

REGULAR MEETING
Sherman Township Board
June 10, 2021

Supervisor Middlemis-Brown called the regular meeting of the Sherman Township Board to order on Thursday, June 10, 2021 at 6:30 PM in the Sherman Township Office. Other Board members attending were Treasurer Marilyn Kastelic, Clerk JT Reno, Trustee Frank Kastelic and Trustee Deneen Connell. There were also 6 community members in attendance. Trustee Connell made a motion to approve the agenda, the Treasurer seconded. An update from the Park Committee, purchase and install of a fire danger sign, recommendations from the water/sewer advisory committee, and formally appointing members to the w/s advisory committee were added to the agenda. All votes were “ayes.”

There was a public comment concerning board members being voting members of the water/sewer advisory committee and that community members had agreed to be appointed to the committee.

The minutes from the May 13, 2021 regular meeting were presented. Trustee Connell made a motion to approve the minutes, the Treasurer seconded. There were no comments or additions, and all votes to approve were "ayes." The Clerk made a motion to approve and discuss expenditures and Trustee Connell seconded. The Clerk stated that the power bills and a payment from the Fire Dept to Bekkala's for repair of a fire truck were added. Insurance payments from water, sewer, and the general fund were also added. All votes to approve the expenditures were “ayes.”

There was a motion made by the Supervisor to hire Kenneth Bennetts as the grounds and maintenance employee, Trustee Connell seconded, and all votes were “ayes.” It was pointed out that K. Bennetts has been mowing the grass since the first of June.

A policy for purchases by board members without prior approval was discussed. It was decided that if the expenditure is necessary within 18 hours, the amount of time needed for a special meeting of the Board, it would be considered an emergency. There will be a limit of \$1,500 put on expenditures without Board approval that are non-emergencies. A draft will be presented at the next Board meeting for the policy.

The water and sewer advisory committee recommended not expanding the district and pursuing an engineering study to determine capacity for the system. The Supervisor made a motion on expansion of the water/sewer district, Trustee Kastelic seconded. There was clarification on redistricting if future assessments were needed. The Supervisor stated “the new users added into the district would be part of the new assessment.” The Clerk conducted a roll call vote and all board members voted “nay” for expansion at this time.

The Clerk contacted MTA about a Memorandum of Understanding and was told that they recommended having an expanded lease agreement for a township of our size. It was stated an expanded lease agreement would better protect the township from any kind of legal issues that may arise from other groups attempting usage of the Hall. The agreement could include a monetary amount that the Auxiliary would donate to the Township in exchange for usage. The Supervisor made a motion for further discussion and the Clerk seconded. The Treasurer asked whether the current use agreement would cover the Township, The Supervisor stated that the current Hall usage agreement didn't cover overwinter storage of Auxiliary items. Trustee Connell asked if the agreement could include the possibility of clearing out an area if other residents wanted to use the Hall during the period of the lease. Trustee Kastelic stated that he didn't see the need for any formal agreement, that we had never had a formal agreement before, and that it was a Board decision who could use the Hall. Trustee Connell commented that the Township could potentially be sued by another organization if they were denied usage. The Clerk stated that MTA had told him about another township that had a lawsuit brought against them over “discriminatory practices” and the MTA suggested an expanded lease agreement in that case as well. Trustee Kastelic stated that the Township had never been sued before and thought that having an agreement would increase the chances of being sued. The

Treasurer was concerned about how the Auxiliary members would feel about a monetary amount being a requirement of a lease agreement. Trustee Kastelic stated that some kind of agreement should have been in place years ago, the Board agreed. The Supervisor stated that the Auxiliary had shown concern over not having a formal agreement in place. It was discussed that the last auxiliary had disbanded because of overwinter storage issues, sales tax concerns, and the group's nonprofit status. There was a roll call vote on drafting a long term lease agreement. The Supervisor, Clerk, and Trustee Connell voted "aye." Trustee Kastelic and the Treasurer voted "nay." The Supervisor agreed to write up the draft agreement and it would be presented after it was developed.

The issue of water and sewer fees was presented next. The Supervisor stated that it was his understanding that it was illegal for a user to receive free water/sewer from the township. It was discussed that the contract with the Historical Society for the Schoolhouse included free water, sewer, and garbage collection. \$10,000 from the sale of the Schoolhouse went to the original park fund that was used to build the pavilion. The Clerk proposed that the general fund pay the fees for the Schoolhouse, but the Supervisor stated that the Township can't pay fees for private entities. Water and sewer usage of the Gay Bar was brought up multiple times and the water/sewer advisory committee was tasked with reevaluating the rate they are charged. It was discussed whether a portion of the \$10,000 from the sale should go to the water/sewer fund for fees. It was suggested to contact a lawyer about what avenues the township could pursue for the water and sewer fees.

A. Schmidt presented the recommendations from the Park Planning Committee. They recommended purchasing playground equipment from WillyGoat Toys and Playgrounds. A list of equipment is included with the minutes. The park representative stated that a slide and full sized playset were outside of the current price range for the Township. Trustee Kastelic asked how many kids were in town and it was estimated that about 20 kids currently lived in town. The equipment would be installed by township residents in the park around the pavilion. Trustee Kastelic asked whether or not it would increase the insurance liability for the township and the Supervisor stated that it would not increase liability. It was recommended by the Township's insurance company to have a licensed contractor overseeing installation, but it wasn't necessary. It was stated by the Clerk that installing this equipment would hopefully help entice people to move to the Township. The Supervisor made a motion on authorizing the committee to spend a maximum of \$6,500 on the equipment that they had recommended, Trustee Connell seconded, all votes were "ayes."

A proposal came from the Fire Department to purchase a fire danger level sign with PA 48 funds. The sign would be installed on the roadside next to the Fire Hall and be changed by a member of the Fire Department. The Supervisor made a motion to purchase the sign, the Clerk seconded, and all votes were "ayes."

There was a motion by Trustee Kastelic to officially form the water/sewer committee with E. Smith, R. Dukart, B. Spehar, and D. Martin as voting members. Trustee Connell seconded. It was suggested that the water and sewer plant operators attend the meeting and Trustee Connell agreed to be the Board liaison. All votes were "ayes."

The Supervisor made a motion to officially form the Park and Recreation Committee and the Clerk seconded. The voting members would be A. Schmidt, K. Jarvi, and S. Middlemis-Brown. J. Reno would be the Board liaison. All votes were "ayes."

The Supervisor made a motion to rent 2 portable toilets for July 3 activities, the Treasurer seconded, and all votes were "ayes."

The Clerk made a motion to adjourn at 8:47 PM, the Supervisor seconded.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on July 8, 2021 at 6:30 PM in the Township Office.

