

ONOTA TOWNSHIP BOARD
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 1, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Present: Terry Pihlainen, Supervisor
Cheryl Lane, Treasurer
Catherine Kimar, Clerk

Connie Lacko, Trustee
Brian Bresette, Trustee

II. AGENDA

A motion was made to accept the agenda as amended (*add "Assessor" to new business*).

Motion: Brian Bresette
Support: Cheryl Lane
Motion carried.

III. MINUTES

A motion was made to accept the minutes as presented.

Motion: Brian Bresette
Support: Cheryl Lane
Motion carried.

IV. REPORTS

A. Financial Report

The treasurer presented the bills for payment.

A motion was made to pay the monthly bills as presented:

- » \$6,010.81 for the general fund, checks #5193-#5211;
- » \$1,640.95 for the fire fund, checks #2066-#2071; and
- » \$9,107.19 for the solid waste fund, checks #1223-#1228.

Motion: Catherine Kimar
Support: Connie Lacko
Motion carried.

A motion was made to approve the monthly balance sheet and profit & loss statements for the general fund, fire fund, solid waste fund and tax fund as presented by the clerk.

Motion: Brian Bresette
Support: Cheryl Lane
Motion carried.

Roll call vote
Ayes: Cheryl Lane
Terry Pihlainen
Connie Lacko
Brian Bresette
Catherine Kimar

Gen: 639,594.99
Fire: 294,539.55
SW: 123,522.95
Tax: 5,754.18

B. Assessor Report

The clerk read the report from the assessor (*copy on file*).

C. Zoning Administrator Report

The clerk read the report from the zoning administrator (*copy on file*).

D. Fire Department Report

Chief Kimar read the Fire Department report (*copy on file*). Joe Shaffer applied to be a firefighter on the department. She recommended that a background check and medical exam be waived due his recent certification for a Coast Guard captain license, which requires far more thorough background investigation and medical clearance (including drug testing). He provided documentation regarding his approved licensure.

It was also noted that he has the opposite schedule of ‘snowbirds’ – he typically leaves the area in summer and stays during winter, which would complement any seasonal absences of other firefighters.

A motion was made to appoint Joe Shaffer as a firefighter.

Motion: Terry Pihlainen

Support: Brian Bresette

Motion carried.

E. Planning Commission Report

Trustee Bresette reported that the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance was discussed with CUPPAD at the October meeting. A survey will be sent out in preparation for this – the Planning Commission will need postage approval (the clerk will check what past costs were for sending surveys).

The supervisor mentioned brownfield opportunities; this will be discussed at their next meeting.

F. Supervisor Report

The supervisor reported on the following:

- * Lake Superior Boat launch – dock removed for winter. Axle is damaged will be repaired before it is re-launched. Still investigating if township can legally obtain this property from the US Forest Service.
- * American Rescue Plan Act – resubmitted application with additional requested details.
- * Answered annual government survey.

G. Tyoga Trail

NMU Conservation crew did not make it out to camp overnight to do brushing, but volunteers still took care of this on each end of the trail and near the historical foundation across the river. The campground has been prepped for winter and is shut down, with hopes to start it up again in spring. The supervisor thanked John Highlen for all his work on this site.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

Marquette County and Chocolay Township each sent correspondence regarding the adoption of the new 20-year County Master Plan.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Opened: 7:15 pm

Comment was received from: David Kimar on a letter he received about state personnel being sent out to check on local assessment values (*the supervisor said he would look into this*).

Closed: 7:17 pm

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Roads

The Alger County Road Commission sent an agreement for the scheduled projects for next year. It was noted that there was an error in projects listed (Peter White, Sand Lake, Onota Hill) vs. roads the board agreed upon (Peter White, Sand Lake, Deerton-Sand Lake). The Onota Hill project is double the cost of Deerton-Sand Lake, and the final cost is incorrect as a result of this (\$74,000 vs. 59,300). The

clerk added that the amount in last month's motion was incorrect.

A motion was made to amend the amount listed in the motion from the October meeting to \$59,400.

Motion: Catherine Kimar
Support: Brian Bresette
Motion carried.

Roll call vote
Ayes: Cheryl Lane
Brian Bresette
Terry Pihlainen
Connie Lacko
Catherine Kimar

A motion was made to approve the Alger County Road Commission agreement contingent upon the correction of the third project from Onota Hill to Deerton-Sand Lake Road.

Motion: Catherine Kimar
Support: Brian Bresette
Motion carried.

B. Custodian Position

A letter of application was received from Jennifer Hough for the custodian position. The board discussed and reviewed the applicants. The clerk offered to send the applicant who did not get selected a letter stating that the township would keep their info on file and they would be contacted if the position opened in the future.

A motion was made to hire Gail Krejci for the custodian position (*at the rate of \$175/mo as agreed on last meeting*).

Motion: Brian Bresette
Support: Cheryl Lane
Motion carried.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Shore Drive well request

The clerk and Zoning Administrator had each been contacted by contractor Thomas Hall, who had a request regarding a well, on behalf of homeowners on Shore Drive. He explained that the previous LMAS health department inspector had allowed wells to be drilled into Lake Superior, due to the significant water quality issues affecting the residences on Shore Drive – but that the person now in this position had disallowed the practice. He asked that the township assist him with getting a “variance” (as per LMAS) to drill under the lake.

The board agreed that this matter is entirely out of township jurisdiction, as it is under health department authority, and any variance mentioned is not related to local zoning. The clerk said she would reply to Mr. Hall with this information.

B. Snowplow Bids

The clerk brought up the need for seasonal bidding for snowplow work this winter. Terry Lane had submitted a bid in anticipation of this request at the rate of \$43/plow. Brian pointed out that the dumpster down by the Whitefish Lodge will also need to be plowed this year. The board agreed it would be best to have bids resubmitted.

The clerk asked where this notice should be posted besides the website and the township hall, as the Mining Journal is expensive and unlikely to result in any applicants. The clerk pointed out that near the dumpsters was a good site for public information to be posted, as it was one of the few frequented locations in the township. The supervisor mentioned that the Marquette post office had said the township could place a kiosk near the local post office, as long as it was 25-30' from the building. The

board was in support of this installation and asked the supervisor to get further information on it.

C. Cemetery Request

The clerk had been contacted by a relative of the Nurmi family (buried in the Deerton Cemetery), requesting that the township allow her to place a bench in the cemetery to memorialize a family member whose cremains were buried without a marker. She added that she strongly supported this request, as a public donation program for cemetery infrastructure and improvements was something she had previously suggested.

The board was also in support of this. The clerk said she would reply to Ms. D'Annunzio and work with her on this matter.

D. Assessor

The township received a letter and resume from Cameron Fuess (who works for Au Train Township & Covington Township). A discussion was held. The final decision was that the board should hold a special meeting to interview Mr. Fuess as well as simultaneously posting a job description with qualifications on the website for any other applicants over the next month.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Opened: 7:47 pm

Comment was received from: David Kimar on the reasoning behind the township's potential acquisition of the boat launch site (*the supervisor explained that the USFS said without township participation and support, it was likely that it would end up being privatized*) and when the board meeting regarding the budget was (*February and March*); Gloria Rinne on the importance of township acquisition of the boat launch site because much of the Lake Superior shoreline was now private. Jarrod Biebel on who had

Closed: 7:52 pm

X. BOARD CONCERNS

Catherine – asked who damaged the parking lot and if it would interfere with plowing.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 pm.

Motion: Catherine Kimar
Support: Cheryl Lane
Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Onota Township Clerk

Proposed: 11/1/21

Approved: 12/2/21