

Town of Almena

Minutes – Regular Monthly Town Board Meeting **October 10th, 2023**

1-The meeting was called to order by Town Chair Ken Scheps at 5:57pm. Board members in attendance were Chair Ken Scheps, Supervisors Harland Becker and Ed Miller, Treasurer Hoyt Rose, Shop Employee Gary Kreckler, and Clerk Kristen Moen. Also in attendance was Keith Kahl.

2-The Clerk states when and where the Notice and Agenda for the meeting was posted. Clerk also discussed other possible options for placement within village as gas station doesn't have a board currently.

3-The Clerk presented via email and meeting the monthly meeting minutes for September 12th, 2023. Chair Ken Scheps made motion to approve minutes with change from districts 1&2 to correction of 2&3. Supervisor Harland 2nd the motion, All in favor, Motion carried.

4-The Treasurer report for September was given by Treasurer Hoyt Rose. Supervisory Ed Miller made a motion to approve Treasurer's report as presented, Harland Becker seconded this, all in favor, motion carried. Clerk presented working capital and budget with no questions from the board. Hoyt discussed moving COVID funds of \$30,000 to be used in November and to pay off loan in October and start new loan this year of around \$90,000 and after we know the fire budget expense. Board discussed and approved to pay off loan, move COVID funds and to start a new loan. They also discussed where budget spending will occur with loan, budget, and road construction.

5-Chair Ken opened public portion and Clerk shared official population is 892. Ken shared the dead end of 2 ½ is not a township road but it will get plowed by either Russ or Mike this winter as a concern was brought up by a person living on that road. Board stated they will not blacktop it as it isn't ours. They also will be plowing a road by loon lake on the east side. All other possible roads were discussed. Board agreed that they need to go over the road map again. Ken shared 40' by Jim Arnold's on Horseshoe that needs to be plowed and they discussed that Ken should reach out to state if we can take it back as ours. Board discussed a culvert between Horseshoe and Echo that needs to be replaced and curious if it was County or Town's and Gary stated that Lori is already going through paperwork for this to get it going for early spring. Liverseed continues to reach out to board members about his turn around and the neighbor keeping stuff to close for him to back his camper. Ken talked to that neighbor and he does that to prevent people from going down and parking/turning around at the property. Public portion closed at 6:25pm.

6-Board discussed the boat landing confirmation email that Hoyt forwarded stating that work will begin by the county on Lower Boat landing on October 23rd. Board then discussed how the county is just putting rose stone on uppers boat landing and questioned why we didn't do this but now we have the engineering involved and funding for the project.

7-Board opened discussion about the Xcel energy pole placement on West side of 6th street going north out of town. Ashley met with Gary when there was just flags and he stated that it didn't look right but didn't approve it as it was in the bottom of the ditch in our right of way. Ken called Ashley on Friday the 15th about this and she stated that she couldn't do anything about it. Larry for xcel called him the following Monday poles were in but no lines and stated that they were going to keep going and we can deal with it later. Ken called towns association lawyer and he stated Statue 86.16 that they cannot put them there without our approval and Ken told Larry he needs to come to the board to get approval for this which they didn't do. Micheal's was there to put up line and they even agreed with Ken that it didn't look correct but they put them up anyway as they were advised to do so. Lawyer said it isn't correct and gave ken another lawyer from Madison that we could use to pursue this further. Ken reached out to the Barron County Sheriff and he didn't think their was anything they could do to stop or issues fines. Ken called Larry and stated that they needed a meeting ASAP and they met at 3pm on 9/25/23. (may ask for notes and email chain for more information) Larry then pulled out an old permit from his truck from 1937 (ask to see) and said we have the right away but it wasn't signed by the clerk. Board returned to town hall to finish meeting and called Laura at Towns Association and she said to get the ball rolling a fine needs to be issued despite it only being \$50. Ken called Fitzgerald and Jeff French along with Mike Hwy Commissioner on Thursday. Chris came back Tuesday and stated that they in fact cannot do this. They will all

assist us in writing a letter to get the ball rolling to get the project to stop. In the mean time xcel is going to have it surveyed but Gary is to Onex it so that we are prepared with answers.

8- During road maintenance and equipment update clerk shared email from Rick Phillips at 271 14 3/4th street about filling gravel in where driveway meets new blacktop. Clerk to respond it will be about 3 weeks per the town allowing the blacktop to setup.

Gary to replace fire number post for a resident that had sewer guy run over it and his telephone box. Discussed snowplowing calls and that everyone has been redirecting them to the two plowers. All ditches are mowed and 1 more day and Gary will be done. Just waiting for corn to come off and he will finish up in areas as able. Did get a call from Sonny that he found 1 of 2 stop signs that were removed and needed to be replaced. Gary reported a universal joint broke on mower wing but he fixed it and can see this being a spot that needs to be watched.

Ken discussed and shared the Mark Servi Contract (ask for paperwork) with M&L Management Consultation LLC Master Service contract. Chair Ken made motion to approve this contract with M&L Management Consultation LLC for one year and it renews yearly unless we want to end it. Harland seconded this, all in favor, motion carried. Clerk to send back to Mark.

Board discussed TRIP road possibilities in the township and what roads would be appropriate for this program. Agreed on resurfacing $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from where we already fixed the road up the hill on $\frac{3}{4}$ - 1st st. Extended plan would be 5th street if needed and can be changed. Harland also shared a new grant that was discussed in the Towns Association Magazine about Ag roads in the 2&3 district to help make roads more durable.

9- Board audited and approved vouchers 9695-9705. Chair Ken made motion to approve vouchers, Supervisor Harland seconds this motion, all in favor, motion carried. Board discussed Dan Stoffel questioned when board was having meeting and that Clerk will reach out to let him know when meetings are as he travels south in the winter.

10- Board sets next regular monthly town meeting for Tuesday November 14th at 6pm and will also do Budget Approval Meeting. Town Budget Review Meeting Scheduled for October 30th at 6pm.

11-Chair Ken made motion to adjourn, Harland 2nds this motion, all in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:46pm.

Respectfully submitted – Kristen Moen, Clerk