

Rutland Charter Township

Regular Board Meeting

November 13, 2024 / 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, Doug Lectka

Others Present:

Sue Bender, Dave Jackson, Terrick Smith, Rebecca Lectka, Steve Pachulski, Jason Watson, Pat Sharpe, Nickie Haight

Approval of Agenda:

Clerk Hawthorne adds "Budget Amendment due to Election workers" to New Business. Motion by Greenfield, seconded by James to accept the November 13, 2024 agenda with one addition. All ayes. Motion passes.

Guests:

Rebecca Lectka gives an update from the Library Board and her report is included. She points out that the library still has a group of disruptive teens spending time there. They are still looking for ways to handle the situation.

Open Comments:

Pat Sharpe asks about the newspaper article that mentioned zoning changes. Hawthorne says those changes are either still at the Planning Commission level or are on the agenda for tonight. Sharpe wishes everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Terrick Smith asks if there is an update about Meijer, Watson says he will give an update under the Supervisor section.

Eric Siska introduces himself as the new County Administrator. He welcomes board members to reach out if they need anything. He has worked with townships, counties, and cities before and is here as a resource for the county. The board wishes him good luck.

Consent Agenda:

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

Supervisor:

- Preliminary draft given to the City for future infrastructure agreement
- ZBA appointments of Robin Hawthorne and Eric Miller
- JPA appointments of Gene Hall and Stacey Graham (taking over for Haywood)
- PC appointments of Brenda Bellmore and Morgan Haley (taking over for Mayack)

Motion by James, seconded by Bellmore to accept the appointments and reappointments listed above. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes, Lectka - Yes. Motion passes.

Watson gives an update about the possible Meijer building. He says that the city responded to RCT's offer about 10 days ago. He says the city and RCT are so far off from what the

other wants. He says the city only wants another urban services agreement where the land would be given to the city. RCT does not plan to enter into another urban services agreement with the city. Since they could not come to an agreement, RCT told the city that they will give them an easement but everything else can be worked out between the city and Meijer. Or Meijer could use well and septic. RCT has not heard back since then. Hall says there was also a question from Meijer of whether RCT has the legal right to enter into an agreement.

Clerk:

Board Members have the Clerk's Report Voucher/Payroll and there are no questions. Hawthorne says she is about to pay off MEI and will only take about \$4000 from the General Fund; the ARPA funds will cover the rest.

Treasurer:

Greenfield says her report is in the board member's packets and on the back table. She shares that for banking purposes, Larry Watson will be removed from the bank accounts and Marti Mayack will be added.

Trustees:

James asks for a breakdown of the Supervisor's job duties. Hawthorne says the only statutory responsibility is the Board of Review. However, the Supervisor also handles hiring and firing, code enforcement, building, zoning, complaints, and many other things that come up during the day in the office. The Supervisor is also in charge of the other employees at the township hall except for the Clerk and the Treasurer.

Watson says he works more than some other township Supervisors and his hours have been 4 days a week from 9am-1:30pm. The Supervisor can make his own hours and they are posted on the door and on the website.

Greenfield says the normal township business hours are Monday-Thursday 9am-3pm. She says residents get used to hours when they change.

James, the board, and the township employees all note that the Supervisor position is a very big job and big responsibility that requires a lot of time spent in the office and sometimes visiting residents.

Hall tells Larry Watson thank you and good job serving as Supervisor. Bellmore is happy the election went well and thanks the voters. James asks Watson to please cover everything with Mayack before he is done. Watson says it is up to Mayack to come in, ask questions, and learn the job. Lectka congratulates Mayack and Jason Watson and all that won. James thanks Jason Watson for coming to the meetings.

Commissioners Report:

Commissioner Dave Jackson congratulates everyone on a successful election and he was happy to see there were many early voters. He says there are several new employees coming into the county and he is happy for those moving on as well. He says the commissioners are spending a lot of time talking about housing and living costs. He is researching the concert that was announced to be at the Barry Expo Center in June 2025 to verify it is all happening as it has been advertised. James asked about some empty properties like the B2 store, she says a Yoga studio is going into the old Previously Pink store. Jackson says the commissioners are evaluating all of the county's properties. Board members mention the small storage annex building at the courthouse and the garages on Jefferson St. Jackson thanks Watson for his service.

Unfinished Business:

Accept Ordinance #2024-193 for Second reading

Motion by James, seconded by Hawthorne to accept ordinance 2024-193 for second reading and adoption. No discussion. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes, Lectka - Yes. Motion passes.

Accept Ordinance #2024-194 amendments to Chapter 220 - schedule of regulations definitions and solar for second reading

Motion by Hall, seconded by Greenfield to accept ordinance 2024-194 for second reading and adoption. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes, Lectka - Yes. Motion passes.

New Business:

Budget Public Hearing for 2025

Supervisor Watson opens the public hearing for the budget at 7:44pm.

Lectka asks Hawthorne to explain a few budget items. Hall asks if this is budgeting enough to cover elections. Hawthorne says there should not be elections in 2025 unless someone runs a millage. She does not think the state will make the townships purchase anything else and she hopes that the state will cover if a tabulator needs to be replaced.

Watson asks for public comment or questions and there are none. He closes the public hearing at 7:51pm.

First reading of Ordinance #2024-195 proposed amendments to the MUD district

The board discusses the process this has been through so far. James asks why the PC was not ready after a month of having the proposed text. Steve Pachulski says they did not have all of the information. Hawthorne says the PC mistakenly thought that Meijer was forcing RCT to make these changes and that is not true. Meijer did review pertinent RCT ordinances and pointed out some things but that is it. RCT is not working with Meijer on this. RCT is just trying to get rid of old exclusionary zoning. Exclusionary zoning could land RCT in court.

Lectka asks Pachulski what issues he saw after a month of reviewing it. Pachulski said that it seemed to the PC that Meijer was forcing these changes. Hawthorne says this cannot be thrown out and must be addressed. She says RCT has spent 3 months of work and funds that will be lost if this does not go forward tonight. Bellmore says the PC didn't have a chance to change it and they decided to deny it.

The board discusses if sending it back to the PC is the right move or if they should disregard their recommendation. Most board members feel it would set a negative precedent of not listening to the PC's recommendations. Bellmore and Pachulski say the PC was told that these changes came from Meijer and did not know that there had been 3 months of work done. They want to know why the PC was not working on this. Bellmore says the PC might consider making some changes if they knew the whole situation. They discuss the square footage requirements and if it would require an SLU or would be a permitted use. Pat Sharpe asks how many parking spots are needed and Hawthorne says it is based on a formula.

Watson says that these issues need to be addressed so that the ordinance does not have to be opened and changed every time a big box store is interested in coming to RCT.

Motion by Hall, seconded by Bellmore to send ordinance 2024-195 back to the Planning Commission for their recommendation. Hall amends his motion to add that there are other tentative texts going back to the PC with this, the amended motion is seconded by Bellmore. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes, Lectka - Yes. Motion passes.

First reading of Ordinance #2024-196 construction code ordinance updates

Hawthorne says this will be a board of 5 people called the Construction Board of Appeals. Watson says they may never need to meet and the members can be picked when and if they are needed. He says Lloyd Jarman and Michael Huffman are a couple that he has approached.

Motion by Greenfield, seconded by Lectka to accept Ordinance 2024-196 for first reading. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes, Lectka - Yes. Motion passes.

Budget amendment - Election workers

Hawthorne says this is needed due to early voting and the 4 elections that took place in 2024.

Motion by Bellmore, seconded by Greenfield to approve the budget amendment for fund 101-191-725.000 Election Inspector Wages. Roll Call Vote: Hall - Yes, James - Yes, Greenfield - Yes, Watson - Yes, Hawthorne - Yes, Bellmore - Yes, Lectka - Yes. Motion passes.

Open Comments:

Pat Sharpe asks if all of the proposed amendments from ordinance #2024-195 will be going back to the PC, Watson says yes. Sharpe also asks about the height and luminescence requirements in MUD.

Jason Watson asks how ordinance #2024-195 came in front of the board if the PC did not approve it. Hawthorne says that the board packets are sent out in the mail the morning before the PC meeting even happens. Also, the PC is a recommending commission so the board can make a different decision.

James thanks Doug Lectka and Larry Watson for their service to RCT.

Adjournment:

Motion by James, seconded by Greenfield to adjourn at 8:35pm, all ayes. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Nickie Haight, Recording Secretary