

Rutland Charter Township

Regular Board Meeting

March 13, 2024 / 7PM

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

Roll Call - Members Present:

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

Others Present:

Bob Teunessen, Steve Pachulski, Rebecca Lectka, Peggy Hemmerling, Dan Lipstraw, Pat Sharpe, Mark Jordan, Nickie Haight

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Hall, seconded by James to accept the March 13, 2024 agenda. All ayes. Motion passes.

Guests:

Rebecca Lectka is the RCT Library Board Representative. She gives an update and has provided the board with her report. She says the library is running programs to give away eclipse sunglasses, look for details between now and April 8th, which is when the eclipse will be.

Open Comments:

Pat Sharpe tells the board to have a great Easter Holiday. The board asks about the gate on Algonquin Lake. Sharpe says it was vandalized and was closed one day for repair.

Consent Agenda:

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

Supervisor: None

Clerk:

Hawthorne says her vouchers and payroll report and a report on Marijuana revenue collected are in the board member's desks. Sharpe asks how much was collected for marijuana, Hawthorne says \$59,086.35 which is about \$2000 more than the previous year. Sharpe asks and Hawthorne answers that those funds will go into the general fund.

Hawthorne shares that anyone running for a place on the RCT Board must submit their paperwork to Hawthorne by April 23rd.

Treasurer:

Greenfield has provided the board with her treasury report and says taxes have been turned over to the county so RCT residents have to go there to pay. James asks what percentage of residents had paid before they were sent to the county and Greenfield says about 88% were paid.

Trustees:

Lectka asks Commissioner Tuenessen when Sheriff Dar Leaf is planning to give his report on the 2020 election investigation. Tuenessen says the commissioners have left it to Sheriff Leaf to find a venue large enough for all the people that want to attend. Board members are unhappy that they have not been given this report. They want to know how much tax money went into this investigation, they want to see the proof that the Sheriff claims to have of fraud. Bellmore and Hawthorne say this was on the news and supposedly the Sheriff has traced the fraud to Siberian nationals. Lectka says the Commissioners pay the Sheriff's paycheck and suggests they should pull his funding and stop letting have the freedom to spend taxpayers money however he wants. James says the Sheriff is an elected official and there is a process that has to be followed when it comes to his job and his funding. The board says they will be waiting to hear when and where the Sheriff's report will be presented.

Commissioners Report:

Bob Tuenessen shares that the airport got a grant to build a new tower and take down the old one, but they have to match it. The City of Hastings is lending them some of the money. Board members ask how the airport has managed to be solvent in past years. Tuenessen says Larry Baum was very generous with the airport and the current hangers bring in income.

Tuenessen says there was a very educational meeting about solar power. There is a petition going around to keep control with the local government. There is a lot of information that most people do not know. Commissioners are worried about property values if the state can come in and dictate where they can put solar panels.

The Commissioner shares that the COA has raised enough money to move on to phase 2 of their plan. He says the commissioners are creating a board to search for a replacement for **Mark Michael** Brown and others that are retiring or moving on. Tuenessen and the board members agree that Brown was a great steward of the taxpayers money.

Sharpe asks about the 911 renewal milage. Tuenessen says the \$50 increase per \$50,000 was already the case. The renewal only increased taxes by \$5-\$7. Tuenessen reminds the board that there will be milages coming in August for the COA and the Transit. James and Tuenessen agree that the COA is needed and Tuenessen says the transit is willing to work with the COA and people that need rides out to the new location. If the COA millage does not pass, they will not get a new building and the old one is not going to last much longer.

Unfinished Business: None

Finished Business:

Accept First Reading of Ordinance 2024-192 Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Motion by Bellmore, seconded by James to accept the recommendation from the Planning Commission and to accept Ordinance 2024-192 for first reading. Roll Call Vote: James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes, Hall - Yes, Lectka - Yes. Motion passes.

Resolution 2024-300 Approval for Patten Monument IFT Exemption

Lectka asks why RCT would want to give this business 50% off of their property taxes. He says they are moving and expanding because they are successful and it is in their best interest to move. Watson and Hall like the idea of giving businesses incentive to move into RCT. New businesses bring more jobs and more property tax income. Hawthorne and Greenfield say they have done these IFT Exemptions for other businesses as a 10 year contract. D&S is the only one RCT currently has left and they are 3 years into their 10 year contract. Board members discuss a shorter contract and Hawthorne says they can choose from 1 - 12 years.

Bellmore says Pattens is only planning to add 2 new jobs. Lectka asks how RCT will know if they actually hire 2 new people and Watson says he will visit. Watson says this is the last lot available in Light Industrial, so there will likely not be others asking for this exemption. Hall asks if this is a public hearing or if one is needed and Hawthorne says it is not required. Board members feel a precedent has been set and this is only available for manufacturing companies, so they should not deny this exemption.

Motion by Hall, seconded by Lectka to approve Resolution 2024-300. Roll Call Vote: James - No, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - No, Hall - Yes, Lectka - Yes. Motion passes.

Closed Session to discuss pending litigation:

Supervisor states that the board is going to go into closed session to discuss the pending litigation.

Board reconvenes and reopens the board meeting.

Motion by Greenfield, seconded by Lectka to accept the settlement offer that is pending in litigation. Roll Call Vote: James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes, Hall - Yes, Lectka - Yes. Motion passes.

Open Comments:

Sharpe asks if the board can discuss the litigation they just voted on. And Watson says no.

Adjournment:

Motion by Bellmore, seconded by James to adjourn, all ayes. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Nickie Haight, Recording Secretary