

**HALFMOON TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION BOARD
REORGANIZATION MEETING-MINUTES
JANUARY 8, 2020**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Temporary Chair Lorin Nauman called the meeting to order at 7:02pm. Other members present were Joe Tylka, Ron Hoover, Jim Smith, Christine Bracken-Piper and Patti Hartle. Staff present was Amy Smith, OSPB Administrator and Rebekah Laird, Recording Secretary. No audience was present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

- *MOTION: Mr. Smith moved to nominate Mr. Nauman as the Chair; Ms. Bracken-Piper seconded; Mr. Nauman accepted; Mr. Smith moved to close the nominations; Ms. Bracken-Piper seconded; Mr. Smith moved to appoint Mr. Nauman as the Chair; Ms. Bracken-Piper seconded; Vote 6-0-0; Motion carried.*

4. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

- *MOTION: Mr. Hoover moved to nominate Mr. Tylka as the Vice-Chair; Mr. Smith seconded; Mr. Tylka accepted; Mr. Hoover moved to close the nominations; Mr. Smith seconded; Mr. Hoover moved to appoint Mr. Tylka as the Vice-Chair; Mr. Smith seconded; Vote 6-0-0; Motion carried.*

5. RECORDING SECRETARY

- *MOTION: Ms. Hartle moved to appoint Ms. Laird as Recording Secretary; Mr. Hoover seconded; Vote 6-0-0; Motion carried.*

6. MEETING SCHEDULE

- *MOTION: Mr. Nauman moved to approve the following meeting dates for the OSPB for 2020 for the 1st Wednesday of each month, as follows: February 5th, March 4th, April 1st, May 6th, June 3rd, July 1st, August 5th, September 2nd, October 7th, November 4th and December 2nd; Mr. Smith seconded; Vote 6-0-0; Motion carried.*

7. MINUTES

Mr. Hoover stated that sentence that read "There was brief discussion as to what would occur if a leaseholder refused to sign the their approval of the revised language to which staff said they could not make a leaseholder sign it but would consult Mr. Stover (not in attendance) steps for that possibility if it were to happen" to read "There was brief discussion as to what would occur if a leaseholder refused to sign their approval of the

revised language to which staff said they could not make a leaseholder sign it but would consult Mr. Stover (not in attendance) regarding steps for that possibility if it were to happen.”

- ***MOTION: Mr. Tylka moved to approve the meeting minutes of November 6th, 2019 with stated correction as submitted; Mr. Hoover seconded; Vote 6-0-0; Motion carried.***

8. REVIEW FORECAST MODEL

Mr. Tylka reviewed forecast model with board if they were to consider offering a permanent easement on the property for Joanne Fisher. Mr. Tylka stated that with current numbers they were not able to do a permanent easement in full up front, as they would need around \$500,000 to do so. There was suggestion by Ms. Bracken-Piper that perhaps an agreement could be made that a down payment be offered and the remaining amount could be paid in installments to her. Ms. Smith stated that, from a tax perspective, Ms. Fisher would most likely be open to and prefer installment payments as this would be allowable under the ordinance. Ms. Smith further stated that according to the wording, though, it would have to be completed within 5 years. Mr. Tylka stated that, while on the subject of permanent easements, that while playing with numbers in the forecast model he found different scenarios that would allow the township to purchase a permanent easement on the all the properties in the portfolio. Mr. Tylka further stated that this could be done either by the year 2099 (with no help from outside sources) or by the year 2060 (if they were to partner 50/50 with the county programs). Mr. Tylka stated the maximum total acres that could be accepted into the program without going into a negative balance would be 2,260 acres this total includes the existing 2006 acres already in the program. This would leave 254 acres that could be accepted into the program until it would hit the negative balance. There was discussion on whether all the landowners would be open to this option as well as ideas on how they could figure out the process for this to happen. There was also discussion on whether this should be opened up initially to the landowners already in the program or to anyone who would like to apply for the permanent easement purchase. The board agreed that brainstorming ideas for this possibility should come first, which would include speaking with the Township Solicitor for advice on how to move forward.

Ms. Hartle asked that a decision be made, at this time, on Ms. Fisher’s property and the other items discussed could be added to the 2020 work plan. The board discussed offering Ms. Fisher a lease contract for the time being with the possibility of transitioning to a permanent easement in the future once that process has been reviewed and refined.

- ***MOTION: Ms. Bracken-Piper moved to offer Ms. Joanne Fisher a lease for both pending applications she has submitted; Ms. Hartle seconded; Vote 6-0-0; Motion carried.***

9. 2020 WORK PLAN

There was continued discussion from review of forecast model on work plan for year. The OSPB work plan for 2020 will include:

1. Reviewing the permanent easement rating system currently in place for township against other programs for revision/update (Ms. Smith will send rating systems out to board members for review during February meeting)
2. Creating a plan for permanent easement purchases both for current leaseholders and new applicants (plan currently is to invite Mr. Stover to the March meeting in order to discuss and ask questions about legality of putting the plan into motion). This would include ironing out legality and specifics of how the process would look. Suggestion was also made to look at legal process and wording from other county programs as a guide.
3. Review township maps in order to know layout of possible land that would be of interest to preserve.
4. Make a clear definition of what they mean by open space to preserve (i.e. farmland, forest, mountain, etc.)
5. Research, review and reach out to different programs that might be available to collaborate with for additional funding to preserve land in the township as permanent easements.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Hartle asked that the citizen's comments be moved in the agenda to after the pledge of allegiance so that if a citizen did not wish to stay for the entirety of the meeting, they may have that option to which the OSPB agreed.

Mr. Nauman asked if it would be considered a conflict of interest that he remains as Chair on the OSPB but also serve as Chair on the Planning Commission in the event that a matter from the Open Space Preservation Board be forwarded to the Planning Commission. Ms. Smith stated she did not believe this to be so but would check with Mr. Stover to be sure.

Ms. Smith stated that the Board of supervisors would be approving a CPI increase of 2.1% at the January 23rd meeting.

Ms. Bracken-Piper stated she had received some phone calls with concern on the amendment to the lease regarding the CPI amendment. Ms. Bracken-Piper commented that the concern was that the lease payment would revert back to the original dollar amount offered at the start of the program (\$25.00). The Board assured Ms. Bracken-Piper that this was not the case.

Ms. Smith also stated that Kevin Abbey has informed her he was currently working with property owners of Dry Hollow Hunting Club as well as the Rossman property off of Marengo Road to permanently preserve the land through Clearwater Conservancy.

11. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

There were no citizen's comments.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11pm.

- ***MOTION: Mr. Tylka moved to adjourn the meeting at pm; Mr. Smith seconded; Vote 6-0-0; Motion carried.***