

**HALFMOON TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION BOARD
REGULAR MEETING-MINUTES
NOVEMBER 4, 2020**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Lorin Nauman (present at the Community Center) called the meeting to order at 7:03pm. Other members present were Christine Bracken-Piper (present at the Community Center), Patti Hartle (present at the Community Center), Reed Moyer (present by Zoom) and Ron Hoover (present by Zoom). Staff present was Denise Gembusia (present at the Community Center), Township Manager, Amy Smith (present by Zoom), OSPB Administrator, and Rebekah Laird (present by Zoom), Recording Secretary.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

There were no citizen's comments.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Moyer requested a correction be made that he attended the meeting by Zoom and not at the Community Center.

- ***MOTION: Ms. Hartle moved to approve the meeting minutes of October 7, 2020 with that correction; Mr. Moyer seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion carried.***

5. EVALUATION OF OPEN SPACE PROGRAM, INCLUDING OBJECTIVES AND EFFECTIVENESS

Ms. Gembusia reviewed the questions that the OSPB were to consider for discussion:

What were the original goals of the program when it started?

Mr. Nauman asked if Mr. Hoover could possibly speak to the original goals of the program as he had been a part of the board almost since the beginning of the program. Mr. Hoover stated that there was not a true goal in the number of acres that would have deemed the program a success. Mr. Hoover further stated that as the program has evolved and grown over the years there was never really any discussion of a quantitative number for a goal, more just the thought that the more land that was preserved the better. Ms. Bracken-Piper stated that part of the goal was simply to preserve the rural aspects of the township. Ms. Gembusia summarized that from what she is hearing, the goal seems to have been simply to protect the rural character of the township.

Have those goals been met? If not, what goal(s) can still be achieved that have not?

Ms. Gembusia questioned that if the goals have not been met what can be done to develop realistic goals. Ms. Gembusia suggested possibly quantifying the amount of land the OSPB would want preserved for the program to be considered a success. Ms. Gembusia commented that at some point there will be a time that the program would not be able to take anymore properties in with the current tax base. Ms. Bracken-Piper commented she did not want to box the program into a number. Mr. Moyer questioned if there are not enough houses to generate the tax base needed does it handicap the program. Ms. Gembusia commented there should be a realistic goal set and there should be short term and long-term goal set. The board discussed different ways to quantify the number of acres they would want permanently preserved and how to find that number. Ms. Smith added that it might also help to look at not just how much is preserved but also the fact that part of the township is preserved through different avenues other than just the Open Space Preservation Program. There was also a brief discussion about article sent out by Ms. Gembusia about costs of maintaining preserved land vs. developed land. Ms. Bracken-Piper commented that the beauty of the program is the more you preserve the cheaper it is to maintain services. Mr. Moyer suggested that a good place to start with goals would be to look at having 50% of the land in the township be permanently preserved. Ms. Gembusia stated that the Board should look at multiple factors in order to find that quantity for them as a starting point. There was also discussion on what the Board considered open space. Ms. Gembusia requested that for the next meeting, members define what open space means to them so a definition could be formed. Mr. Moyer also brought up that in previous meetings when they were looking at the rating system for permanent easements that they were going to look at what factors would go into labeling a piece of open space as having public benefit. Staff requested the board in addition to defining open space, also come up with a list of what they consider as factors to determine public benefit.

6. UPDATE ON PERMANENT EASEMENT PURCHASE RESPONSES

There were thirty (30) letters sent to applicants who currently have 99-year leases. Some applicants have more than one property in the 99-year lease program. Responses are due by close of day November 13, 2020. This will be an agenda item for the December 2nd meeting.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Gembusia reviewed a possible schedule change for OSPB meetings for next year to remain on the first Wednesday of each month but have the start time moved to 6:00 p.m. Members of the board suggested the possibility of moving the meetings to the second Wednesday of the month but were okay with moving the time to 6:00 p.m. Ms. Gembusia stated that she would review the dates for the second Wednesday of the month against possible religious holiday conflicts and send it back out to the board to review.

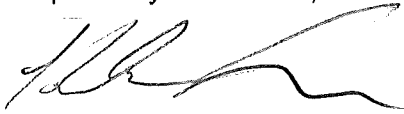
Ms. Gembusia reviewed the conflict-of-interest memo that was sent out to them. Ms. Gembusia stated that she had asked the Township Solicitor to draw up a memo that clearly states what constitutes a conflict of interest and when board members would need to recuse themselves from discussing or voting on a topic.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44pm.

- ***MOTION: Ms. Bracken-Piper moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:44pm; Ms. Hartle seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion carried.***

Respectfully Submitted,



Rebekah Laird
OSPB Recording Secretary