

**ONOTA TOWNSHIP BOARD**  
**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING**  
January 8, 2024

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm.

Present: Terry Pihlainen, Supervisor                      Brian Bresette, Trustee  
                 Cheryl Lane, Treasurer                              Tina Watkeys, Clerk

**II. AGENDA**

A motion was made to accept the agenda as presented.

Motion: Brian Bresette  
Support: Terry Pihlainen  
Motion carried.

**III. MINUTES**

A motion was made to accept the minutes as presented.

Motion: Cheryl Lane  
Support: Brian Bresette  
Motion carried.

**IV. CORRESPONDENCE**

Five letters of interest were received for the vacant Board Trustee position. All letters were read aloud at the meeting. Trustee Bresette notified the board that one of the candidates provided a recission letter but would like the board to keep her Letter of Interest on file for potential future consideration. All letters are available for review and will be kept on file at the township.

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

Appointment of Board Trustee

Supervisor Pihlainen prepared a statement regarding the appointment and nomination of board trustees. He cited "Authorizing Statutes for boards and commissions, give the Township Supervisor the exclusive right to select members who will serve. The full township board then confirms the selection. Planning Commissions (MCL125.3815(1) and Downtown Development Authorities (MCL125.1654) fall into this category among other positions. The township board can appoint anyone who is eligible to hold elective office, basically any person who has been registered to vote and a resident of the township for at least 30 days. The board is not required to advertise the vacancy or solicit resumes. The township board does not consider a slate of candidates- instead, the first person nominated who receives a second and a majority vote of the board members present and voting is the appointee. As always, the vote to appoint must be a voice vote, not a paper or secret ballot."

Supervisor Pihlainen also noted a concern for the number of interested candidates for Board Trustee position and no interest shown so far for the Planning Commission vacant position that has been available for an extended period of time.

Supervisor Pihlainen made a motion to nominate Jennifer Hough for the vacant Board Trustee position.

Motion: Terry Pihlainen  
Support: Brian Bresette  
Motion Carried

Roll Call Vote  
Ayes: Cheryl Lane  
Brian Bresette  
Terry Pihlainen  
Tina Watkeys

#### **V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Received by: Gloria Rinne commented she didn't think anyone knew about the vacant Planning Commission position because it wasn't on the website. She was informed by the board that it was in fact posted on the website and has been since the vacancy opened. She also requested it be noted that she didn't feel the appointment of the Board Trustee was fair.

#### **VI. BOARD CONCERNS**

Trustee Bresette announced concern for Treasurer Lane had to shovel the porch for the special meeting and the parking lot was not plowed due to the health issue of Township Groundkeeper Lane. It was decided Supervisor Pihlainen would check on Groundkeeper Lane and confirm if he is able to maintain his duties or needs a replacement.

Treasurer Lane questioned if there was a potential conflict of the newly appointed Trustee to also be the Township Custodian simultaneously. Supervisor Pihlainen advised there was no conflict. This is allowable under the same guidelines where former clerk Kimar, held both the clerk position as well as fire chief. Additionally, Ms. Hough's second position with the township is non-administrative.

#### **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:23 pm.

Motion: Brian Bresette  
Support: Terry Pihlainen  
Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Tina Watkeys, Clerk  
Proposed: 1-08-2024  
Approved: pending board approval