

Rutland Charter Township

Regular Board Meeting

August 11, 2021 / 7PM

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

Roll Call Members Present:

Gene Hall, Sandy James, Sandy Greenfield, Larry Watson, Brenda Bellmore

Roll Call Members Not Present:

Robin Hawthorne - excused, Matt Spencer

Others Present:

Pat Sharpe, Audrey Burton, John Smelker, Jean Gallup, Jim Brown, Nickie Haight

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Greenfield, second by James. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Bellmore - Yes.

Motion passes.

Guests:

Audrey Burton - RCT Library Board Representative:

Burton reports that the library is getting estimates and looking into warranties for roof repair for leaks that have already been fixed once. She says the library staff will be wearing masks and the public is being asked to as well. Burton says to check out the article in the Reminder and Banner about the Library's 125th birthday. The library parking lot was resealed and they are now using an updated computer system. Diane Hawkins is retiring and they are hoping Emily Reed is able to pick up some additional hours. James comments that the newspaper coverage of the library was wonderful.

Open Comments:

None

Consent Agenda:

Motion by James to accept the consent agenda, seconded by Bellmore. All ayes, motion carries.

Supervisor:

Watson says there will be a Joint Educational Workshop to work on the Blight Ordinance on August 24th at 7pm. Rebecca Harvey will be there to answer questions. Hawthorne will be sending out invites. James is happy to hear of the Joint Workshop. Watson and Hall agree it is time to move forward and make some final decisions on this ordinance. Hall thinks it is about 80% finished now and that Raymond and Harvey need clarification on some details in order to move forward. Greenfield refers to the old Blight Ordinance explaining there are 2 sections - Junk and Vehicles. She thinks this is a good way to move forward and will send copies to Raymond.

Watson explains that Mercy Ambulance is going to start charging in 2023. The amount will be divided between the 5 townships that are included in BIRCH. James would like to see the breakdown and Watson says that will all come soon. He explains they will use the same formula they use to figure out the existing BIRCH bill split. Smelker says the commissioners figure it to be an additional \$5 or \$6 per household. Watson says that is a conservative amount compared to other places. The board discusses how EMS workers are not well paid, they are overworked, and employees are hard to find.

Treasurer:

Greenfield shares that a copy of her Treasurer's Monthly Report is on each board member's desk.

She says tax bills went out July 1st and are due by September 14th.

Greenfield and Haight confirm the school millage election went well with no problems and the bond did pass in RCT.

Trustees:

James says she is glad the board has decided to move forward on the Blight Ordinance

Hall speaks about the trip he took with Raymond and Blake to Pinconning. They visited a Class C grower along with two other board members. They also toured a retail operation. Hall says the facility looks like a modern factory from the outside and is very professional, high tech, and clean. They employ about 100 people and they are also a processor. They plan to add retail soon and that will create about 50 more jobs. Hall says he would have no problem having an operation like that in RCT.

Watson asks about security and Hall says there are several cameras in every room. Hall says that Pinconning Township put a limit on the number of marihuana operations they would allow and he wonders if RCT should do the same.

James says Pinconning has had no lawsuits in the 2 years they have been allowing marihuana businesses. She points out that the RCT board was warned that if they apply limits to the amount of licenses they will issue, they could be opening themselves up to lawsuits. Hall confirms they have not had legal issues.

Greenfield asks if they are only AG or other zones as well. Hall says he believes just AG. He says the retail and grow operations were in the same area. Hall thinks Pinconning has allowed 4 or 5 retail businesses and they have a population very close to the same as RCT.

Sharpe points out that Pinconning used to be known as the cheese capital. He asks Hall how big their facility is. Hall says Raymond would have those details. Sharpe also asks where RCT plans to allow marihuana businesses. The board answers mostly AG and MU but not residential. He asks about the caregiver operation near Algonquin Lake and Watson tells him that the township has nothing to do with caregiver medical marihuana.

Commissioners Report:

Commissioner John Smelker gives an update.

- He says the new Broadband committee is starting their work. Greenfield asks about the grant for broadband that is for Great Lakes Energy customers and not Consumers Energy customers. She says that limits the RCT residents that will benefit. Smelker says yes for that grant but the other grant is for all. Smelker says that he believes Great Lakes Energy will go ahead with the work even if they do not get the grant.
- There is a lot of movement happening as 911 and FOC move into new office areas and remodeling continues.
- The commissioners will talk about the Health Department budget at their next meeting.
- The commissioners voted to fill in the underground tanks at the airport and only use above ground tanks going forward. Sharpe asks what the tanks will be filled with, and Smelker says slurry and it is DEQ approved and being filled by Rhor.

Unfinished Business:

Cemetery Ordinance Discussion:

Hall passes around photos he took at a few cemeteries. He says most have a new section that seems to have more trinkets and then an old section that seems to stay lower key.

Watson would like this ordinance done by the first of the year so that they can advertise in the spring, give residents the summer to clean things up themselves, and then discard the things that do not get cleaned up by families.

Hall thinks the 36 in border allowance is what is causing a lot of the issues because it gives people the option to grow out from the headstone.

Bellmore and Greenfield discuss that there are 4 different ordinances that they are looking at and need to be made into one. They explain that a lot of the changes the board is now suggesting, have already been changed in the newer versions.

James wonders how penalties would be enforced and the board discusses removing the penalties because they would be cleaning up if the families do not.

Greenfield says the sexton can keep track and remove extra items after 60 days. Watson says people even drive on the grave stones. Greenfield says maybe the roads need to be defined.

James suggests using the winter tax bills mailing to send notice about the new cemetery procedures. She would also like to see the rules posted on the Upton Rd side as well as other easily accessible areas. The board discusses actual sign posts.

The board tables the discussion to the next meeting.

New Business:

Resolution 2021-271:

This is a resolution to adopt a Federal Procurement Conflict of Interest Policy to accept the ARPA funding.

Greenfield makes a motion to approve Resolution #2021-271, seconded by Bellmore.

Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Bellmore - Yes. Hawthorne – Absent
Spencer – Absent Motion passes.

Resolution 2021-272:

This is a resolution to adopt the recommendations from the Township Road Committee and the Barry County Road Commission for the 4 year Road Millage monies.

Hall explains that 2022 is redoing roads and a lot of subdivision roads. 2023 is gravel and dust abatement. 2024 is primary and secondary roads - these are also included in the \$85,000 that RCT pays annually.

Bellmore makes a motion to approve Resolution #2021-272, seconded by Greenfield.

Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Bellmore - Yes. Hawthorne – Absent
Spencer – Absent Motion passes.

Open Comments:

Jim Brown is the Hastings Township Supervisor.

- He would like to congratulate the RCT board on the road plan.
- He lets the board know that he was late to this meeting because the county directory still says they start at 7:30pm.
- He comments that cemeteries will always need work and Sextons have a very difficult job. He says to let him know if they find some tips that help.
- He also shares that the vote was unanimous at the BIRCH meeting to pay for the ambulance service. Watson asks for a breakdown and Brown says they will do that once the proposal is accepted. He says there are a couple townships that still need to vote.

Adjournment:

Motion by Bellmore to adjourn at 8:07pm, seconded by James, all ayes. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Nickie Haight, Recording Secretary