

Rutland Charter Township

Regular Board Meeting

January 12, 2022 / 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, Robin Hawthorne, Brenda Bellmore, Stacey Graham

Others Present:

Pat Sharpe, Audrey Burton, Jane Cybulski, Les Raymond, Steve Pachulski, Dave Jackson, Landon from JAP

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Greenfield, second by Graham to approve the agenda. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes, Graham - Yes. Motion passes.

Guests:

Audrey Burton - RCT Library Board Representative:

Burton introduces Jane Cybulski and explains that she is taking over for Kim Bosma as the other RCT Library Rep.

She shares that a generous donor paid for the digitizing of all the old newspaper articles.

Pat Sharpe says that he sees no reason to adopt a pro marihuana ordinance in RCT. He says that Baltimore Township only brought in \$28,000 last year and he does not feel that is reason enough to opt in. He says the weed business signs are taking over and he is worried that is what will happen on M43 and M37. He believes that people voted to be able to use marihuana in their own homes and did not want shops everywhere. He thinks that the board should have another vote in RCT about marihuana and blight before they adopt any new ordinances.

Open Comments:

None

Consent Agenda:

Motion by James, second by Greenfield to approve the agenda. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes, Graham - Yes. Motion passes.

Supervisor:

Watson says that Raymond wants the board to review their part/job in the dangerous buildings process. He says they will be needed in the next 60-90 days. There will be a schedule of events and meetings coming soon.

Clerk:

Hawthorne says that her Clerk's report is in the board member's packets. And asks if the board has any questions.

Treasurer:

Greenfield shares that her treasurer report is in the board member's packets. She explains the smaller report is for the COVID funds to keep them separate. She shares that tax payments are coming in.

Trustees:

James asks about the COVID funds and why the board did not know about the collaboration with the county. Hawthorne says that she found out at the clerks meeting that most townships/local governments did not know about the collaboration either. James thinks that these townships and local governments should go back to the commissioners and tell them they did it wrong. Commissioner Jackson says there is a meeting next week for the people who applied for the first round. James asks Jackson to tell the commissioners that RCT was not invited to participate and that they were interested in working together. Jackson says that they were most likely not included because the county has applied for a grant to get broadband throughout the county. He says there is a broadband committee that has done a study to work on goals based on where the most need is. Graham says that there was a broadband survey but she does not know who all it was sent to. James says more communication is needed and they should all be working together. The rest of the board agrees. Hawthorne says it was not widely known that townships could apply and that no one came to speak or sent a memo.

Hall says that he met with the Road Commission and they are planning their schedule for RCT in 2022. He says there will be a lot of work on subdivisions. He says there is a PowerPoint available for the board if they want to see it. He says RCT roads actually scored higher than average. He says residents that will be affected by the tree trimming and other spring work, got a notice in the mail.

Bellmore asks if January 19th is for marihuana and blight? Hawthorne says it is just for marihuana and that blight does not need a public hearing. Hawthorne also shares that the 19th is just for the board and not the PC.

Commissioner Report:

Commissioner Dave Jackson shares that there will be no leadership changes for the county. He says they are looking into changing their meeting times to afternoons and evenings instead of morning to give more people the opportunity to get involved. Bellmore and Greenfield say to try evenings. James says they tried evenings when she was there and they did not get more attendees. He says the next scheduled meeting is 9am next Tuesday. He says that the governor signed a bill to change the commissioner's terms to 4 years starting in 2024. And he will send the broadband study to Hawthorne to share with the board.

Unfinished Business:

Marihuana License Applications for Applicants

No vote is needed, this is just a discussion. Graham asks where all these ideas were taken from - Lowell, Pincinning, Middleville, Three Oaks, among others. Greenfield asks why medical marihuana is included. Watson and Raymond talk about how the state cut what caregivers can grow per patient. The board consensus is that the state will eventually get rid of caregivers. Bellmore asks if an applicant would have to already own/rent/lease land in RCT. Hawthorne says the state will have already approved them first before they could come to RCT for a permit, then RCT would approve based on zoning. Watson says he liked that Middleville is asking how the applicant plans to be a good neighbor. Hall says Middleville set limits on their applicants so they are able to ask those questions but RCT did not.

Blight Ordinance Discussion

Hall asks about some definitions that were deleted. Hawthorne says Harvey thought those things would be a better fit for the zoning ordinance.

Bellmore thinks Harvey did a great job and that the zoning part is the next step for them to work on after this.

Watson says Rick Argo is taking people to court already using present zoning.

Hall asks about at least adding back in some definitions. Hawthorne thinks less detail is better so that the zoning officers can define things based on blight situations. Raymond

agrees with Hall that there are definitions on some terms but not on the main component part. Watson will tell Rolfe to add that definition back in. Raymond agrees that it is a fine line of when does an item regulated in zoning become blight. He says there is not a lot to help him police the situation when the ordinance is abused. Hall says that would revert back to nothing is allowed. Hawthorne thinks that 30 days to sell a vehicle per year is not enough. Watson will tell Rolfe to delete "calendar year" under B in the licensed vehicle for sale section. Raymond wants to remind the board that if they change the zoning ordinance, that would make all those that are not in compliance now, legal-non-conforming.

American Relief Plan Act Funds Discussion

Hawthorne explains that she has to send a report of how RCT intends to use the funds by April 2022. She says they have to have a plan by then but the money does not have to be spent. She says she can report that it will be used for government services and not have to give details.

James asks if this first round of funds can be saved and combined with the second round. James, Bellmore, and Greenfield say that Broadband is at the top of their lists. They would all like to combine both rounds of funds and hopefully collaborate with other townships to deal with broadband needs.

Hall says there needs to be a plan for the funds if the broadband plan does not work out. Hawthorne and Hall have already submitted their ideas and Watson asks the other board members to come to the next meeting with their ideas.

Hawthorne says she has enough information to fill out the report for April.

New Business:

Ambulance Service Agreement

Hall tells the board they do not pay Mercy Ambulance separately anymore and that it will be charged through BIRCH. Greenfield makes a motion, seconded by Hawthorne to approve the 2022 Ambulance Service Agreement for BIRCH Fire. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes, Graham - Yes. Motion passes.

Mileage Reimbursement for 2022

Hawthorne makes a motion, seconded by James to approve the mileage reimbursement rate for township employees using their vehicles to attend township business and trainings. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes, Graham - Yes. Motion passes.

Open Comments:

Steve Pachulski congratulates the board on moving forward with a blight ordinance. He likes that there is more for the zoning officers to rely on. He does not think it is moral for the zoning officers to make the decision when or when not to enforce an ordinance. He thinks the more details the better when having to defend RCT in court. He does worry about neighbors filing complaints on other neighbors. Watson assures him that the only time a name would come out is if it was for a FOIA or court.

Pachulski recommends that the board change all permit processes to include that the applicant has to be in compliance with all ordinances to get any type permit.

Pachulski says he is surprised to hear that RCT paid for an attorney to put legal terms into the blight ordinance, just to take some of that wording back out. He recommends using a general ordinance off the internet in the future.

Adjournment:

Motion by Bellmore to adjourn at 8:54pm, all ayes. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Nickie Haight, Recording Secretary

