

Minutes of the January 4, 2021 Regular Board Meeting of Sherman Township

The regular scheduled meeting of the Sherman Township Board was held on Monday January 4, 2021 at 7pm through the electronic format of Zoom. Meeting was called to order by Ken Smalligan at 7:02 pm. After the pledge of allegiance, roll call of the board was taken, and members present were Karen Berens, Doug Berens, Stan Stroven, Ken Smalligan, and Jamie Kukal.

Motion was made by K Berens and 2nd by D Berens to approve the agenda as presented. Roll call vote was taken. Yes; K Berens, D Berens, S Stroven, K Smalligan and J Kukal. No; none Motion passed.

Motion was made to approve the December 7, 2020 regular board meeting minutes with corrections. Roll call vote was taken. Yes; K Berens, D Berens, S Stroven, K Smalligan and J Kukal. No; none Motion passed.

At this time Supervisor-Smalligan expressed condolences from the board to Brian Story, in the passing of his brother. He also introduced a meeting protocol for electronic meetings, asking everyone to indicate whom they are addressing questions to, so there is less overlap of talking and to control the extra comments.

There was no public comment at this time.

Treasurer-Berens presented the treasurer's report of checks dispersed with no unusual expenditures. She also reported that she received the last revenue sharing check of \$35,441 on Saturday. Motion was made by S Stroven and 2nd by D Berens to accept the Treasurer's report and authorize the payment of bills. Roll call vote was taken. Yes; K Berens, D Berens, S Stroven, K Smalligan and J Kukal. No; none Motion passed. J Kukal asked K Berens about the statue of the credit cards. Berens responded that the cards are in her possession and she has yet to activate them. She said she is supposed to have training with the bank before usage. Kukal pointed out that often there is a 30 day limit on activation of new cards, before they are clarified void. Berens said she would look into it.

Clerk-Kukal asked if the board had any questions pertaining to her previously presented report for review. With no questions she asked if there were any questions pertaining to the updated job descriptions she had presented for review. K Smalligan asked J Kukal what she was expecting from the board as far as input. Kukal responded that she only had a few more positions to finish and then she would like input on changes or additions, before presenting them for approval next month.

For Trustee comments, S Stroven responded that the White Cloud Fire Board meeting for last month was canceled and it looks like there may not be a meeting for January.

Supervisor-Smalligan asked if there were any questions on hi report previously presented for review. S Stroven asked about the short term rental topic and if it was only the one issue at the time. Smalligan indicated that yes it was just the one property on Ryerson Lake at this time. However with the popularity of short term rental use, the lawyer advised being proactive and adopting a moratorium for regulation and to prevent future issues. Stroven asked that the board have a copy of the letter form the lawyer to the property owner. Smalligan agreed that he would share any information he gets in a timely manner and he is happy to discuss the issue with Stroven independently if he would like more insight at

Minutes of the January 4, 2021 Regular Board Meeting of Sherman Township

this time. Otherwise the subject is tabled until next month, when the lawyer has had time to prepare the documents.

Supervisor-Smalligan went on to present the elected officials' pay scale for review. He advised the board that every year this pay scale should be reviewed and it has not been done for many years. Also, any changes to elected officials' compensation must be done in the form of a resolution 30 days prior to the adoption of the next fiscal year's budget. Smalligan had inquired with many townships in the area and the results shows that Sherman Township is significantly lower than most. He present a report that the clerk had prepared that shows the pay scale, the last date of revision and the figures to adjust the oldest updated positions with a 3% cost of living increase for 12 years to bring those salaries up to date. Smalligan then opened the topic up for discussion. K Berens commented that she was not sure were the information was obtained form, but the Treasurer's date for revision was incorrect. She then went on the scold the board for even considering pay raises at this time, given the financial state the population of the township is currently in. She will not support such activity at this time. Clerk-Kukal responded that she obtained the information from the previous clerk's records for that revision date. D Berens said he would have to agree with Karen on the financial statues of the population. Kukal responded that everyone would agree that there are financial hardships out there. However if the township is hoping to retain quality employees the board needs to bring the township pay scale up to date. She said that the previous supervisor, Roman Miller, had asked her to gather this information last year and they had been tabling it for some time and needs to be disused now given the time frame of the budget meeting in March. Smalligan commented that salaries have not even been disused since before Bob Sullivan left the board and it is a fiduciary requirement that each township board evaluate the topic yearly. He also pointed out that all township employee wages are insufficient across the boards. D Berens asked if there would be any push back from the public if the board enacted revisions at this time. Kukal explained the process for enactment, where the board would approve today and it would not start until the next fiscal year, in April. The public would then have 30 days to gather signatures for a petition requesting a public vote on the topic. A special election would have to be held to obtain the results of said public vote and that would be the final decision for that fiscal year. S Stroven presented a different view by reminding the board of the previous instances where the township has asked the public for road mileages and such and those votes were definite noes, indicating that the public is not interested in raising their taxes to support the township's proposals. However, he has to agree that Sherman Township is considerably lower than other townships. Stroven recommended that a little more research and figuring may be needed to make a more appropriate decision. Smalligan remarked on the figuring that had already been presented and pointed out that it would be a difference of approximately \$3,000 to adjust the Supervisor and Clerk's salary and this year the township saved \$20,000 on the road work after a discount was applied from the county. Kukal commented that it looks bad because her and Ken's positions are some of the positions that were last revised 12 years ago, but she is looking to bring all the wages to a to a fair rate eventually. She also pointed out that an increase of \$8,000 was needed to offer competitive compensation for the recently filled assessor's position, showing just how far off the mark township salary compensation is. Motion was made by K Smalligan to increase the Clerk's salary to \$11,000/year. Kukal stated that she is abstaining from a vote on the clerk's salary. So with no 2nd the motion was dropped with no further discussion.

Minutes of the January 4, 2021 Regular Board Meeting of Sherman Township

Assessor-Story reported that the December BOR was a success and all finalized. He said he has been working on personal property canvases and the property statements have been mailed. Any inquiries should be directed to him. He has just completed two years' worth of building permits to update files. He plans to send out letters to the veterans reminding them of their previous filings and need to refile. Story then presented the three resolutions that need to be enacted on yearly. The first was Resolution 2021-1 State Required Poverty Level Standards. Then Resolution 2021-2 Accepting Letters of Protest and finally Resolution 2021-3 to provide for alternate starting dates for March 2021 BOR. S Stroven asked if the figures on the poverty one if they are the current figures. Story confirmed that they were the current figures. Motion was made by S Stroven and 2nd by J Kukal to accept Resolution 2021-1, A RESOLUTION UPDATING STATE REQUIRED POVERTY LEVEL INCOME STANDARDS FOR PROPERTY TAX POVERTY EXEMPTION GUIDELINES FOR TAX YEAR 2021. Roll call vote was taken. Yes; K Berens, D Berens, S Stroven, K Smalligan and J Kukal. No; none Motion passed. Motion was made by K Berens and 2nd by D Berens to accept Resolution 2021-2, ACCEPTING LETTERS OF PROTEST FROM TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS FOR MARCH 2021 BOARD OF REVIEW. Roll call vote was taken. Yes; K Berens, D Berens, S Stroven, K Smalligan and J Kukal. No; none Motion passed. Motion was made by D Berens and 2nd by K Berens to accept Resolution 2021-3, A RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE FOR ALTERNATE STARTING DATES FOR MARCH 2021 BOARD OF REVIEW. Roll call vote was taken. Yes; K Berens, D Berens, S Stroven, K Smalligan and J Kukal. No; none Motion passed.

Supervisor-Smalligan reported that the annual BOR training is now open for enrollment and he needs to know who is interested in what classes. It is online and available for unlimited reference with the enrolment payment. Motion was made by S Stroven and 2nd by D Berens for the township to pay for anyone interested in attending the training. Roll call vote was taken. Yes; K Berens, D Berens, S Stroven, K Smalligan and J Kukal. No; none Motion passed.

Building Inspector-Smalligan presented his report for December, highlighting 2 permits and 7 inspections.

Zoning Administrator-Kukal reported no planning meeting for December and again in January.

Dick Chenard reported that stations 1 & 7 have been updated and brought online. At the sewer plant, they have replaced the aerators'. An economic development authority grant of \$ 400,000 will be awarded at the end of the week. Meeting dates for 2021 have been set. Health insurance is increasing by 4.19%. Replaced a truck for a sale price of \$33,001.99 and it was originally purchased at \$33,587. So it only cost a little over \$500 to operate that truck for 2 years.

For cemetery C Kukal reported that an ad has not been placed yet due to the weather conditions. It would be more practical to wait until closer to spring to place the ad. S Stroven agrees that holding off until logical bids could be attained. After discussion it was decided to place the ad in March for an early spring excavation. S Stroven asked if work on the building could be added to the bid. Kukal replied that it was in the plan for the ad to except bids for both the construction maintenance of the building and the excavation of the new drives. J Kukal commented that originally the ad would run in conjunction with an ad for the final ZBA position, but now she will separate the ads and place the ZBA one this week.

Minutes of the January 4, 2021 Regular Board Meeting of Sherman Township

For Fremont Fire District K Berens reported that she billed \$207.38 and collected \$1,135 last month.

For White Cloud Fire District, S Stroven repeated the no meeting status.

No new or unfinished business at this time.

No public comment at this time.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm

Submitted by Jamie Kukal, Clerk

Also present through zoom were Chad Kukal, Gary Smalligan, John Borgman, Brian Story, Jim May, Karen Kopolces, Richard Chenard, Roman Miller, Wayne Berens, and Gerald Engel.