting capped back in place again. Jim also reported that back in the Spring there was about 10 weeks where there were virtually no sales and now the sales have started to pick up substantially- close to what we were seeing back in 2008. A stick-built house is going for over 200,000.00 now.

D. Morford stated he wanted to hear about the Assessor Agreement that was under New Business from Jim. D. Henning moved the topic up.

New Business: Emmet County Interlocal Agreement -Assessor: Jim reported this is a part of the Assessing Reform that started three years ago. There were three things that the legislators brought in as a part of the reform but it wasn't done all at once. A Designated Assessor is put in place if a local government unit is to fail their AMAR audit and are unable to bring it into compliance through the yearlong corrective action then a Designated Assessor would be put in place. A Designated Assessor could also be put in place if the local government unit is unable to find their own assessor then the Designated Assessor would be put in place. D. Henning explained that his understanding is that the Designated Assessor fees don't start in Emmet County unless they get called in to intervene. D. Henning also stated that Emmet County Equalization Department was pushing for this to be signed so he contacted a few other Supervisors to get their feelings on it. D. Henning did go ahead and sign it because of the way our meetings were and the way Equalization was pushing us for it to be done. There is really nothing the local governments can do about it due to it being a part of the reform. S. Festerling stated that the Equalization Dept. stated they sent it out to D. Henning and the Clerk email addresses back in November but we never received it then. We just got it and it was a push to get it completed.

Unfinished Business:

Settlement Agreement – Hoffman: D. Henning announced that he provided the Township Board with the final copy of the **Settlement Agreement and Mutual Release of All Claims Settlement Agreement** document in their packets to be looked over and asked Joel Wurster if he had anything more to be added to this topic. Joel responded that the scope was related to the underlining agreement that we were trying to resolve and that was the requests that were made. The other change on this agreement relates to the progress made to address the drainage issues at the Keystone Park property which is now being acknowledged by the Hoffman's as satisfying their concerns. Joel Wurster stated that the intent of this agreement is to provide a complete release relating to anything to do with the property and the moving of the buildings. However, there is no guarantee that no one will ever try to make a claim but under this agreement there would be difficulty making a claim under this agreement whereas the first agreement was too loose and resulted in having to do this settlement. Joel then went on to point out under section 5 the statement that reads: 'Except as expressly provided for by this Agreement, neither Party shall have any other, further, or remaining obligations to each other regarding the Underlying Agreements and the Relationship. This includes but is not limited to there being no further obligations between the parties concerning the removal or relocation of storage buildings; the transfer or improvement of any real estate other than as

provided by this Agreement; or the improvement, development, and operation of the public launch, the Township park and marina, or any concessions related thereto.’ Basically, this boils down to the fact that if it is not in this agreement it is not an obligation. D. Morford went on record that he is now satisfied on how this agreement is worded. Joel stated that to finalize this the Township Board will need to make a Motion to the Settlement and Release of All Claims to the Hoffman’s.

D. Morford made the **Motion** Authorizing the Township Supervisor and Clerk to sign and exchange the **Settlement Agreement and Mutual Release of All Claims Settlement Agreement** with the Hoffman’s along with signing the related Warranty Deed. Second by K. Shomin, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No. D. Morford made the **Motion** Authorizing the Clerk and Treasurer to make this year’s Settlement Payment for \$55,000.00 to the Hoffman’s after the Contract is signed. Second by S. Festerling, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No. The remaining two payments of \$50,000.00 are to be made by the 31st of December of 2021 and 2022 respectfully.

Joel Wurster departed the Zoom Meeting at 7:42PM

New Business:

ECRC – Annual Meeting: The annual meeting between the township and Emmet County Road Commission to go over the 2021 construction projects and any road issues has been scheduled for Tuesday, January 26th, 2021 at 7PM. After a brief conversation, our Township Board is fine with holding this meeting in Zoom. S. Festerling will notify Tori Thompson ECRC Administrative Assistant of our confirmation.

Emmet County Interlocal Agreement -Assessor: D. Henning reiterated that he did talk to multiple Supervisors and they all agreed that there isn’t anything we can do but sign the agreement, and since Emmet County Equalization was pressing to get it signed, it was signed by him. D. Morford made the **Motion** to approve retroactively the signing of the Emmet County Interlocal Agreement for County Designated Assessor. Second by K. Shomin, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No.

2019-2020 Audit: The Township Board was given copies of the Audit done by Kammerman & Bascom, PC in their packets. D. Henning asked if there were any questions or concerns in regards to the Audit that was prepared by the Township Auditors. D. Morford made the **Motion** to Receive and File the 2019-2020 Littlefield Township Audit. Second by K. Derrohn, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No.

Habitat for Humanity- Luce Street: K. Derrohn asked if S. Festerling received a letter from Sarah at Habitat for Humanity in regards to the Luce Street property updates. S. Festerling had not received anything as of this date. K. Derrohn stated they said they sent something out, and that she wanted the Township Board to know that they are ahead of schedule as of right now. They will be setting the two new houses on the foundations soon, and the remodeled house and the two new houses should be ready to go by the middle of January. They are hoping to have all three of the houses occupied by the end of March. The last lot on the corner of High St. and Luce should be started this coming Spring.

Clerks Agenda: S. Festerling provided the board with a clerk’s agenda in the packet that contained the Certificate of Determination for the November 3, 2020 Election from Emmet County along with informing the Board that the State of Michigan has announced the risk-limiting audit for the November Election and what has to be done in preparation of the audit to begin on January 11th. S. Festerling also informed the Board that Michelle Hart from MTA asked for us to review our township data because there has been legislation introduced that would allow, if enacted, to post public notices on our website as an option to publishing in a local newspaper. K. Morgan received an email from Julie Welch of the Fence Company in Indian River stating that it is believed that the caps on the cemetery fence that was being replaced were defective and that we would not be billed for the new caps or installation. K. Morgan reported all the new caps are on and look really nice. She also stated that all of the trees that were to be removed from the back of the cemetery property are now down. She wants to check with

Wade Williams if he would be interested in burning the brush that is left and of course he will be doing the removal of the stumps before leveling out the ground.

S. Festerling brought up to the Township Board that in the past the Township has purchased a gift card in the amount of \$100.00 for the Township Employee and wanted approval to do it again this year. After a brief discussion, K. Derrohn made the **Motion** to have the Clerk purchase a Visa Gift Card in the amount of \$100.00 plus applicable fees as a Christmas gift for Township Employee, Glen Pemberton. Second by D. Henning, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No.

New clerk agenda items that have come up since the packets were created: K. Shomin received an invoice from Blight Inspector Mike Vargo that I will need to go over and match up to the previous payment that was made to him since some of the dates were for October 2019. This invoice goes up through December 6, 2020.

An email was received from Jason Losey on the Village of Alanson DPW address. Jason requested a copy of the ordinances for the township. In talking with K. Morgan, it was discovered that Jason was doing research for the Fire Department. He was trying to locate if there was an ordinance for cost recovery on fire department runs pertaining to illegal burning and accidents that involve out of town drivers. I was headed out of town so K. Morgan located Ordinance #116 & 117 that covered this topic. Unfortunately, both numbers had the same information on the website and K. Morgan had to go into the Township Vault and make copies of the missing ordinance for complete information. Jason was going to get with K. Morgan to review. It might be something the Department will be willing to enact on to help offset payroll costs.

New township bills just received needing approval to pay before next meeting: Hay Lake Account bill from Flotation Docking Systems, Inc. (Invoice# 4013) for \$938.86, and General Fund Account bills from Alanson Area Public Library (Invoice#103) for \$8,150.00 and from Joel Wurster (Invoice#17209) for \$665.50. S. Festerling made a **Motion** to pay the above referenced invoices and amounts out of both the Hay Lake Marina Account and the General Fund Account. Second by D. Morford, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No.

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

Regular Meeting was adjourned @ 8:15PM by D. Henning.