

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 September 17, 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 8:08 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Clerk Spurgeon at the preceding Special Township Meeting.

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

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 August 20, 2014. No discussion.

Motion by Hartford, seconded by Miller to approve the minutes from August 20, 2014 as presented.

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

Township Business:

No new or old township business.

Reports:

Supervisor's Report:

No report.

Highway Commissioner's Report:

Commissioner Edmunds thanked those who assisted him with the taxation petition effort.

Assessor's Report:

Assessor Berens reports Lake County has notified area townships it is divesting itself of the dedicated T1 access line support historically provided to townships for communication with the county assessor office. The cost for this service is ~\$325/month. Berens notes that many of the other affected townships are transitioning to other services, such as Comcast. Due to Newport's rural nature alternate arrangements will be necessary. Berens indicates he does not have the expense budgeted, thus the county has agreed to continue providing support to Newport throughout the current fiscal year (FY 2014-15). Berens notes he will budget for alternate services in his FY 2015-16 Assessor's Budget.

Clerk Comments:

The clerk thanked the volunteers who served at tonight's Special Township meeting and additionally noted a past due letter she received from TOI, stating Newport had not paid its annual dues and is facing a 5% late fee on the outstanding amount of \$661.13. [From the audience, Mrs. Toni Edmunds comments the invoice has now been paid.]

Trustee Comments:

Beth Hartford—No report.

Ron Miller-- No report.

Diane Crittenden—No report.

Corey Kirschhoffer— Trustee Kirschhoffer states she received a forwarded email, which she found to be inappropriate since it originated from Trustee Miller's township Gmail address. After

reading the email aloud describing Trustee Miller's reasons for not supporting the special tax referendum, Kirschhoffer questioned whether Miller acted inappropriately by sending the email from his trustee address. She notes she engaged Ancel Glink attorney Adam Lasker to weigh-in on the matter, noting the attorney concluded it "could be" a violation if public resources were used.

Trustee Miller responds the email account in question is a free G-mail account and no public money was spent. Kirschhoffer insists public money was spent via use of the email account, but added even if it isn't paid for by public money, he is totally going against what we should be doing as a township.

Trustee Hartford inquires as to why the township spent taxpayer money for legal services in order to bring forth a special meeting petition for an individual seeking enactment of a road tax. Attorney Keri-Lyn Krafthefer denies this to be the case, indicating the legal fees were to prepare a petition for the electors. Trustee Miller notes three months of legal bills where the township was billed for work related to this petition. Hartford asks Attorney Krafthefer why she prepared a petition for resident Kevin Zupec. Trustee Miller adds the elector is supposed to bring forth the petition, not the township's attorney. Hartford and Miller cite the actions by the law firm as inappropriate.

Attorney's Report: Attorney Keri-Lyn Krafthefer reports on a recent decision by the State Attorney General's office. When residents come forth for public comment, public bodies are now not allowed to ask for personal addresses. She isn't certain what the practice is here in Newport, however notes the township will need to follow the AG's new decision going forward.

Trustee Hartford comments sometimes residents volunteer their address; however the township does not ask for it as a matter of routine.

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:

Steve Garrett-- Mr. Garrett comments sarcastically about the board and the meeting.

Supervisor Whitmore calls for order.

Executive Session:

No closed session.

Motion to Adjourn:

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

Motion by Hartford; seconded by Miller.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Dated the 17th day of September, 2014.

_____ s/Debbie Spurgeon

Debbie Spurgeon, Township Clerk