

# REGULAR LITTLEFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING

**August 3, 2021 TIME: 7:00 PM**

Meeting called to order by Damien Henning, Supervisor. Present: Dean Morford, Trustee, Katie Derrohn, Trustee, Kim Shomin Treasurer, and Sondra Festerling, Clerk. Guests: Kim Morgan, Jule Peurasaari, Scott Lauer, Jason Losey, Brian Drayton, Jason Horton of Elmer's, Mike Wargel, Dave & Sue Droste, Jim LaPeer, and Brooke Milbrandt.

D. Henning asked if there were any items to be removed from the Consent Agenda. #9 Blight was removed.

**Consent Agenda:** Items **#3 Minutes:** Regular Meeting 7-6-21 and Special Meeting 7-24-21, **#5 Budget Adjustments:** Hay Lake: Supplies- Adjust to \$1,000.00 from Fund Balance. **#6 Approval of Bills:** General Fund \$17,765.15 and Hay Lake Marina Operating Fund: \$1,033.19, **#10 Management Authority Report:** In Packet. **#11 Assessor's Report:** None, **#13 Sewer Authority Report:** In Packet. **#14 Library Board Report:** Will Forward, and **#17 Miscellaneous: Correspondence:** Emmet County Road Commission Minutes, Emmet Planning & Zoning- Update Rec Plan, EGLE Correspondence, Dept of Ag & Rural Development, ECBC- Strategic Planning Session on Workforce and Affordable Housing, and 2021 Northwest Housing Summit were all entered into the Consent Agenda and declared Adopted.

**Treasurers Financial Report:** K. Shomin reported: General Fund Checking \$77,446.42, Sewer Fund Checking \$54,629.42, Fire Fund \$70,626.47, Tax Account \$181,905.00, Cemetery Savings \$12,132.51, Oden Light Savings \$7,913.39, Hay Lake Marina Op. Fund \$19,512.20, and Hay Lake Marina \$8,807.46.

**Public Comment:** None

**Fire Board Report:** Minutes and financials were received. Kim Morgan reported that Fire Board would like to go with the quote dated 5/28/21 from Northern Michigan Asphalt for the parking lot upon the Township's approval. D. Henning made the **Motion** to approve the sealcoating job quote from Northern Michigan Asphalt. Second by K. Shomin, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No.

Brian Drayton reported that he applied for and received a grant from AAA Traffic Safety Grant in the amount of \$3,284.58. This grant was approved for purchasing collapsible traffic cones for the fire trucks, regular cones for the rescue truck, breakaway safety vests for every personnel, along with a high visible parka – winter coat that will also have the departments name placed on it. The cones have been ordered and once the department has the proper sizes for the vests and coats those will be ordered as well and will receive everything within the next two weeks. The only obligation the department has to fulfill is to do a publication (newspaper, Facebook, etc.) of our department with their new cones, vests, & coats acknowledging the AAA Traffic Safety Grant Program.

Kim also reported that they have received the \$2,250.00 Jaws of Life money for this year along with getting another Cost Recovery payment. It was also reported by Brian Drayton that with the new EMS volunteers we have they will need boots and gear to identify them as being Alanson Littlefield EMS. Back in 2015 the Township appropriated \$4,000.00 for the department and Brian asked if we could do it again. D. Henning and S. Festerling said we should know more on our status of funds by next month or two but definitely before the snow arrives. The Township is still waiting on the final bill for Crump Rd before we will know how much money we might have left over on our budgeted amount.

D. Henning reported that putting together the information for the Baiardi Family Foundation Trust Grant he has come to a crossroads as to what the Township can provide as a match. Scott Lauer said that if we could do 8 air packs it would be a good start. D. Henning asked if we can use some of the COVID-19 ARPA funds that we have applied for -it would give us a good start to the matching funds. D. Morford said it looked like we could use it for the Fire/First Responders when he looked into it. D. Henning went on to say that at our Saturday meeting the Board did talk about once we can confirm an approval of our application and receive the first of the funds, we will

need to spread the funds out on multiple services/areas of our budget so no one could dispute that we haven't used the money in the best interest of our whole Township. D. Henning went on to say that once we know how much is left over from the budgeted amount from the Crump Rd. Project and we confirm that we will get the ARPA funds we will have a better idea of what we can put forth for the Fire Department's equipment needs this year.

**Planning & Zoning:** K. Derrohn presented:

**Case#PZBA21-006 Elmer's Real Estate Co.:** This is a request for a height variance to apply to a building so they can enclose aggregate bins located on their property at 5147 Powers Rd. The property is zoned I-1 Light Industrial and the proposed structure is 45' tall which is 15' above the maximum height standard. The building will be replacing an older existing plant but it will be pushed further into the wooded area, the enclosed aggregate bins and conveyor will allow work to continue during the winter. K. Derrohn went on to say the Township Committee looked at the regulations and that it does allow for additional height besides the fact that it will be tucked into the trees. The Committee also liked the fact that it will be enclosed reducing noise and dust that could affect the neighbors although they are a distance from the area of the plant. The Committee did recommend to the Township to approve this case but the neighbors were not notified the notices did not go out to them for the committee meeting but it did get out in time for tonight's Township meeting. K. Derrohn asked if there was any of the neighbors present to make comments on this case. None were present. Scott Lauer asked Jason Horton from Elmer's on behalf of the fire department to have the cement truck drivers to use extreme caution coming out of the pit because it is a dangerous intersection. Too many times, people are accelerating from the intersection and curve at a faster speed than posted and if caution is not being used there will be a big accident between a cement truck and another vehicle in this section. Scott went on to say public safety is his number one concern there.

Jason from Elmer's took a few minutes to welcome the comments and to say that Elmer's is always available for addressing concerns whether it is called into the Traverse City location or by stopping and talking with the Plant Manager at the Powers Rd. location. He then went on to explain their plans and why it would be helpful to have the 45' variance so business can continue even in the winter. He also explained they will be coming back into Planning & Zoning for their sight plan review approval in the next few months. The overall plan is that the existing plant & building will be removed and replaced by the new one by after approved by Planning & Zoning sometime next year. D. Morford made the **Motion** to approve Case #PZBA21-006 as requested. Second by K. Shomin, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No. D. Henning made closing comments of appreciation to Jason on all of the work Elmer's has done in reclamation of the property and cleaning up the berms, etc. The Township Board agreed it really looks nice on that corner, and it is appreciated.

K. Derrohn stated that the P&Z Committee also reviewed the Emmet County draft of Solar Standards. They commented that they are happy the County is going to have standards for solar companies that are coming into our area. The Committee had no questions, problems, or revisions on the draft. More information will be presented to the committee for their August/September meeting. K. Derrohn went on to say there is a lot of interest from Solar Companies that would like to bring their business into our area. D. Morford said that the Sewer Authority has been in talks with a solar company. The P & Z Committee is also going to start looking at the Township's Corridor Study along M-68 when time permits. K. Derrohn will be talking with Tammy Doernenburg on some questions that we have had along M-68, and help to get things started for an update along that section. D. Henning also stated that we will need to follow up with the implementation of the full Corridor Study once M-68 has been brought up to date.

D. Morford asked K. Derrohn about the County Recreation Plan and that we should strongly ask them to include our Hay Lake Marina since they do have active involvement with the Jones Landing Park, Camp Petosega, and others. We will have to look into our Recreation Plan and make sure we also have them added to our plan so it could help us to get grants and maybe have County involvement in the day-to-day operations since they already have a Parks & Rec. Department.

### **Unfinished Business:**

**Assessor Position:** D. Henning asked Jim LaPeer how many years he has been our assessor. Jim replied 21 years as of the beginning of July. The Township Board thanked Jim for his service to our community and that it has been wonderful having him provide the highest quality of work not only with us but also when dealing with the public directly. Jim said he didn't come tonight for accolades but to merely say goodbye. He also went on to say that things in the township are selling fast and they are selling high. He said it won't affect this year's sales study which ended the end of March. However, the sales picked up as of April 1<sup>st</sup> to now and it will affect next year's sales study. Jim went on to say that he feels we will be left in good hands with Brooke Milbrandt and that he has faith in her. Jim let the Township and Brooke know that he will be available to answer any questions Brooke may have and to point things out if needed at almost any time.

D. Henning introduced Brooke and went on to say that they have been talking transitioning from assistant assessor to the assessor as Jim LaPeer's final day is August 31, 2021. D. Henning, Jim, and Brooke did meet for a few minutes before the meeting and it was pointed out by Jim that our township has a lot going on in it. We have almost every type of classification of land and it all has to be assessed appropriately for its classification which will take a bit of work. D. Henning did provide Brooke's resume in the packets. Brooke said she would be happy to answer any questions that the board may have for her. She went on to say that she has enjoyed working with Jim because he is very thorough in his work and she was honored that he recommended her for his replacement. K. Shomin asked if she gets calls for the assessor who should she send the calls to. Brooke stated that she will verify the date of which he is no longer going to take the calls and will let us know. She also said she can continue to have the Tuesday office hours like Jim has had and she can work with us for Board of Review dates that can dovetail with the dates that she will also have on Drummond Island. D. Henning stated that they have talked about Brooke keeping track of her hours as the Assistant Assessor and that they have agreed to the \$16.00 per hour for that time while we are still paying Jim LaPeer this month. After this month Brooke will transition into the Assessors position. D. Henning made the **Motion** to engage Brooke Milbrandt as Littlefield Township's Assistant Assessor at the rate of \$16.00 per hour and that she will turn in her hours. K. Derrohn Second, Carried 5 Yes, 0 No. Brooke will fill out the Employee Forms and turn them in before her first payroll check is issued. Pay will be on a monthly basis just as it is for the assessor position.

**Joint Meeting 8-09-21:** The Special Meeting had to be changed to this date due to prior obligations from some of the Village of Alanson members. It will now be just after the Village's monthly meeting on 8-09-21 starting at 7PM between the Library, Village of Alanson, and the Township. K. Morgan will step in for S. Festerling to take notes due to S. Festerling's back surgery.

**Oden Park/Gazebo:** K. Derrohn reported that the blue house next to Walter Dow Park has sold and it is unknown if the realtor informed the new owners that there is no parking in the park/outside the garage door. K. Morgan stated when she gets the new owners names for the sewer, she can pass off the information to K. Derrohn to send them a letter about parking in the park.

K. Derrohn stated that the survey was done on the Gazebo Park property to show where the township's boundaries are compared to the house that has been using our property as his own. She will get the bill to S. Festerling to be paid. K. Derrohn and D. Henning went down to meet with the gentleman who is in the house and parking the old ambulance on our property. Two days later he moved the Ambulance. Jesse from Johnston's Lawn Care can now mow that area.

**Blight:** K. Derrohn reported that there is still a problem with the two houses along Luce St. not to mention the Valley Rd. property. She feels that things need to pick up on administering the Blight Ordinance on these three properties at least. Our gazebo park property looks really nice but it is distracting to see the two houses still having blight issues on Luce St. K. Derrohn feels like we need to step up to the plate and enforce our Blight Ordinance otherwise what is the point in having it. D. Henning asked K. Derrohn if she feels like we need a different Blight Enforcement Officer and her reply was yes, she does. Other Board members stated that they also feel that our officer could be doing a lot better than he has been doing. D. Henning asked K. Derrohn if she had anyone in mind

to fill the position and she didn't. She said if anyone knows of someone, please bring their name forward because once the first letter goes out the officer should follow through with the steps for blight which shouldn't be hard to do. These properties shouldn't keep popping back up with us if we are following the steps our blight officer should be doing.

**New Business:**

**Habitat for Humanity/Land Bank Property:** K. Derrohn reported that Habitat for Humanity is holding an open house at the location of the three houses along Luce St. from Monday the 9<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup> 9am to 3pm. She would like to incorporate a history notice of these housing sites and how the Township was pivotal in making it happen with the Land Bank of Emmet in each of the three houses. The fourth house property has started to be excavated for its foundation. K. Shomin stated it could also be incorporated in the next Township newsletter.

**Public Comment:**

Dave and Sue Droste asked if there were any updates to the Geoff Frye sewer system. D. Henning stated that they haven't been able to set up a meeting this last month but is hoping to establish one this coming month.

Scott Lauer stated that he has been paying attention to the parking situation down at Hay Lake Marina that was brought up last month under the first Public Comment. He has noticed that most of the cars that are parking inappropriately or driving on the grass are going to the condo slips not the Township's slips. D. Henning was going to go down and look into it.

**Clerks Agenda:** S. Festerling stated that 2 ½ weeks after her back surgery will be our next meeting, and she did find out from Joel Wurster that in the situation of a medical reason a Board Member can participate in meetings up to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 on Zoom due to the COVID-19 changes to open meetings. S. Festerling asked if it would be possible to include her in the meetings through Zoom as she is recuperating. D. Henning and the other members of the Board stated that unless there is something really big on the agenda, they would rather have me take the time to recuperate and take it month to month as it comes. Deputy Clerk, Kim Morgan, or one of the other Board members can record the meetings in the clerk's absence.

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

Regular Meeting was adjourned @ 8:36PM by D. Henning.