

# 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 November 19, 2014.

**Members Present:**

Beth Hartford, Trustee

Ronald Miller, Trustee

Diane Crittenden, Trustee

Corey Kirschhoffer, Trustee

Randy Whitmore, Supervisor

Rodger Edmonds, Highway Commissioner

Debbie Spurgeon, Clerk

Jerome Berens, Assessor

**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:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Supervisor Whitmore.

**Roll Call:** In attendance were Beth Hartford, Ron Miller, Rodger Edmonds, Jerome Berens, Diane Crittenden, Corey Kirschhoffer, Randy Whitmore and Debbie Spurgeon. Also present, Attorney Keri-Lyn Krafthefer of Ancel Glink.

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

**Approval of Minutes:** Supervisor Whitmore requested a motion and second to approve the minutes from October 15, 2014. No discussion.

Motion by Hartford, seconded by Miller to approve the minutes from October 15, 2014 as presented.

Voice vote: Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion passed 5-0.

**Reports:****Supervisor's Report:**

No report.

**Highway Commissioner's Report:**

Commissioner Edmunds commented the road district has received 70-80% of their ordered salt for the upcoming season, and is in good shape.

**Assessor's Report:**

Assessor Berens reminded the board that Lake County will be divorcing itself of the dedicated T1 access line support at the end of February. The county has historically provided this service to townships for communication with the county assessor office. Berens' office has been reviewing available options for several months and notes replacing the county program will cost ~\$400 per month, up from the \$300 monthly fee charged thru the county. Berens notes he will budget for these services in his FY 2015-16 Assessor's Budget.

Trustee Kirschhoffer feels using a T1 line is outdated and suggests she can find a cheaper, more modern alternative such as a wireless router or mobile hotspot. Whitmore heard of T1 in the 1980s, and in his opinion T1 is antiquated. Berens notes his office has been working closely with the county technical department and has been advised the T1 line is the appropriate solution. Kirschhoffer says she will look into alternatives. Berens suggests she contact Joe Crietz at Lake County.

**Clerk Comments:**

No report

**Trustee Comments:**

Beth Hartford—Trustee Hartford has noticed activity on the township's property on Russell Road. Supervisor Whitmore explains a company (MJ Electric) is fixing overhead utility lines behind the property and required access to the area. Whitmore says he gave them permission, to traverse the township's property, adding the company has signed an agreement with Dave Richards (who farms the township-owned land) to reimburse Mr. Richards for any damage to his crops. Hartford notes another area property owner received \$20,000 for access rights to their property. She suggests the township may have been able to negotiate a similar arrangement.

Whitmore indicates he will give them a call to see if anything can still be done to compensate the township.

Ron Miller-- No report.

Diane Crittenden—No report.

Corey Kirschhoffer— No report.

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

**Township Business:**

Supervisor Whitmore requested a motion and a second, to establishing an estimate of levy for Newport Township. Motion by Crittenden; seconded by Kirschhoffer.

Whitmore continued, stating the corporate and special purpose property taxes extended or abated for 2013 were \$51,697.50 and the proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2014 are \$155, 495. Whitmore states this is a 300% increase over the previous year, noting a Truth in Taxation Hearing will be required.

Trustee Hartford requested an explanation on the process for Truth in Taxation meetings, noting the township had previously not previously exceeded this levy threshold. Attorney Krafthefer stated the township has to follow procedures to hold the hearing and then explain the reason for the increase at the hearing. If people want to present testimony, they have the right to do so. She stated the predominate reason for the Truth in Taxation Hearing is the recent referendum. Whitmore noted to date ~\$142,000 has been withdrawn from the Town Building Fund, constituting the entirety of the fund. He cited a lack of funds as the reason for increasing the Township Levy. Whitmore briefly read aloud a portion of the advice he received from Ancel Glink regarding the levies. No further discussion.

Voice Vote: Ayes, Crittenden, Kirschhoffer, Whitmore; Nays, Hartford, Miller. Motion

Passed 3-2.

Supervisor Whitmore requested a motion to establishing an estimate of levy for the Newport Township Road District “in the amount of \$369,239.00”. Rodger Edmonds added, the increase represents a 584% increase. Motion by Crittenden; seconded by Kirschhoffer.

A brief discussion was held on the timing of the two levy hearings on December 17<sup>th</sup>. The board agreed to hold the hearings at 6:30 p.m. (Township) and 6:45 p.m. (Road District), with the Regular Meeting following at its usual time (7:00 p.m.). No further discussion.

Voice Vote: Ayes, Crittenden, Kirschhoffer, Whitmore; Nays, Hartford, Miller. Motion

Passed 3-2.

**Finances:**

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, Miller. Motion passed 3-2.

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

Motion made by Crittenden; seconded by Kirschhoffer.

Voice Vote: Ayes, Crittenden, Kirschhoffer, Whitmore; Nays, Hartford, Miller. Motion Passed 3-2.

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, Miller. Motion passed 3-2.

**Public Comment:**

There was no public wishing to comment.

**Executive Session:**

No closed session.

**Motion to Adjourn:**

Supervisor Whitmore requested a motion and a second to adjourn the Regular Meeting.

Motion by Miller; seconded by Hartford.

Voice Vote: Ayes, all; Nays none. Motion passed 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

**Dated the 19<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2014.**

s/Debbie Spurgeon

**Debbie Spurgeon, Township Clerk**