TORCH LAKE TOWNSHIP

ANTRIM COUNTY, MICHIGAN

APPROVED MINUTES OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING WITH CHANGES 5-0

JULY 13, 2020

COMMUNITY SERVICES BUILDING

TORCH LAKE TOWNSHIP

Present: Martel, Schultz, Petersen, Cook and Windiate

Absent: None

Audience: 8

THE PURPOSE OF THIS SPECIAL MEETING IS TO DISCUSS AGENDA ITEMS ONLY. OTHER ISSUES WHICH WOULD NORMALLY COME BEFORE A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD WILL ONLY BE DISCUSSED IF THE FULL BOARD IS PRESENT AND THERE IS A NEED FOR URGENCY.

1. Meeting convened at 6:00 PM followed by the pledge to the flag. From the audience, Ginny Hawkins asked if it would now be required to wear masks at the Day Park due to the Governor’s new directive? It would be recommended BUT difficult to enforce.
2. Changes to the Agenda: **Motion** by Cook to approve the additions to the Agenda was seconded and passed 5-0. After discussion, the **Motion** by Cook to rescind his motion was seconded and passed 5-0.
3. Recommendation to hire Stephanie Orshel for Day Park Attendant: After brief discussion of MS Orshel’ s qualifications, the **Motion** by Schultz to approve the recommendation to hire MS Orshel, pending standard background checks, etc. was seconded and passed 5-0.
4. Recommendation to hire EMT Zachary Strine: After discussion of the interview panel results, the **Motion** by Petersen to hire Mr. Strine as EMT Basic was seconded and passed 5-0, pending standard background checks, etc.
5. Zoning Violation Complaint-Deb Graber. After an introduction of the event by Martel, MS Schultz began the discussion by referencing the email received from Jeffrey Nordlund addressed to the Board, dated July 3, 2020, outlining his contact with the Zoning Administrator, Deb Graber. MS Schultz is disturbed, after reading the email and Mr. Nordlund’ s complaint of the lack of professionalism of MS Graber. She feels the Board needs to take a closer look at this incident. Martel asked if MS Schultz had talked to MS Graber about the incident and she stated no, but she had spoken with other sources, including the Fire Chief and also received a memo from Fire Fighter Mike Velding. Martel also contacted Mr. Nordlund by email.without the Board’s prior knowledge. Martel’s concern is that this is very one-sided, he said, she said, and no one else was there. Mr. Cook added that MS Schultz contacted Mr. Nordlund by phone without Board prior knowledge.

MS Graber had an opportunity to explain the events from her perspective. Complaints came to her from some of the neighbors, and that as far as she knew, Mr. Nordlund was trespassing on private property with no permission from the owner, had a campfire that was left unattended, vehicles without plates, and he refused to leave after her explanation of the zoning ordinance rules. The question was asked whether we need a more thorough investigation and what action if any did we wish to take against MS Graber. It is not appropriate to jump to a conclusion if we weren’t there. The **Motion** by Schultz that in regards to a letter addressed to all Board members, dated July 3, 2020 from Mr. Jeffrey Nordlund, address of 9091 68th St SE, Alto, Michigan, that we further investigate the allegations against our Zoning Administrator, Deb Graber. The Motion dies for lack of a second. Schultz asks that her July 14, 2020 letter be added as an appendix. Mr. Martel requests his email to be attached as well. Mr. Cook would also like his statement to be added to the minutes which he will send to the Board prior to the minutes being published.

For the future, the Board needs to tighten up what is expected of our employees and to look for procedures to help prevent he said she said, and also for their own safety. From the audience, Dave Barr commented that MS Graber is the Zoning Administrator, not a cop and not having an Ordinance Enforcement Officer is the Board’s fault. Marina Friend commented that when we do our policies, we need to be clearer when you are serving in a dual role.

1. Zoning Revision-Ag Zone Cook/Petersen: A committee made up of Bill Petersen, Bob Cook, Deb Graber and Dave Barr was formed to look into revisions to Chapter II General Provisions of the Zoning Ordinance in regard to Mobile Homes on farm land for use as housing for temporary fam workers of the owner. Language has been created and will be presented at the Planning Commission meeting on July 14, 2020. The **Motion** by Martel to approve as written the revisions to Chapter II General Provisions of the Zoning Ordinance and to move it on to the Planning Commission was seconded and passed 5-0.
2. CSB Building Covid Safety Regulations: The Board was asked if we needed to do anything further regarding Covid safety but everyone seemed comfortable with the steps we have in place.
3. Public Comment: Tom Stillings noted that it is a disservice to the Public to have so many Special Meetings. There is nothing tonight that couldn’t have waited until a regular meeting.
4. Board Comment: None. With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:15PM.

These Minutes are respectfully submitted and are subject to approval at the next regularly scheduled Meeting.

Kathy S. Windiate

Township Clerk.