

ONOTA TOWNSHIP BOARD
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
January 2, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

Present: Terry Pihlainen, Supervisor
Cheryl Lane, Treasurer
Tina Watkeys, Clerk

Absent: Connie Lacko, Trustee
Brian Bresette, Trustee

II. AGENDA

A. A motion was made to accept the agenda as presented.

Motion: Cheryl Lane
Support: Terry Pihlainen
Motion carried.

III. MINUTES

A motion was made to accept the minutes as presented.

Motion: Terry Pihlainen
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:

- » \$24,044.21 for the general fund, checks #5884-5903;
- » \$172.33 for the fire fund, checks #2184-85; and
- » \$6,331.26 for the solid waste fund, check #1269
- » \$208,434.91 for the tax fund.

Motion: Tina Watkeys
Support: Terry Pihlainen
Motion carried

It was noted by Supervisor Pihlainen that a Notice of Nonpayment was received for service on November 3rd by Wolverine Generator. A motion was made to pay the bill to Wolverine Generator and 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: Tina Watkeys
Support: Cheryl Lane
Motion carried

Roll call vote
Ayes: Cheryl Lane
Terry Pihlainen
Tina Watkeys

Gen: 746,569.16
Fire: 392,851.53
SW: 129,011.26
Tax: 208,434.91

B. Assessor Report

None

C. Zoning Administrator Report

The zoning administrator reported that two zoning compliance applications was approved (*copy on file*). He also responded to several zoning related phone calls and emails throughout the month of December.

D. Fire Department Report

The fire chief reported that there were no calls in December. She also noted Caleb Ritari will be attending Firefighter I & II courses in Marquette County.

E. Planning Commission Report

None

F. Supervisor Report

The supervisor reported on the following:

- * Supervisor Pihlainen has been checking into the feasibility of highspeed internet in the township through Jamadots. He has been informed that Peninsula Fiber has received a substantial grant to grow their internet base in the UP. He is looking into if TDS has any proprietary rights in the township and whether or not public hearing is needed.
- * Supervisor Pihlainen is in the process of obtaining the surrender packets for retired and deceased board members and new packets for new board members. He was notified that the pension plan for the township board members that was due in February has not been paid. The funds from the township must be paid before the retired and deceased plans can be paid out. It was asked for the clerk to track down the check to the Municipal Retirement Systems Inc asap and confirm if ever paid or not.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

County Clerk email was received requesting early voting poll workers. If there are any former or new poll workers that would like to work the early voting, they are to contact the County Clerk, Joel Vandeveld for info on training and dates needed to work the polls.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Opened: 7:15 pm

Received from: Charlotte Lindes, Chairperson of the Alger County Library Board, millage for the library is up for renewal and will be on the February ballot. She provided an informational brochure (copy on file).

Received from: Joan inquired about the progress of the planning commission comprehensive plan. Without Trustee Bresette, there was no update to provide at this time.

Closed: 7:19 pm

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Bids for Kitchen/ADA Door and Siding of Township Hall

The supervisor provided copies of the two bids requests that will be published in the Munising Beacon. He is also talking to contractors about the possibility of changing the layout of the handicap ramp and possibly incorporate that into the siding project.

B. Quick Books Renewal/Township Debit Cards

Quick Books renewal deadline is January 7th. After this date, payroll will not be able to be processed until renewal is complete and paid. It was believed the township could pay for the Quick Books renewal by electronic transfer from the general fund. Further information on township debit cards versus credit cards was provided by Treasurer Cheryl Lane. Treasurer Lane stated that Incredible Bank informed her that credit cards were highly recommended instead of debit cards due to the fraud risk and limited corrective measures provided with debit cards. She will look further into it.

A motion was made to pay for quick books.

Motion: Terry Pihlainen

Support: Tina Watkeys

Motion carried.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Johnson Road Bridge

David Squier and Mark Squier are requesting help from the township with funds to repair the bridge to allow access to their property. Bob Limbeck, Alger County Road Commission has agreed to supply labor but not materials and referred them to the township for bridge assistance. The current bridge has become unusable. Supervisor stated he would look into the township possibly helping with matching funds but would not pay the entire amount needed.

B. Board Trustee Vacancy

With passing of Trustee Connie Lacko, her position is open and needs to be filled. Supervisor Pihlainen stated Michigan Township Association has informed him the position can be filled without posting or notifying the vacancy to the public. He received a letter of interest from Jennifer Huff and nominated her for the position. Mark Fisher requested that he was also interested in the position. Treasurer Lane stated she has also received comment from others interested in the position. Treasurer Lane than nominated Mark Fisher. The nominations were tabled as a courtesy to the township to allow all interested parties to submit their letters of interest for consideration by deadline of Monday, January 8th. There will be a special meeting held on Monday January 8th at 6:00pm to vote in the new Trustee.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Open: 7:43 pm

Received from: Gloria Rinne to post the open position on the website to notify anyone interested to submit their letter of interest by Monday January 8th at 6:00pm. The board agreed as a courtesy to do so.

Closed: 7:44 pm

VI. BOARD CONCERNS

None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm.

Motion: Tina Watkeys

Support: Terry Pihlainen

Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tina Watkeys, Onota Township Clerk

Proposed: 01/02/2024

Approved: 01/08/2024