

Sharon Township Board Meeting Minutes

APPROVED

April 4, 2013

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: The Sharon Township Board held its regular board meeting on Thursday, April 4, 2013. Supervisor Psarouthakis called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. There were 9 public attendees.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The pledge of allegiance was said.

ROLL CALL: Mikel, Psarouthakis, Hopkins: PRESENT. Farmer, Simons: ABSENT.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Psarouthakis added dog ordinance to New Business.

Motion by Mikel to approve the amended agenda as presented, supported by Hopkins. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE March 7, 2013 MINUTES:

Motion by Mikel to approve March 7, 2013 minutes as presented, supported by Psarouthakis. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: A question was asked about the formula the county Road Commission uses to determine how much money gets allocated, he asked supervisor Psarouthakis to inquire with the county. A question was also asked about the previous drought and dry conditions and concerns about the water table levels in the township and preventative measures being taken. Discussion took place. Discussion also took place about the upcoming fire run millage. A question was asked about the status of the front porch replacement, Psarouthakis said the board continues to look into grants and funding options.

SUPERVISORS REPORT: Psarouthakis discussed working with police issues in the township (which he said would discuss further in New Business), that there have been a lot of fire runs lately and that he now gets direct notifications. He said he is continuing to work on the internet issue.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Simons was absent but had his financial report and copies ready for the board and public.

Motion by Mikel to approve the Financial Report, supported by Hopkins. Motion carried.

ZONING REPORT: Administrator Wilson reported no new compliances, one property line transfer and one sign permit.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT: PC Chair Lewis reported that they are currently looking into various ordinance changes.

MINERAL LICENSE BOARD REPORT: No report.

CHELSEA AREA CONSTRUCTION AGENCY REPORT: Hopkins stated there was no new news to report.

SOUTHWEST WASHTENAW COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS: Psarouthakis attended the meeting with Bill Lewis. They stated that the meeting tied in with “New Business topic Police Services” and that at the meeting discussion came up about surrounding townships who contract for police services being upset that their Sheriff is being sent to “non-contracted” township calls, which includes Sharon. Psarouthakis added that the Sheriff department, Lodi and the village of Manchester are all on board with the idea of possibly billing other townships- Psarouthakis is looking into the legal aspects of this.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS: The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) had no meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. **Fire and Emergency Services Millage-** Election is May 7th. The election is a school election as well with a Chelsea Schools proposal and Grass Lake Schools proposal.

Clerk Mikel mentioned needing election workers.

Psarouthakis thanked local clerks from Ann Arbor and Grass Lake for helping train Mikel on their own time and being so helpful.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **Police Services-** covered earlier in meeting.
- b. **Presentation on Municipal Civil Infractions-** Presentation given by Hopkins: Hopkins stated that our current standing with enforcing compliance with our ordinances is circuit and criminal court.

A municipal civil infraction ordinance would give the township the ability to issue non-compliance tickets rather than take a resident to court. Hopkins noted that the township would NOT be able to issue traffic tickets as it is not a police service, it is an ordinance enforcement program.

Hopkins stated that there were many positives to adopting a municipal civil infraction ordinance, including but not limited to: the defendant not getting a criminal record, it is less expensive for the township because there is less interaction with the township lawyer, the burden of proof is lower, proceedings are faster, remedies are broader, fines collected get deposited to the “township general fund”, and it helps avoid jury trials.

Hopkins stated that the negative aspects of the ordinance are that not all district courts fully understand the ordinance and that some defendants may not take a civil infraction ticket as seriously as a criminal offense.

Psarouthakis asked why this idea of looking into a civil infraction ordinance came up and Hopkins stated that its modernization, will reduce the amount of time and money it takes to deal with ordinance non-compliance issues, and that the need came from needing to go to

criminal court to handle situations that that it seemed in the past the township didn't want to spend the money on a lawyer.

Psarouthakis reiterated that this a non-compliance issue and that the township is NOT trying to be the police.

Mikel asked about costs involved. Hopkins said that there are plenty of model ordinances to follow and the only cost he would foresee would be sending the townships draft to the township attorney for final review.

Hopkins said that this is just the start of discussing the idea of Municipal Civil Infraction ordinance and that the board is just trying to be transparent with the residents about upcoming ideas.

- c. **Dog Barking Ordinance-** Zoning administrator Dave Wilson and township resident Cynthia Avery (retired police officer) gave presentation. Wilson stated that issues have arose with our nuisance ordinance and that the Police have said "it is not worth anything" and "unenforceable." Seeing that the issues have not gone away, Wilson said he and Avery have been working on a Dog Barking ordinance that would use civil infractions as enforcement. This would require a "procedures ordinance" that would outline steps and how to enforce, i.e. the number or notices a resident would have to get, time frames, etc. An "ordinance violations bureau" could be created to collect money (which allows all money collected to go to the township). Wilson mentioned that the County is looking into adopting a civil infractions ordinance as well. Cynthia Avery state that they are not "reinventing the wheel" but "we are taking templates from other areas" and making them work and fit for the township.

APPROVE BILLS: Mikel presented Clerks Warrant Report with the addition of a "Tax" bill that had come in the mail that day after she printed the report.

Motion by Hopkins to approve the bills, Supported by Psarouthakis. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: It was suggested the township consider a one man law enforcement. A question was asked about and "EFT" payment date on the clerks report. It was brought up that AnnArbor.com had an article about oil exploration in Saline and it was asked if the board had heard anything about this taking place in Sharon- the board had not heard anything. It was suggested have a "volunteer day" to clean up the cemeteries before lawn mowing began- Psarouthakis, Hopkins, and former trustee Spiegel are working together on this. It was mentioned that lawn mowing bids are currently being accepted and will be presented at the next meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:16 p.m.

Chelsea Mikel

Sharon Township Clerk