

# Minutes Board of Town Trustees

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STATE OF ILLINOIS

LAKE COUNTY

TOWN OF NEWPORT

THE BOARD OF TOWN TRUSTEES met at the office of the Town Clerk at the Village Hall on October 16, 2013.

**Members Present:**

Beth Hartford, Trustee

Diane Crittenden, Trustee

Corey Kirschhoffer, Trustee

Jerome Berens, Assessor

Rodger Edmunds, Highway Commissioner

Randy Whitmore, Supervisor

**Call to Order:** Supervisor Whitmore called the Regular meeting of the Board of Town Trustees to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Supervisor Whitmore led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:** In attendance were Beth Hartford, Rodger Edmunds, Jerome Berens, Diane Crittenden, Corey Kirschhoffer, and Randy Whitmore. Also present, Attorney Keri-Lyn Krafthefer. Absent, Ron Miller.

**Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was not called for approval.

**Approval of Minutes:** Supervisor Whitmore requested a motion and second to approve the September 25, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes. No discussion.

Motion by Kirschhoffer; seconded by Crittenden to approve the September 25, 2013 regular Meeting minutes.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion passed 4-0. Absent, Miller.

**Reports:**

**Supervisor's Report:** Supervisor Whitmore stated he would like to move the November meeting as he has a personal commitment. It is noted that the public hearing notices have already

been published for the original date and additionally there may be conflicts with the scheduling of the village hall. Whitmore then indicated he would work out his personal schedule.

In unfinished business, Whitmore notes he plans to further address the Newport Drainage Ditch commenting that Donald Hey (Wetlands Research, Inc.) is working with the Village of Gurnee and the City of Zion. According to Whitmore, these municipalities may be willing to help fund WRI doing this project. Whitmore states he needs to know what the board wants to do. Trustee Hartford asked if Whitmore was planning to disclose his interest since he is Vice President of Wetlands Research Inc. Whitmore replied that there is no money to be made here by me. Hartford thought it interesting that Whitmore had not previously disclosed this fact. Whitmore stated his interest is why he brought it to the board. Attorney Krafthefer interjected, WRI is a not-for-profit corporation. Trustee Kirschhoffer is curious about Hartford's opinion on the project. Hartford stated it isn't clear what Whitmore and WRI are asking the board to do. Whitmore says they just want to know if we are for it or against it. WRI wants to use Newport Township as leverage downstream and they want to buy 75 acres at Kilbourne and 9<sup>th</sup> Street and do work up there and put cluster homes in. Kirschhoffer clarifies that the cluster homes, etc. are not part of the drainage ditch project. Whitmore agrees, and says it is just something they want to do on the side. Kirschhoffer inquires as to how many acres and property owners are affected. Whitmore says 12 property owners--- the landowners could not build on the land as WRI will make marshes out of the property. It is essentially an easement and the property could not be deeded away. No property will be purchased for the drainage ditch project. Kirschhoffer added she thought the forest preserve was trying to get in there. Whitmore says no, the forest preserve dislikes wetlands and says WRI was forced out of the wetlands project in downtown Wadsworth (Des Plaines River Wetlands Demonstration Project). WRI doesn't have good feelings towards the county forest preserve district. Kirschhoffer indicates she is fine with the WRI proposal. Hartford doesn't think enough is known about the details to be able to support or not support this project. Whitmore says this isn't going to cost the township a penny; they just want to use the township's name in support of the project. Hartford suggests caution. The clerk comments a public meeting could be held to let the residents know about the project plans and let WRI do a presentation. Whitmore says he will tell WRI they can have a meeting and bring in the homeowners to explain it to them. Attorney Krafthefer indicated the board would not necessarily need to be present at such a meeting. Kirschhoffer notes the Wetlands Demonstration Project holds water that then doesn't flood Gurnee. Whitmore says WRI just wants to know how the board feels about it, calling it a win-win. Highway Commissioner Rodger Edmunds interjects that essentially you are going to flood these home owners' backyards to make Gurnee happy and they [the homeowners] are not going to be happy to hear that. Hartford added the homeowners would also be restricted in how their property can be used and she isn't sure the home owner's will be in support of this.

Attorney Krafthefer would like to re-address the rescheduling of the November meeting, stating she texted Wadsworth Village Administrator Moses Amedei during the township meeting to determine alternate dates the village hall would be available, suggesting the Wednesday night before Thanksgiving. Hartford says it is unlikely the public would attend on the night before Thanksgiving. Krafthefer inquires on whether the township usually gets people attending the budget hearings. Hartford isn't clear on why a new budget hearing is required if you're moving

money from the existing Town Savings Fund to the Town Fund---no budget amendment is necessary. Whitmore says he and Edmunds are planning on adding a couple of things. Keri-Lyn Krafthefer says both of the budgets need to be amended for something different. Whitmore indicates he is adding a line item for his mileage. Hartford reminds the board no vote was taken regarding budgets at the last meeting and noted if new lines are being added, a hearing would be necessary. Kirschoffer recalls \$200,000 is being transferred from Gravel to Road & Bridge. Keri-Lyn Krafthefer asserts the hearings are necessary and she doesn't believe Supervisor Whitmore should be jammed up if he has a personal commitment, suggesting the meeting date be changed. After further discussion on possible new dates, November 25<sup>th</sup> is chosen. Attorney Krafthefer suggests 6:30 p.m. for one hearing, 6:35 for the second one and 6:40 for the regular meeting, indicating if they go later that is okay.

#### **Highway Commissioner's Report:**

Highway Commissioner Rodger Edmunds reported he has intergovernmental agreements with Wadsworth ready to sign for snowplowing.

#### **Assessor's Report:**

Assessor Berens indicates his department assesses about 4,000 properties in the township every year and of those about 4% will protest their tax bills. His office processes about 90% of these with negotiated settlements. The other 10% go to the county level for trials and he notes they win the majority of those. His office ensures township assessments are fair.

#### **Clerk Comments:**

The clerk noted that comments made at the September meeting made it clear that there are now multiple people who have been provided key sets by the supervisor and are now able to, and have, accessed the locked township records. The clerk noted for the record that the township records are no longer under her sole control and she cannot vouch for their integrity.

#### **Trustee Comments:**

Beth Hartford-- No report.

Ron Miller-- No report. (Miller absent.)

Diane Crittenden—No report.

Corey Kirschhoffer—No report.

**Attorney's Report:** No report.

**Finances:**

Supervisor introduced the bills for approval by fund:

Supervisor Whitmore requested a motion to approve the General Town Fund Assessor's bills.

Motion made by Kirschhoffer; seconded by Crittenden.

Voice Vote: Ayes, 4; Nays, none. Motion passed 4-0.

Supervisor Whitmore requested a motion to approve the General Town Fund bills.

Motion made by Kirschhoffer; seconded by Crittenden.

Voice Vote: Ayes, Crittenden, Kirschhoffer, Whitmore; Nays, Hartford. Motion passed 3-1.

Supervisor Whitmore requested a motion to approve the Road & Bridge Fund bills.

Motion made by Kirschhoffer; seconded by Crittenden.

Voice Vote: Ayes, Crittenden, Kirschhoffer, Whitmore; Nays, Hartford. Motion passed 3-1.

**Public Comment:**

No public wishing to comment.

**Executive Session:**

Supervisor Whitmore noted the board will need to hold an executive session to discuss personnel matters. Keri-Lyn Krafthefer added she would like to request an executive session to discuss imminent litigation. Highway Commissioner Rodger Edmunds was asked to stay.

Motion made by Crittenden; seconded by Kirschhoffer to enter into executive session at 7:32 p.m.

Voice Vote: Ayes, all; Nays, none. Motion passed 4-0.

Motion to return to open session at 7:51 p.m.

Voice vote: Ayes, all; Nays, none. Motion passed 4-0.

**Roll Call – Return to Open Session:** In attendance were Beth Hartford, Rodger Edmunds, Jerome Berens, Diane Crittenden, Corey Kirschhoffer, and Randy Whitmore. Also present, Attorney Keri-Lyn Krafthefer. Absent, Ron Miller.

The board resumed regular session at 7:51 p.m. No action was taken resulting from closed session.

**Motion to Adjourn:**

Supervisor Whitmore requested a motion and a second to adjourn.

Motion by Hartford; seconded by Kirschhoffer.

Voice Vote: Ayes, all; Nays none. Motion passed 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

**Dated the 16<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2013.**

\_\_\_\_\_ s/Debbie Spurgeon

**Debbie Spurgeon, Township Clerk**