

**MONROE CHARTER TOWNSHIP
MONROE COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

Special Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2020

7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

A Special meeting of the Monroe Charter Township was called to order by Supervisor Alan Barron at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 4, 2020, in the Monroe Charter Township Hall, 4925 East Dunbar Road, Monroe County, Michigan.

ROLL CALL

Present: Supervisor Barron, Clerk Smith, Treasurer Barton, Trustees Blank, Pancone, Manor and Heck

Others Present: Attorney McCormick and forty nine (49) people in the audience.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ANNOUNCEMENT

Supervisor Barron addressed the audience regarding the circumstances for the Special meeting and the moratorium being presented at the meeting. After the first reading of an ordinance passed by the Board, the Clerk must have that ordinance published in a general circulation newspaper, the Monroe News, within 15 days of adoption or what we call a second reading. The minutes of the meeting on August 18, 2020 were published and the complete Ordinance was on the website but, was not published in the newspaper. This was an error, with absolutely no intent on the Clerk's part to prevent resident participation. All other required publications by the Planning Commission were satisfied for the Ordinance recommended to the Board. Tonight we are here to begin the process of correcting this error and moving on. We're not here to negate or in any way be non-transparent to our obligations to follow the legal requirements. So this moratorium will allow us to 1.) Tweak the original Ordinance with the ability to add a cap to the number of businesses selling Marihuana. 2.) To appoint a citizen Committee to discuss their views with our Ordinance Committee and 3.) To follow the publishing guidelines as are required by state law. So tonight there is really no reason to discuss anything, no decisions can be made at a Special Meeting other than passing the moratorium and one other item we have for the Fire Department millage. We won't be discussing what you think that, we think the Ordinance should be. Or what things you want to see in the Ordinance that is not for tonight's Special Meeting. There will be public hearings at our regular Board meeting and Committee of the Ordinance Committee. So again the reason for the moratorium is to correct an error and I will stand behind Tina (Christina). She was given a new job less than one year ago. Stepped into an Election right away, stepped into COVID right away and then stepped into the biggest Election in American history. It was an error and no one feels worse than she does and we will have compassion for that error. So that is our objective tonight is to simply pass the moratorium stopping the applications from being accepted.

**MONROE CHARTER TOWNSHIP
MINUTES**

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November 4, 2020**

NEW BUSINESS

Consider placing an up to 6 month moratorium on all marihuana business applications, so as to allow additional time to pass a zoning amendment to allow for the reasonable and fair regulation of Marihuana businesses.

Trustee Blank asked that the motion be amended to one year for the moratorium and that further actions on applications not be acted on by the Monroe Charter Township Planning Commission prior to November 4, 2020, shall be held in advance with the effect of no action. Pending the outcome of one year moratorium at which time the Planning Commission can take up consideration of the site plan and special land use approval. With COVID increasing we don't know if the Governor is going to shut us down and it would be better to take a year. Not ninety (90) days.

Attorney McCormick asked Trustee Blank for clarification that he was asking for an extension of the ninety (90) day moratorium to one year.

Trustee Blank confirmed that he would like 365 days and to not be able to accept any new applications from this day forward.

Attorney McCormick stated that not accepting new applications is already included in the moratorium, including pending applications on the November and December Planning Commission agenda.

Trustee Blank asked who is appointing citizens to the Committee.

Supervisor Barron stated that the Supervisor is who makes the appointments.

Treasurer Barton stated that Supervisor Barron would not have any issues with residents who want to volunteer for the Committee.

Supervisor Barron advised that anyone interested may do so by emailing him. He will also be making it a diverse group.

Treasurer Barton stated that if we can't accomplish the Ordinance amendments in ninety (90) days that we have the ability to extend the moratorium at a future date by the Board. She is the only Board member to consistently vote no to Marihuana. If we can't accomplish the new ordinance with the public help within ninety (90) days we can seek approval for an extension.

Trustee Heck stated with the time of year and spikes in COVID and the desire of the residents seeking to be involved that rather than a one (1) year moratorium we opt for an up to six (6) month moratorium.

Attorney McCormick clarified that the completion of the amendment could shorten the moratorium to an earlier date.

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NEW BUSINESS

Chris Harter asked if the businesses on the November 9, 2020 Planning Commission Agenda were being tabled? Supervisor Barron responded that yes, they would be tabled. He also said the moratorium would force those who have complied with the requirements to sue the Township.

Dr. Julie Everly, Monroe Public Schools Superintendent and Monroe Charter Township resident, stressed that children are easily influenced and is concerned that there is potentially nine (9) Marihuana businesses planned for South Dixie Highway and that children going to school would be passing those businesses. She would like the community to come together for a resolution and supports a one (1) year moratorium on Marihuana business and future approvals of business.

Dr. Stephen McNew, Monroe County Intermediate School District Superintendent and Monroe Charter Township resident spoke of the long term negative effects and that it is reckless to allow for unlimited Marihuana business within the Township. He also spoke of the effects that legalized Marihuana has negatively impacted other States. He asked that the Township Board postpone any action.

Chris Harter stated that the Township needs to grow and that he has a Fortune 500 company that is interested in purchasing property he owns on LaPlaisance Road that is not a Marihuana business. He asked that the businesses that were approved and the ones on the upcoming businesses be approved.

Tim Lake, Monroe Charter Township resident and President and CEO of Monroe County Business Development Corporation supports growth in the Township. He is also in favor of a one (1) year moratorium. Township has the ability to rescind the moratorium.

Sandra Blank, Monroe Charter Township Resident read an article from Epic Times out of New York about the effects that Marihuana is having in Colorado.

Katybeth Davis, Monroe Charter Township resident thanked those that voted for her and asked that due to COVID that the Township move all meetings to ZOOM and to make them available on YouTube to be open and available to everyone.

Jerry Oley, addressed the errors of the Township and how they disenfranchised the citizens and their ability to exercise their rights. He spoke of the hundreds of municipalities that opted out of Marihuana. July 21, 2020 was the first reading and August 18, 2020 was the formal adoption and the adopted Ordinance should have been in publication within 15 days. He asked that the Township correct the compliancy and that no Ordinance was enacted. He asked the Board to consider a one (1) year moratorium.

Troy Goodnough, Sheriff Elect has 31 years in law enforcement and has seen the effects of drugs and impaired driving. He spoke of the increase in accidents between the methadone clinic and the Ohio border. He supports a one (1) year moratorium and offered help from the Sheriff office with the ordinance.

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Treasurer Barton stated that she has voted no on everything to do with Marihuana but, feels everyone needs to meet in the middle.

Trustee Blank stated he would like to be on the Committee.

Greg Hanlon, thanked the Board for their dedication and was not trying to convince anyone of pros and cons of Marihuana. He stated that these businesses are here to stimulate the economy. Cannabis is in all communities and being sold behind closed doors. The State made this law because a large portion of the population is in favor of Marihuana. Facilities may only disperse to consumers legally. He stated that he wants transparency and asked that the Committee includes people in the Marihuana industry.

Motion #1. Motion by Barton, supported by Manor to consider placing an up to 6 month moratorium on all marihuana business applications, so as to allow additional time to pass a zoning amendment to allow for the reasonable and fair regulation of Marihuana businesses, as presented.

Roll call vote: Barton yes, Manor yes, Heck yes, Pancone yes, Smith yes, Blank yes, Barron yes. **Motion carried.**

Consider revising Monroe Charter Townships L-4029, upon approval of the fire millage on the November 3, 2020 ballot.

Supervisor Barron explained that the passing of the millage would go directly to the Fire Department only.

Motion #2. Motion by Barton, supported by Smith to consider revising Monroe Charter Townships L-4029, upon approval of the fire millage on the November 3, 2020 ballot, as presented.

Roll call vote: Barton yes, Smith yes, Blank yes, Manor yes, Pancone yes, Heck yes, Barron yes. **Motion carried.**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments began at 7:44 p.m. Fire Inspector Calvin Schmitt for Monroe Charter Township presented the Board with a letter offering assistance with fire codes as this is not his area of expertise. Asked to be considered for the Committee. Public comments ended at 7:46 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion #3. Motion by Smith, supported by Heck to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

Roll call vote: Smith yes, Heck yes, Blank yes, Barton yes, Manor yes, Pancone yes, Barron yes. **Motion carried.**

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Christina Smith, Clerk

Monroe Charter Township

Attested:



Alan Barron, Supervisor

Monroe Charter Township