

Rutland Charter Township

Regular Board Meeting

January 10, 2024 / 7PM

Meeting called to order by Supervisor Watson at 7pm. Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call - Members Present:

Gene Hall, Sandy James, Doug Lectka, Sandy Greenfield, Larry Watson, Robin Hawthorne, Brenda Bellmore

Others Present:

Rebecca Lectka, Dave Jackson, Paul VanderMeer, Nick and Buck from AGS, Pat Sharpe, Mark Jordan, Nickie Haight

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by James, seconded by Greenfield to accept the January 10, 2024 agenda. All ayes. Motion passes.

Guests: Rebecca Lectka introduces herself as the new RCT Library Board Representative. She gives an update and has provided the board with her report.

Open Comments: None

Consent Agenda:

Motion by James to accept the consent agenda, seconded by Greenfield. All ayes. Motion passes.

Supervisor:

Watson would like to appoint Andy Thompson as an alternate board of review member. Motion by Hawthorne, seconded by Lectka to appoint Andy Thompson as an alternate board of review member. All ayes. Motion passes.

Clerk:

Hawthorne says her vouchers and payroll report is in the board member's packets. She also says that she heard from Ryan Murray from WOW and he wondered if anyone has had any issues since the install. Hawthorne mentioned to Murray the possibility of using the ARPA fund money towards an agreement with WOW to provide internet through more of RCT.

Treasurer:

Greenfield has provided the board with her treasury report and the report on the ARPA funds.

Trustees:

Bellmore asks about the abandoned road by her house. She says it is still on maps and there are Amazon and other delivery drivers getting stuck down there. Since there is snow, people cannot see where the road ends. Bellmore says there is already a sign and it is all grown over in the summer. Watson will talk to the road commission.

Commissioners Report:

Dave Jackson gives a brief update and mentions that solar is going to be a big deal in the coming years. They are planning a workshop at the HPAC on February 13th to start an ordinance and try to control it. He will make sure RCT board members are invited. He says all townships will be affected and there will be a lot to figure out between the local and state governments. Jackson also shares there are more plans coming for the COA, Jail, and housing.

Unfinished Business:

Award Contract for Cemetery Sexton

Many board members feel that Nancy Hallifax has done a great job, is reliable and great with the public. Other board members have not been satisfied with her work. Hall points out that Hallifax's quote is the highest and therefore the most expensive for RCT residents.

Motion by James, seconded by Greenfield to award Nancy Hallifax with the Sexton contract. Roll Call Vote: Hall - No, James - Yes, Lectka - No, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - No, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - No. Motion fails.

Hawthorne says Paul Vandermeer is another Sexton that gave a quote and he is in the audience. Hawthorne says he is the Sexton for Castleton township and they gave him a great referral. Vandermeer says he has a tractor and a dump truck and lives locally.

Motion by Lectka, seconded by Bellmore to award Paul Vandermeer with the Sexton contract. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Lectka - Yes, Greenfield - No, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - No, Bellmore - Yes. Motion Passes.

Discussion on Second Amendment Resolutions

Most board members agree that this is not up to local governments and RCT should not have anything to do with it.

Motion by Lectka, seconded by Greenfield to drop the discussion and do not act on the resolutions in front of them. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Lectka - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes. Motion passes.

Budget Amendment for the Agaming Drain District

This is a budget amendment to cover the townships share of the cost. Hall shares that his taxes went up about 15% and there were 22 properties in the assessment area. The board discusses that the Drain Commission did not try any of their suggestions that could have worked.

Motion by Hawthorne, seconded by Greenfield to approve the budget amendment for the Agaming Drain District. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - No, Lectka - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes. Motion passes.

New Business:

Mechanical and Plumbing Contracts

Board members discuss the two applications from PCI and AGS. Some members have not been pleased with PCI.

Motion by Greenfield, seconded by Lectka to table the issue of mechanical and plumbing contracts until the AGS plumber is back to work after surgery and in the meantime tell PCI that RCT is looking elsewhere. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Lectka - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes. Motion passes.

BIRCH Discussion

Hall tells the board that the BIRCH board wonders if The City of Hastings might be better equipped to handle the Fire division. Board members discuss that BIRCH has not done a good job in the past of budgeting for the future. Hall says there are pros and cons of both ways and all the townships involved in BIRCH are having this discussion and going back to the next BIRCH meeting with feedback. The City of Hastings has submitted a contract for the townships to review. RCT would be paying the same amount that they are now and the city will be paying the same as the townships. James asks who would decide if that rate will increase or decrease. Hawthorne says the city would come to the townships if the fire millage is not enough. He says there are a lot of details that would have to be figured out if they decide to go through the city. Hall asks Mark Jordan, the Fire Chief, to speak to the board.

Jordan says that BIRCH is supposed to own the equipment but they do not, and that BIRCH already does not control the operation. He says they need to build an equipment fund and then work on a policy to have trucks replaced in 10-15 years instead of 25-30 years. He says all the townships would have the same contract with the city and that businesses could see decreased taxes once the trucks and policies are in place and caught up.

Several board members say that BIRCH has new leadership that will be following the new policies and they should be given a chance. Hawthorne likes that RCT has 2 representatives on the BIRCH board so they are kept updated and have a say in decisions being made. Lectka says the BIRCH leadership needs to be held accountable.

Motion by Lectka, seconded by Hall to continue with BIRCH with the new leadership and make sure policies are enforced now. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Lectka - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes. Motion passes.

First Reading of Ordinance 2024-191 Zoning Map Amendment and Text Change to the MUD District

Hawthorne says these are housekeeping items. The 2 parcels were missed when they made the changes for the airport, crop farming needs to be listed as a permitted use, and there was a typing error.

Motion by Bellmore, seconded by James, to accept the recommendation from the Planning Commission and to accept Ordinance #2024-191 for first reading. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Lectka - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes. Motion passes.

Open Comments:

Pay Sharpe says he is happy with the decision the board made about BIRCH and he asks Mark Jordan if he had a preference one way or the other

Adjournment:

Motion by Bellmore, seconded by James to adjourn at 8:32pm, all ayes. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Nickie Haight, Recording Secretary