

Banks Township Board Meeting

Monday, December 21, 2020

This meeting was conducted via Zoom per emergency orders during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic.

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:03 P.M. by Supervisor Alex Busman. Present were Supervisor Busman, Clerk Donna Heeres, Treasurer Katy Postmus, Trustee David Rasmussen and Trustee Tom Cooper. Also present: Julie Waterman, Marvin Rubingh, Dave Heeres, Emily & Gunner Busman. Jarris Rubingh joined at 7:30 P.M. Supervisor Busman led the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the Invocation.

2. **Public Comment:** Marvin Rubingh addressed the Board regarding plans for paving Rubingh Road. He said the ACRC had been out and took boring to assess the base of the road.

3. **Minutes:** The minutes of the November 16, 2020, regular Board Meeting were presented. MOTION was made by Rasmussen, seconded by Cooper, to approve the minutes as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

4. **Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer presented Report of incomes and balances. The tower rent from American Tower is up \$25 a month due to contractual agreement. General Fund Balance: \$376,121.38; Fire Fund Balance: \$134,600.09; Liquor Fund: \$2022.47; Roads Fund: \$79,850.11; Vehicle Fund: \$107,187.78. Grand Total: \$699,781.83. **Bills** represented by the attached list were reviewed for approval for payment. MOTION by Heeres, seconded by Busman, to pay the bills as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

5. **Zoning Administrator:** ZA report not available. Clerk reported one permit has been issued for replacement of a garage, addition of 3 grain bins at existing grain terminal, and a new home with attached garage and covered porch.

6. **Fire Department:** Report from Chief Groenink that both pumpers are back in-service following pump tests. The equipment truck is in Grayling for repairs, the Rescue Vehicle is in the body shop for repairs following the deer accident. The tankers are due for inspection sometime this winter. The Dept is not holding regular meetings currently due to the pandemic. They plan to resume after the new year. Trustee Rasmussen commented that members **Larry Essenberg** and **Ed Petter** are treasures for our township. Their dedication and service to the Fire Dept is superb. They will be exceedingly difficult to replace should they decide to retire. More volunteers are needed to fill these guys' "big shoes". The Board concurs and again thanks Larry & Ed for their many years of dedicated service to Banks Township.

7. **Planning Commission:** Trustee Cooper reported on the PC meeting held December 8. He thanked Joni Wieland for her years of service to the community as planning commission member. He reported the ZA gave a report that included "a pile of permits" and activities. The PC adopted a mission statement. The next meeting will be held January 12.

8. **Board of Review:** Meeting was held December 15 and homestead property tax exemptions were processed. The regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 8 from 3 PM to 9 PM and Thursday, March 11 from 9 AM to 3 PM.

9. **Correspondence:** Clerk presented the correspondence: Extension of remote meetings under the Open Meetings Act through March 31, 2021, and after that until December 31, 2021, may hold remote meetings under special circumstances. Antrim County COVID-19 newsletter was shared. Christmas Greetings from Peterson McGregor Insurance. Beckett&Raeder monthly Planning Report that included recreational cannabis sales are booming. Municipal Emergency Services has acquired Douglass Safety Systems. Sheriff's report of 911 calls in November was 61 with 10 car/deer accidents. Antrim County Parks & Recreation Plan has been released for a 30-day public comment

period. It is available for viewing on the website and the public is encouraged to review and comment until January 18, 2021. PC from a resident who is not in favor of fixing Rubingh Road as it is a dead-end road and only goes to one family's home/business. PC from a resident inquiring about the status of the Noise Ordinance that the Board had been considering last summer. She stated noise is still an issue with a Short Term Rental in her neighborhood and asked that noise be considered as part of the Nuisance Ordinance if the Noise Ordinance is not adopted. Notice of Determination from Unemployment Insurance Agency that a claim filed by one of our employees due to lay off from another employer was adjusted due to the employee still working for Banks Township.

10. **Township Hall:** Due to continued Health Dept directives, **MOTION** by Heeres, seconded by Rasmussen, to continue the closure of the Township Hall for social gatherings through January 31, 2021. **MOTION CARRIED.**

11. **Election 2020:** The State of Michigan, Bureau of Elections, performed an audit of all ballots for Antrim County for the November 2020 Election. Hand counting of over 16,000 ballots was performed by a group of 20 non-partisan volunteers under the supervision of the BOE. The count was done for only the presidential race. Twelve additional votes were identified for Donald Trump. These votes possibly were not picked up by the tabulators due to the voter marking with an X or check mark instead of filling the oval as directed.

12. **Water Damage Insurance Claim:** New desktop has been ordered for the Village desk.

13. **WiFi Hotspot:** Proposal from Charlevoix Library and North Country IT to place two hotspots outside the Township Hall was reviewed. Total cost is estimated at \$4232; available grant funds of \$1200 through the CARES ACT brings our responsibility to \$3032. Supervisor Busman will contact the Village to see if they are willing to cost share since one hotspot will specifically service the Community Square area. No proposal was received to provide IT services to the Township.

14. **Appointments:** Supervisor appoints **Gary Strange, Jesse Anderson and Richard Diebold** to the **Board of Review** for two-year appointments January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022.

MOTION by Heeres, seconded by Rasmussen, to approve these appointments. **MOTION CARRIED.** Supervisor appoints **Tom Cooper** as Ex-Officio member of the **Planning Commission** for a term to coincide with his term of office. **MOTION** by Heeres, seconded by Postmus, to approve this appointment. **MOTION CARRIED.** Supervisor appoints Julie Waterman to the Ambulance Authority Board for a three year term, ending March 31, 2024. **MOTION** by Heeres, seconded by Cooper to approve this appointment. **MOTION CARRIED.** Supervisor appoints Mark Groenink as Fire Chief. **MOTION** by Heeres, seconded by Rasmussen, to approve this appointment and authorize the Chief to appoint his officers: Assistant Chief: Tom VanStedum; Ellsworth Captain: Brian VanderArk; Atwood Captain: Nathan St. Pierre; EMS Coordinator: Ward St. Pierre; Secretary/Treasurer: John Hastings. **MOTION CARRIED.**

15. **Political Signs:** Supervisor Busman reported phone call to complain about presence of political signs around the township, now more than six weeks following the election. The Zoning Ordinance says signs shall be removed 5 days following the election. Residents are encouraged to comply and remove the signs before the enforcement officer begins enforcement.

16. **Meeting dates in 2021:** Following discussion, **MOTION** by Busman, seconded by Heeres, to set the 2021 dates as follows: January 18, February 22, March 22, April 19, May 17, June 21, July 19, August 16, September 20, October 18, November 22, December 20. **MOTION CARRIED.**

17. **Poverty Exemption & Penalty Waiver for Non-Filing of Property tax Affidavits:** Clerk reported the Poverty Exemption Resolution was adopted in 2017. It should be adopted each year.

The Penalty waiver has not been addressed. Supervisor and Treasurer will work together to update these documents for the Board to consider in January.

18. **Cemetery Ordinance:** Clerk & Supervisor reviewed and updated the proposed ordinance. Recommended amendments were pointed out to the Board and amended as discussed. Clerk will send to attorney and funeral director/grave digger for input which is requested by January 15 to allow the Board to take action on January 18.

19. **Zoning Administrator Contract Renewal:** Supervisor & Treasurer negotiated with Zoning Administrator on terms for contract renewal. Proposed contract was reviewed. Discussion was held and further investigation of duties and salaries of zoning administrators in the area will be done with plans to finalize the contract on January 18.

20. **Nuisance Ordinance:** Comments on this ordinance will be heard January 18 during our regular meeting.

21. **Board Comment:** Trustee Cooper commented that the railroad property north of Ellsworth is blocked off at Best Road and if it should be open.

22. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Marvin Rubingh asked about the plans for Rubingh Road and wondered if the Board's plans needed to be submitted to the ACRC by the end of the year. Supervisor Busman responded that he was not sure the \$103,000 estimate was still solid following borings that were done recently. He will contact the manager to find out.

23. The meeting was adjourned by the call of the Supervisor at 7:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna L. Heeres