**ORLEANS TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING**

**April 23, 2024**

**Orleans Township Hall**

**Call to Order:**           Supervisor Colwell called the meeting to order at 7:00PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a short prayer.

**Members present:**    Al Almy, Bob Terrill, Barb Colwell, Melissa Harper and Clare Colwell

**Set/Amend Agenda:**

The following item was added to New Business:

    Item A: Election Inspector Appointments

Motion by Almy, supported by Terrill, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

**Consent Agenda:**

The consent agenda contained the March 26, 2024, minutes as well as the Township’s balance sheet, P&L’s and a disbursement ledger for the general and sewer funds for March. Motion by Harper, supported by B. Colwell, to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**Reports**

A. **Police** – A written report was submitted by Sherriff’s Deputy Mike Richards, showing a total of 30 responses for the month of March 2024. A copy of the report is on file in the Orleans Township Clerk’s Office.

B. **Fire Department** – Chief Ron Hill stated that there were 19 runs in March 2024. The report is on file in the Orleans Township Clerk’s Office.

C**.        Assessor Report** – Dean Kohagen reported in the next couple weeks approximately 20 % of Township properties will be assessed.

D. **County Commissioner** – No report

E. **Long Lake Improvement Board** – No report

F. **Roads** – No report

G.        **Permit Officer** – Almy presented the Board with a Permit Activity Report and discussed it in detail. Four permits were issued for the month of March. A copy of this report is on file in the Orleans Township Clerk’s Office.

H. **Treasurer/Sewer**- Treasurer Colwell informed the board that the 2023 winter and summer taxes have been reconciled with the Ionia County Treasurer’s office.

I. **Cemetery** – Clerk Harper informed the board the small flags have been ordered and garbage pickup has been started for the 2024 season.

J.         **Building Authority** –No report

**New Business**

A.     **Election Inspector Appointment –** Harper submitted a list of proposed election inspectors for the upcoming election. Motion by B. Colwell, supported by Almy, to approve the elections inspector’s appointments.

**Old Business**

A. **Discussion Regarding Options to Fund Fire Department Expenses –** As directed at last month’s meeting, Supervisor Colwell made inquiries from our legal counsel and other Townships as to additional funding options that could support growing fire department expenses.  Essentially, two options are available to the Township:

1.  A millage to be applied to all assessed properties in the Township. Has to be approved by a vote of the Township and ballot language must be submitted to the Ionia County Treasurer no later than 82 days prior to the election.  Once implemented, funds raised by the millage can be used for any Township expense.  Would require legal counsel to handle some issues and would require a public relations campaign by the Township to inform the voters as to its purpose.

2.  A “Fire Service” Special Assessment – Does not require a ballot vote unless 10% of the landowners in the special assessment district object. We can assess a millage on the assessed value of the properties or a flat fee. Any funds raised from the special assessment must be used for the assessment’s purpose i.e., fire department.

Colwell indicated he would be attending the Berlin Township meeting on May 7.  Berlin has a special assessment for fire services and he will discuss it with their Supervisor.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:47 PM.

The next Orleans Township Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 28, 2024, at 7:00PM

 Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Melissa Harper

Orleans Township Clerk