

Argentine Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes of September 28, 2020

Call to Order @ 7:00 p.m. This meeting was also held on Zoom.

Supervisor Saad led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Conner, present, Schmidt, present, Graves, present, Hallman, present and Saad, present.

Motion, Saad, seconded by Schmidt to approve the minutes of the August 31, 2020 Regular Board Meeting. Motion passed.

Correspondence is available to view.

There were no budget amendments.

Motion, Saad seconded by Conner to approve payment of expenditures as presented in the board package. Motion passed.

Public comment: Eagle Scout candidate Sean Miller talked about his project to place trash can receptacles on the Laff Pathway.

Police Department- A written report was submitted. Chief Allen said that Becky Nemecheck has applied for the "Aftermath" grant which directs funds from the grant to the Police K-9 programs. Aftermath is a company that addresses hazardous material clean up and removal. This highly competitive grant has a potential reward of \$5,000.

The department conducted firearms training. The shoot was a tactical training session. The August firearms training were for the annual state qualification.

Linden Pay it Forward, a non-profit organization, has appointed Becky Nemecheck to a seat on the board of directors. They also presented her with a Certificate of Appreciation for her service to the communities of Argentine and Linden. The consideration is based on volunteerism and inspiring others to serve, and the active promotion of ways to improve our community.

Reports: Fire Department- A written report was submitted. Chief Kurtz said the "Firefighter only" parking signs will be installed in the coming days.

The annual open house has been cancelled due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Letters of intent have been sent to Terry Balewski and Trevor Riddle. Neither firefighter has been responding to calls or attending training.

Chief Kurtz would like to create 2 Sergeant positions. This would provide at least 1 officer on nearly every call, as well as assisting with the day to day work load within the department and vehicle maintenance will be completed within a more reasonable time frame.

Rescue #18 had to have extensive repairs to the air braking system. The repair has been completed and is back in service.

Estimates for replacement of the generator are incomplete at this time.

There is not any news to report on Engine # 11. I will keep the Board informed on this.

We had an incident where a chainsaw was removed from the Fire Hall without permission and was returned damaged. With extra keys to the building still out there, Fenton Lock and Key will rekey the old doors until the new doors arrive. When the new doors are installed, they will have new locks installed on them.

Extraction training is being conducted.

We had a new applicant who will be scheduled for an interview soon.

Chief Kurtz asked about getting a surveillance camera for the Fire Department. Trustee Conner said this is being rolled out as we change out the cameras. We can easily add cameras and tie them into our system.

Chief Kurtz said Graves had mentioned the need for more sophisticated (electronic) locks that could be easily changed.

Attorney Lattie suggested that the Board hold off on the decision regarding the 2 firefighters until next month.

Saad said the pay of the officer positions will be decided at a later date. The decision today is to allow for the creation of the positions within the department.

Motion by Saad, seconded by Graves to allow for 2 officer positions of Sergeant to be created in the Fire Department.

Discussion: This is for accountability and to have an officer on scene for most calls. Roll call: Schmidt, yes, Hallman, yes, Graves, yes, Saad, yes and Conner, yes. Motion passed.

Schmidt asked if Chief Kurtz would research alternative repair facilities to the one in St. Johns, Michigan.

Building Department- Saad reported that 17 permits were issued that total \$9,111.

The Planning Commission –The Planning Commission did not have a meeting. The updated master plan will be discussed at a meeting on October 8th.

Attorney: David Lattie had nothing to discuss.

New Business: Consulting Contract with Fire Department:

Moved by Saad, seconded by Hallman to accept the terms of a contract for up to 20 hours @ \$100.00 per hour with Tom Wickham for Fire Department consulting.

Roll call; Schmidt, yes, Conner, yes, Hallman, yes, Graves, yes and Saad, yes. Motion passed.

2020/2021 Snow Removal Contract:

Moved by Saad, seconded by Hallman to accept the terms and sign the 2020-2021 snow plowing agreement with Royalty Services for the Township Hall and Fire Department.

Discussion: Schmidt noted that we do not want salt used on the sidewalk. We want them to use De-Icer.

Roll call: Saad, yes, Schmidt, yes, Hallman, yes, Graves, yes and Conner, yes. Motion passed.

2020/2021 Snow Removal Contract:

Moved by Saad, seconded by Hallman to accept the terms and sign the 2020-2021 snow plowing agreement with Royalty Services for the Police Department. Roll call: Schmidt, yes, Hallman, yes, Saad, yes, Graves, yes, and Conner, yes. Motion passed.

Royalty Services Agreement for Tree Cutting Behind Fire Hall:

Royalty has quoted this service @\$2,600.

Motion Graves, seconded by Hallman to accept quote # 1980 from Royalty Services for shrub & oak tree cutting closest to the deck using a bucket truck. This service includes trimming of shrubs around the south east side of the fire department. Roll call: Schmidt, yes, Conner, yes, Hallman, yes, Saad, yes and Graves yes. Motion passed.

Royalty Services Agreement for Hill Side Cutting:

Royalty has quoted this service @ \$\$2,100.

Motion Saad, seconded by Hallman to accept quote # 1981 from Royalty Services for brush cutting on the east side parking lot/ dam embankment. Roll call: Conner, yes, Hallman, yes, Saad, yes, Graves yes, and Schmidt, yes. Motion passed.

Public comment: None.

Business from Board Members:

Schmidt- We need to talk about maintenance on the pathway. The bond has been redone for Pineview Lake Dr. This saved over \$16,000. in interest payments and reduced 1 to 1.5 years off the scheduled time to repay.

Chief Allen was asked when we expect the new vehicle to be available to us. Chief Allen said mid to late October. Schmidt said we plan to swap out the 2015 and sell the 2010.

Schmidt asked about printers and cameras for the cars. Chief Allen said we are waiting on a grant. Schmidt asked about a bill from Panasonic for \$7,293. Chief Allen said we are waiting on a grant for this.

Hallman- The pathway looks good. The Master Plan needs to be updated to include an ordinance about no motor vehicles allowed on the pathway. I have seen golf carts on there. Hallman thanked the Police and Fire Departments for their response to a recent fire.

Graves- We have received a \$9,000 grant for First Responder Hazard Pay Premium. Thank you to Becky Nemecheck for applying for this grant on behalf of the Police Department. We also received a grant in the amount of \$4,242.00 for Public Safety and Public Health payroll reimbursement program. This was for the payroll expenses of April and May. Thank you to Leslie Renckly for applying for this grant on behalf of the Fire Department.

I have applied for and been told that we have qualified and will receive a \$ 5, 000. Grant to use for additional expenses for the election. This can be used for hazard premium pay for election help. I have already had extra staffing to keep up with the extra absentee ballot requests.

I move that we approve a November 2020 hazard premium to be paid for all election workers in the amount of \$2.00 per hour. Roll call: Schmidt, yes, Conner, yes, Hallman, yes, Saad, yes and Graves, yes. Motion passed.

Saad- Clerk Graves, Jane and Leslie have worked very hard getting the ballots out.

We need to have a discussion on the pathway soon. I want to thank the City of Linden and Trustee Hallman for their help with the pathway construction issues. We were able to resolve issues that arose. Also, I want to thank Josh from Fleis & Vandenbrink and Mark from Erie

Construction for taking care of issues with the pathway. These two were easy to communicate with.

Conner- The pathway culmination is finally here. Mrs. Ciesielski and Trustee Hallman did an excellent job.

Asked about signage on pathway for no motor vehicles and how this will be enforced.

Old Business:

Linden Community Schools Resource Officer Agreement:

Moved by Saad, seconded by Schmidt to accept the terms and sign the agreement as written. Roll call: Hallman, yes, Schmidt, yes, Graves, yes, Saad, yes, and Conner, yes, Motion passed.

Veteran Preference Hearing:

Saad opened the hearing @ 7:53 p.m.

The meeting was conducted on Zoom. Pursuant to state law, a veteran is entitled to a Veteran Preference Hearing when their employment is terminated. The Board can ask questions and reverse their decision if they so desire. The township has the burden of proof. David Lattie represented the township. All Board Members were present on Zoom. Ms. Julie Gafkay represented John Cross via Zoom.

Interim Fire Chief Kurtz, Asst. Chief Hatton, Supervisor Saad, Rick Brown a friend of Mr. Cross, John Cross and former Chief Lafferty testified. The purpose was to decide if the termination decision was warranted

The board listened to the testimony of all witnesses. Each side had their attorney have a chance to cross examine the witnesses. Ms. Gafkay gave a closing statement as did Mr. Lattie.

Board members had an opportunity to ask questions.

The hearing was closed @ 9:33 p.m.

Moved by Saad, seconded by Schmidt to uphold the employment termination decision for John Cross. Roll call: Graves, yes, Saad, yes, Hallman, yes, Schmidt, yes and Conner, yes. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Adjournment at 9:36 p.m.

Denise Graves, Clerk

Brian Saad, Supervisor