

**RUTLAND CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 9, 2025**

Meeting called to order by Supervisor Mayack at 7:00 p.m. Moment of Silence Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

**Members Present:** Brenda Bellmore, Sandy James, Jason Watson, Robin Hawthorne, Sandy Greenfield, Gene Hall, Marty Mayack

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Pat Sharpe, Dave Jackson, Bob Teunessen, Eric Zuzga, Sue Bender, Eric Schaefer, Dana Yarger, Barb Lyons, Steve Pachulski, Robert Foster, Mark Jordon, K Porritt, Todd Porritt, Brad Carpenter, Jim Partridge, Pat Sharpe

**Agenda:** Mayack asks to amend the agenda to add the approval of the Contingent License for a change in ownership of Lumberjacks. Motion by Hawthorne, second by Greenfield to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passes.

**Guests:** No Library Report.

**Open Comments:** Brad Carpenter: Carlton Twp Supervisor BIRCH Fire Board Chair: Wants all the BIRCH members to stay united and pass the subsidy request for Mercy Ambulance.

Jim Partridge: Hastings Charter Township Supervisor: requesting that we consider staying with Mercy Ambulance service and approving the subsidy for Mercy.

Pat Sharpe asks why the discussion on Mercy. Mayack responds that we will be discussing that later.

Joe Hubner representing Mercy Ambulance: discusses response times and hospital runs and gives a brief overview of Mercy's services.

Gary White: Gave handout on Jail Feasibility Study and how no representative is on any of the committees and Barry County General Fund Revenues.

**Consent Agenda:** Motion by Watson, second by James to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion passes.

**Supervisor:** Nothing to report

**Clerk:** Hawthorne states that she would like to see a Planning Commission Liaison Report on the agenda going forward before the Commissioners report and also add the Township Board Liaison Report to the Planning Commission agenda every month. She feels that this might help with the disconnect that the two boards are feeling at this time. James concurs and is still concerned about the minutes from the PC meeting not being ready before the board meeting. Board discussion. Motion by Mayack, second by Greenfield to add those reports to the agendas going forward.

Roll call vote. All Aye Motion passes.

**Treasurer:** Greenfield states that the treasurers report is on the desks and asks if there are any questions.

**Trustees:** nothing to report

**Commissioners Report:** Commissioner Teunessen gave his report from the County Board of Commissioner's Meetings. No spraying for Gypsy Moths at this time. Jail Study was approved to construct a new jail as repairing will not work. Bids for body cams for the Sheriffs Department. County property on the corner of Jefferson and Walnut is going to be sold. Chamber of Commerce moved to the old Trumble Insurance site. Hawthorne questions why Rutland has been left out of the WIFI BEAD Grants. Jackson responds he saw Rutland's name on one of the reports on WIFI and gives a heads up on the bike race this Saturday.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Continued Discussion on the Mercy Ambulance Proposal for Funding:** Board discussion on all pros and cons of staying with Mercy and paying the subsidy of \$51,000.00 per year or to go with Thornapple Twp ambulance service for \$6,500.00 per year. Hall reads off a list of pros and cons he compiled on both options. Chief Jordan states that the city has already sent the application to the State to provide ambulance service and assures the board that BIRCH will respond to EMS calls no matter which we choose. James asks if there is room at the fire station for ambulance service. Jordan confirms there is. Greenfield asks if there has been any discussion on Mercy and BIRCH joining forces for ambulance service. Jordon states there has been none. Watson questions the expense report from Mercy and feels it seems they are showing a profit in 2026 and wonders why a subsidy is needed. He feels we as a board need to represent Rutland residents first. Bellmore feels we should not have to pay any subsidy to Mercy for services for our residents.

Motion by Greenfield supported by Bellmore to sign a one-year contract Thornapple Township for ambulance service. Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Mayack, Hawthorne, Bellmore, Watson, James, Greenfield

Nays: Hall

Absent None

Motion Passes

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Proposal from the City of Hastings:** Board discussion on joining with BIRCH and the City to hire a consultant for a feasibility study to have an ambulance service thru BIRCH. Our share would be \$5,000.00. Board feels this would not be necessary. Motion by Hall to reject the proposal. Second by Greenfield. Roll Call Vote All Ayes Motion passes.

**Discussion on the ongoing meetings with the City on infrastructure needs for the Meijer Project:** County Administrator Zuzga presents information on an "Island 425 Agreement" and how it might work out with the city for infrastructure needs for Meijer. Board discusses this possible avenue. Hall feels this might work if all the other MUD properties are not included in the 425 Agreement for Meijer.

Motion by Hall supported by Hawthorne to move we propose to the COH an agreement that includes the proposed Meijer property at M37/M43 to be under COH tax structure by a 425 Agreement and all other properties in our Mixed Use District stay in Rutland Charter Township tax structure even if they choose to connect to city sewer and water.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Hawthorne, Mayack, Watson, James, Hall

Nays: Bellmore, Greenfield

Absent: None

Motion Passes

**Hold Harmless Agreement for the fireworks display at the Fairgrounds:** Jordon presents the paperwork for the fireworks display on Saturday, June 14, 2025 and state there will be a walk thru before the show. Motion by Hawthorne Second by James to approve the Hold Harmless Agreement for the Images Engineering Special Effects Inc. All Ayes Motion passes.

**Contingent License for Pure Green Leaf LLC:** Mayack states that this is a new owner for the existing marihuana dispensary located in the mini-mall in front of Walmart. They have to obtain a new license from the state and from Rutland. Hawthorne states that they have paid their \$5,000.00 fee to Rutland and now they need to get their paperwork approved by the State. Motion by Hawthorne Second by Greenfield to approve the Contingent License for Pure Green Leaf LLC. Roll Call Vote All Aye Motion Passes.

**Open Comments:** Sharpe inquires do we really need a Meijer and when you call 911 who will respond?

Dana Yarger comments that the County is rich in certified EMT personnel and someone will always respond to any 911 calls. Jordon reiterates that BIRCH will always respond.

White asks why we are paying any fees at all and gives the schedule for upcoming Republican Meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Robin Hawthorne, Township Clerk and Sandy Greenfield, Township Treasurer