

Rutland Charter Township

Regular Board Meeting

August 9, 2023 / 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:

Carolynn Hall, Bob Teunessen, Mark Jordan, Audrey Burton, Hunter McLaren, Steve Pachulski, Rick Brown, Lois and Randy Frantz, Pat Sharpe, Nickie Haight

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Hall, seconded by Lectka to accept the August 9, 2023 agenda. All ayes. Motion passes. Watson says to add the new Fire Chief - Mark Jordan as a Guest on the agenda.

Guests:

Audrey Burton - Hastings Library Rep gives an overview of the last library board meeting. Her report is available and included.

Mark Jordan - Fire Chief introduces himself and says that he met Watson at the BIRCH meeting. He says he will be working on repair quotes for all of the vehicles. They have been piecing parts together to make them work for years. He is also looking into the cost to buy newer vehicles and researching which is a better investment.

Open Comments:

Pat Sharpe asks about the numbers from the school bond vote. Hawthorne says they had 247 YES / 102 NO walk-in voters, and 212 YES / 167 NO Absentee votes for a total of 728 votes. Sharpe also congratulates the Podunk Lake residents on their PLM contract.

Carolynn Hall thanks the board for the upgrades to the outdoor lighting. She works the elections and it is dark when she arrives in the morning and dark when they leave at night. She says the new lights were a needed safety update.

A gentleman that did not introduce himself asks if the board has an update from MDOT about the condition of M43. Watson says they do not.

Consent Agenda:

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

Supervisor:

Lectka confirms with Jordan that Mercy Ambulance will still pick up emergency patients between the hours of 12-8am. The board was under the impression after last month's board meeting that there would be no ambulance service during that time. The board is glad to hear that is not the case.

Watson says he needs to reappoint Larry Haywood and Jim James to the ZBA and to appoint Steve Pachulski to the Planning Commission to replace Jim Blake. Hall makes a motion, seconded by Lectka to reappoint Larry Haywood and Jim James to the ZBA and to appoint Steve Pachulski to the Planning Commission to replace Jim Blake, all ayes, motion passes

Clerk:

Hawthorne says that her Clerk's report and Vouchers/Payroll reports are on board members' desks.

Lectka asks if the mailbox is done and Hawthorne says it just needs a clear coat and it will be done.

Treasurer:

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

She shares that the township gets a lot of questions from residents about renting the hall for events. Greenfield says that the board approved the addition of the kitchen with the understanding that they would be renting it out to residents. But then once the addition was finished, the board at that time, voted not to rent it out. She is hoping to have another discussion about it and look at renting it to residents. The board agrees it should be a discussion at next month's meeting.

Trustees:

Hall asks for an update on the ADU discussion. Hawthorne says the board sent it back to the PC with a couple of suggestions and the PC did not have a meeting in August so there has not been further progress.

James asks if anything came of the updates to the Master Plan that were supposed to be updated by Brad from Williams & Works. Hawthorne says she could not find in the meeting minutes where the PC had asked him to make those specific changes. James also asks about the updates that Walmart is doing and Hawthorne says just minor inside updates and changes and that they do have a permit for those.

Lectka asks how the election day went with all the new voting changes and if they are ready for the November election next year. Hawthorne says it went well, but that the November election in 2024 will be much more expensive and many more rules will be coming into play. She says at this time, it looks like the costs will fall on RCT and they will have to discuss this again during budget conversations.

Commissioners Report:

Commissioner Bob Teunessen shares that the county has adopted a new Master Plan. He says there was a lot of thought about the future and things like solar farms and how the state might mandate those in certain areas.

He shares that the commissioners abolished their regulation that said fully elected employees cannot get the raises and bonuses that other county employees would get. They felt this was not fair and that the elected employees deserve the benefits too. Lectka says the elected officials knew that they would not be able to receive those benefits when they accepted the jobs. Hawthorne asks who was on the board that decided that. Teunessen says there was a board of residents from local township boards. The RCT board was not asked to participate or even told this vote was happening. RCT board members once again voice how upset they are to be left out of another discussion panel.

Teunessen says the commissioners are still working on a plan for the old FOC building and that several housing projects have been approved and are moving forward.

Unfinished Business:

Public Hearing – Resolution to approve the plans and cost estimate for the Podunk Lake Weed Control Program – Resolution 2023-293

The board discusses that residents have been happy with PLM. Hawthorne explains the full process to the board and public. Rick Brown shares that they have sufficient signatures on the petition to proceed. Hawthorne says they had 66% support from Podunk Lake residents. Brown says there are a few residents that do not want any chemicals used or want to try more natural options. But the 66% understands that those other options have not worked.

Motion by Greenfield, seconded by Bellmore, to approve Resolution 2023-293. Roll Call Vote: Hall – Yes, James – Yes, Lectka – Yes, Greenfield – Yes, Watson – Yes, Hawthorne – Yes, Bellmore – Yes. Motion passes.

Bids for the Cemetery Sign

The board discusses if this is a necessary expense and unfortunately, the current sign has to come down because it has become a safety hazard and could fall on its own. The board talks about lowering the sign but do not think that would change the cost much. They agree it should sit higher so it does not look like a headstone. James says she prefers to use RCT residents for the job but would like to see a more detailed quote from Hawthorne Masonry. Hall does not think a detailed quote is necessary. He says RCT provided the companies with the exact details of what was wanted and these quotes are both based on those details.

Motion by James, seconded by Greenfield, to use Hawthorne Masonry for the Cemetery sign. Roll Call Vote: Hall – Yes, James – Yes, Lectka – Yes, Greenfield – Yes, Watson – Yes, Hawthorne – Yes, Bellmore – Yes. Motion passes.

New Business:

Top Soil Quote for Cemetery

Watson says the new section is exactly the same as the older sections. Hall says it is all sand, weeds, and crabgrass. The board does not feel that this is a needed expense.

Motion by Hall, seconded by Hawthorne to NOT add topsoil to the new cemetery addition. Roll Call Vote: Hall – Yes, James – Yes, Lectka – Yes, Greenfield – Yes, Watson – Yes, Hawthorne – Yes, Bellmore – Yes. Motion passes.

Hawthorne asks if the board thinks she should sell plots in line or let the purchaser pick the spot. The board says next in line.

Open Comments:

None

Adjournment:

Motion by Greenfield, seconded by James to adjourn at 8:08pm, all ayes. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Nickie Haight, Recording Secretary