

MINUTES OF THE ALBERT TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 20, 2024

Board Members, Supervisor Michael Szukhent, Treasurer John Righi, Clerk Sandy Raffin, Trustee Marsha McDonald. Also in attendance were Albert Township Fire Department Fire Chief Doug Baum, Zoning Administrator Jeff McDonald, Road Commissioner Ted Orm, and Recording Secretary Julie Marcotte. 2 residents were present.

Treasurer John Righi led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mike Szukhent called the regular meeting of the Albert Township Board to order at 3:00 p.m.

Recording Secretary, Julie Marcotte called attendance, Trustee Dick Deska was absent.

Sandy Raffin pointed out that the Meeting Minutes for the February 8, 2024 regular Board Meeting are included in the packet but not listed on the agenda. John Righi made a **motion** to accept the agenda as amended, seconded by Marsha McDonald. Motion carried with 4 yea votes.

Mike Szukhent would like to authorize the use of Zoom for Board Meeting attendance, but not voting. Marsha McDonald made a **motion** to authorize Zoom meetings under the Board Rules, seconded by Sandy Raffin. Motion carried with 4 yea votes.

Mike Szukhent briefly introduced himself and explained that the Township had a Board Member unexpectedly step down and although he had obtained the paperwork to run for Township Supervisor in November, he was offered and accepted the opportunity to fill the current unexpired term of the previous Township Supervisor until that time. He will be running in November for the next term.

Mike Szukhent asked the Board to approve, under Board Rules, amendment of the regular Board Meetings to once monthly, on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Marsha McDonald made a **motion** that beginning in March 2024, Board Meetings will be held once monthly, on the third Tuesday at 7:00 p.m., seconded by John Righi. Motion carried with 4 yea votes. Mike Szukhent did point out that the one exception to the new schedule, is the budget meeting previously scheduled for the third Monday in March 2024, which will supersede the regular Board Meeting on the third Tuesday of the month.

One resident did express concern regarding the time change and the impact on senior citizens due to weather and driving after dark.

Marsha McDonald made a **motion** that under #7 on the agenda, A) Road Commission B) Fire and Ambulance and C) NEMCOG, seconded by Sandy Raffin, motion carried with 4 yea votes.

Discussion regarding previous minutes; Sandy Raffin states that during the February 8, 2024 meeting, it was agreed that Laura Schrader would be paid \$200.00 for 2024 budget preparation. Sandy has since received an invoice from Laura for \$250.00 to include \$50.00 for Fire and Ambulance budget preparation. Marsha McDonald made a **motion** to approve the Minutes of 2-5, 2-8, 2-13, 2-15-24 as written, seconded by Sandy Raffin. John Righi requested discussion; on 2-5-2024 the minutes are

titled MINUTES OF THE ALBERT TOWNSHIP PUBLIC HEARING AND BOARD MEETING, there was not Public Hearing at that meeting, correction will be made. One additional correction to the 2-13-2024 budget meeting Minutes, Dick Deska was not present. Motion carried with amendments, 4 yea votes.

Sandy Raffin made a **motion** that the Township receive back from Laura Schrader, \$50.00, which was paid in error and charged to Fire and Ambulance, and pay only the \$200.00 which was approved. Seconded by Marsha McDonald, motion carried with 4 yea votes.

Sandy Raffin made a **motion** that the Board provide approval to pay \$15,761.35 in bills and \$5,040.74 in additions, seconded by Marsha McDonald, motion carried with 4 yea votes.

Sandy Raffin made a **motion** that the Board provide approval for payroll in the amount of \$22,369.19 for the period of 2-6 thru 2-20-2024, seconded by John Righi. Motion carried with 4 yea votes.

Ted Orm provided a brief report regarding current projects and reported that they have hired a new mechanic. Road Commission has approximately 11 job applications on file, which is historically quite low. Ted also requests that residents direct any concerns directly to the Road Commission vs. bringing concerns to Board Meetings to be addressed.

Fire and Ambulance report received and filed as submitted. Doug reported that on 2-13-2024 he met with the Chamber of Commerce so that they could start the planning process, specifically for Timberfest. Monthly meetings will begin shortly on that, and other events that they are holding, to see if there are any safety and response concerns for those events that we have here in town. Mike Szukhent did inquire of Doug Baum what "MCSO Drone Program" was, under Unfinished Business on the County Officers Authority Meeting Minutes. Doug explained MCSO is the Montmorency County Sheriff's Office and they have been working, for at least a couple of years, to put together capital stack to purchase a drone for the County.

Doug reported that concerning NEMCOG, a grant was submitted to EAGLE on behalf of the Township and Crawford County for scrap tire collection. We did last year and were notified last week that we did receive a grant. Albert Township, as a Board, will have to look at collection dates so advertisement can begin.

John Righi reported that he contacted the Township attorney, Brian, who is ready to go as far as putting together the ballot wording for Headlee. If we are going to do a parks/cemetery millage, which has been talked about in the past, Brian will need the 2024 taxable value which is not yet available. John will be talking to our Assessor tomorrow to see when that information will be available.

There was a discussion regarding a new "citizen complaint" form. Mike proposes that the form be modified to reflect "citizen concern" and remove the complaint verbiage. Marsha McDonald made a **motion** to update the citizen complaint form, to remove the word complaint and replace with concern, throughout the form, seconded by Sandy Raffin. Motion carried with 4 yea votes.

Marsha McDonald reported that Albert Township submitted for a grant through MSHDA and we were awarded \$50,000. These funds will be used to update the Master Plan and Marsha believes we can

add Parks and Recs. to our Master Plan. Marsha McDonald made a **motion** to accept the \$50,000 grant from MSHDA for the purpose of developing a Master Plan rewrite, seconded by John Righi. Motion carried with 4 yea votes.

Marsha McDonald made a **motion** for NEMCOG to provide a proposal for assistance with the Master Plan, seconded by Sandy Raffin. Discussion followed. The process will begin with the Planning Commission who will then provide input and final wording for approval or denial from the Township Board, and possible public hearings. Mike asked if there are time-frame requirements, Doug stated that typically 12-18 months out is standard with a completion date within two years, Marsha confirmed that the plan must be completed and submitted within two years. Doug stated that NEMCOG normally works with the Planning Commission and other groups within the municipality, conducts public hearing and the 60-day review. A draft is given to the Board who will return with edits if they have any, it then goes back to the Planning Commission for approval and the Municipal Board can either opt in or out for approving it themselves. Marsha reported that she had received an e-mail that indicated quarterly reviews are required, the first one being due 4-30-2024. One half of the money will be disbursed once we have a contract with an independent contractor, which NEMCOG is. Doug reported that NEMCOG does a lot of these and if selected, they will work with the Township to assist with quarterly reports. Doug asked that staff confirm that a Rec. Plan would be eligible activity under the grant. John reported that rules have gone back and forth regarding Rec. Plan inclusion in Master Plans. Doug reported that the Master Plans NEMCOG have been doing, are separate from the Rec. Plans., however, NEMCOG is currently assisting Gaylord and that includes a Master Plan, Zoning and Rec. Plan, layered on top of each other. Motion carried with 4 yea votes.

Mike Szukhent addressed an earlier comment by a resident and stated that senior citizen attendance was an important consideration, however the 3:00 p.m. meeting time precluded the working citizens from attending.

Sandy Raffin reported that she received a list of dates from the Chamber, throughout the summer months, for Pavilion use consideration. Sandy also reported the Pavilion is coming along well, Chris Stark is doing a nice job. Finally, Sandy followed up as promised, with Joe, the Assessor, regarding the 50 ft. lot owned by the Township. Joe advised that the maximum value would be \$1,500. Sandy will reach out to Sam Shoff, adjoining property owner, and relay that information.

Mike reiterated that the March 4, 2024 meeting will be cancelled. There will be one meeting on Monday, March 18 2024 at 3:00 p.m. which is a public hearing for the budget. Per Sandy, notification has been completed. The once monthly meeting at 7:00 p.m. will start in April.

Marsha McDonald made a **motion** to adjourn, seconded by Sandy Raffin. Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully,
Julie Marcotte
Recording Secretary