

Minutes Board of Town Trustees

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 December 17, 2014.

Members Present:

Beth Hartford, Trustee

Ronald Miller, Trustee

Diane Crittenden, Trustee

Corey Kirschhoffer, Trustee

Randy Whitmore, Supervisor

Rodger Edmonds, Highway Commissioner

Jerome Berens, Assessor

Debbie Spurgeon, Clerk

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 at the preceding Truth in Taxation Hearing.

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

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

Approval of Minutes: Supervisor Whitmore requests a motion and second to approve the minutes from November 19, 2014. No discussion.

Motion made by Hartford seconded by Kirschhoffer, to approve the minutes from November 19, 2014 as presented.

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

Reports:

Supervisor's Report:

No report.

Highway Commissioner's Report:

No report.

Assessor's Report:

Assessor Jerome Berens presented his budget for the new fiscal year, beginning March 2015. Berens says computers and computer access are important to assessors both at the township and county level. As long as Berens can recall, in excess of 15 years, the county has provided the software and technical support for the areas' township assessors. The pressure is on the county's tax extension office to cut costs and ~6 months ago, township assessors across Lake County were notified this support would be ending. The Newport office is currently serviced by a T1 line. After researching options available to the area, Jerome's office made arrangements with AT&T for service going forward at a cost of \$280 per month for the T1 line, computers, etc. plus \$80 per month for ICN (Information Centric Networking) for a total of \$360/month.

Subsequently, Trustee Kirschhoffer offered assistance in finding an alternative to the T1 resulting in the possibility that broadband service may be available thru e-vergent. Kirschhoffer interjects that the actual cost for AT&T is closer to \$800 a month, and she intends to argue hardship with AT&T in order to get Newport released from the current T1 contract. She states the e-vergent cost is \$60/month total. Berens continues, while service thru e-vergent may eventually be worked out, at this time he needs to budget for the T1 expense. He also noted copying and printing expenses in excess of current levels. The assessor cited these items as reasons for a budget increase for FY 2014/15. Berens additionally summarizes his budget as: Column A- \$45,000 (his 2012/2013 budget total), Column B- \$43,400 (his 2013/14 budget) and Column C- \$49,000 (his proposed 2014/15 budget). Kirschhoffer interjects that the state income tax rate will be going down and thus he will be spending less on this expense. Berens says the new rate was provided by Nancy Lech and is already projected in his current proposal.

Two area residents in the audience indicate they too have challenges with service in the area being discussed and suggest e-vergent may not work out for the Assessor's office as they had issues.

Whitmore asks if Berens intends to raise salaries for his employees. Berens says no.

Clerk Comments:

No report.

Trustee Comments:

Beth Hartford—Trustee Hartford indicates she was contacted by a taxpayer who observed something that disturbed them and was looking for an explanation. Hartford said she didn't have one, continuing the resident claims to have observed Township road district employees performing work (picking up a large salt spill) for a private company (Lake County Hose) for which Rodger Edmonds does contract work for with his personal business. Hartford says she assumes there is an explanation, but she didn't have an answer for the resident. Commissioner Edmonds explains the township employees were paid by Lake County Hose to clean up the spill, because the township has the necessary broom equipment.

Ron Miller-- No report.

Diane Crittenden—No report.

Corey Kirschhoffer— No report.

Attorney's Report: Keri-Lyn Krafthefer relayed information about an update to a Bill pending before the General Assembly (HB3796) which would amend the Freedom of Information Act for information already accessible on a government body's website, and further define the timeframe and fees allowed to be charged by a government body for voluminous requests. Governor Quinn vetoed the bill, however in the weekend Veto Session, the legislature overrode the governor's veto. Krafthefer says this change to FOIA provides relief to government bodies and was supported by the Township Officials of Illinois (TOI).

Township Business:

Supervisor Whitmore indicates the board needs to vote to establish an estimate of levy. The assessor notes this was done at the November meeting. Attorney Krafthefer interjects that tonight's action is to adopt the actual Ordinances for the Township and Road District levies.

Motion made by Kirschhoffer, seconded by Crittenden to adopt the Newport Township Levy Ordinance.

The clerk asks the supervisor to state aloud the amount of the levy. Whitmore says the amount is \$155,495.

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

Motion made by Kirschhoffer, seconded by Crittenden to adopt the Newport Road District Levy Ordinance.

Commissioner Edmonds states the levy amount as \$369,239.

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

Following the preceding votes on Newport Tax Levy Ordinances, it came to light that no ordinances had been provided by the township attorney to the supervisor and highway commissioner. Therefore, there were no ordinances to route for board signatures at the meeting.

Finances:

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 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 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:

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 17th day of December, 2014.

_____s/Debbie Spurgeon_____

Debbie Spurgeon, Township Clerk