

Minutes Board of Town Trustees

STATE OF ILLINOIS

LAKE COUNTY

TOWN OF NEWPORT

July 20, 2016

Members Present:

Beth Hartford, Trustee

Ronald Miller, Trustee

Diane Crittenden, Trustee

Corey Kirschhoffer, Trustee

Randy Whitmore, Supervisor

Debbie Spurgeon, Clerk

Jerome Berens, Assessor

Rodger Edmonds, Highway Commissioner

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, Beth Hartford, Ron Miller, Rodger Edmonds, Jerome Berens, Diane Crittenden, Corey Kirschhoffer, Randy Whitmore and Debbie Spurgeon. Also present, Ancel, Glink, Diamond, Bush, DiCianni & Krafthefer, PC attorney, Tiffany Nelson-Jaworski.

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

Approval of Minutes: Supervisor Whitmore requested a motion and second to approve the Regular Meeting minutes from June 15, 2016. No discussion.

Motion by Miller, seconded by Hartford to approve the Regular Meeting minutes as presented.

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

Reports:

Supervisor's Report:

Supervisor Whitmore reports Tim Smith, Mayor of Old Mill Creek has agreed to pay the \$10,000 owed to the township road district for culvert work performed by the township last year.

Highway Commissioner’s Report:

Commissioner Edmonds reports the speed limit on Sheridan Oaks Road is being reduced to 35mph and the Lake County Sheriff has agreed to enforce the new limit.

Edmonds additionally reports that the Department of Labor is investigating the Newport Road District.

Lastly, Edmonds reports the road district employees have concluded the first round of mowing for Newport and the Village of Wadsworth. Additionally, graveling is being done along Delany Road, Dilly’s Road, and Woodford Trail. Village of Wadsworth Roads are being mowed and graveled by the road district via intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with the village.

Assessor’s Report:

Assessor Berens reports his office is in the process of closing the books on the previous year. “Blue cards” will now come out in August rather than July as reported last month. Residents can expect an average of a 6% property tax increase and have 30 days to address concerns with Berens’ local office. Berens notes 2016 taxes are paid by taxpayers in 2017.

The Assessor is concerned about his compensation, and passed out information to the board designed on justifying a compensation increase for the elected position of township assessor.

Clerk Comments:

No report.

Trustee Comments:

Beth Hartford – No report.

Ron Miller— No report.

Diane Crittenden—No report.

Corey Kirschhoffer—Trustee Kirschhoffer again inquires with Ancel Glink attorney Tiffany Nelson-Jaworski whether a township can purchase property (yes). She states her interest is in taxpayers purchasing 70 acres at 9th Street and Kilbourne for future development, recreation or wetlands. Nelson-Jaworski says purchased property cannot be used ‘for profit.’

Attorney's Report:

No report.

Township Business:

Supervisor Whitmore says Newport elected officials are the most underpaid officials in all townships. He is looking for feedback from the board members in the coming meetings as to setting compensation levels for the next term, for all board positions.

A resolution brought forth by legal counsel Ancel Glink for tonight's meeting to allow the Supervisor to pay routine invoices and expenditures not to exceed \$1,000, was previously brought forth by Ancel Glink and adopted by the board. No action was taken on the redundant resolution.

Finances:

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

Motion 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 General Town Fund bills.

Motion 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 by Kirschhoffer; seconded by Crittenden.

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

Public Comment:

Tom Hartford – Mr. Hartford commented on Jerome Berens presentation requesting a salary increase, noting current and future township revenue levels should be a consideration in the decision process.

Neil Palmer with American Transmission Co. (ATC)-- Mr. Palmer informed the board the Wisconsin-based company he represents, the largest transmission-only company in the U.S., intends to file papers with regulatory commissions (Illinois Commerce Commission and Public Service Commission of Wisconsin) at the beginning of August to build a double-circuit, high voltage 345 kilovolt transmission lines thru the middle of the Village of Wadsworth and Newport Township. The preferred path is east of Delany Road, which he says will directly affect some 32 residences along the route while indirectly affecting the entire community. ATC's Neil Palmer comments that while the company prefers not to use condemnation methods, it could decide to use such methods. Mr. Palmer says ATC has hired a "local appraiser" to value directly affected properties and letters are expected to go out in late August. They do not plan to purchase land from affected homeowners, but rather to acquire ~110 foot easements. The proposed transmission lines will not serve Wadsworth, Newport Township or Lake County, but will enhance the revenues of ATC. The power lines will be built with large diameter steel poles 110 to 150 feet tall, placed 700 to 1,000 feet apart and requiring a 110 foot wide corridor. This project is estimated to cost \$52 million to \$63 million and costs are expected to be built into the bills of electricity users. In anticipation of this project, ATC has purchased acreage at the north-east corner of Delany and Rt. 173 to build an 800x600 ft substation. If the project is not approved, ATC will place the property back on the market. Mr. Palmer was informed all information on the proposal which ATC is legally required to provide to Newport Township as an affected municipality, should be directed to the township clerk at the township offices.

Unfinished Business:

None.

Executive Session:

No closed session.

Motion to Adjourn:

Supervisor Whitmore requested a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting.

Motion by Crittenden; seconded by Hartford.

Voice Vote: Ayes, all; Nays none. Motion passed 5-0.
Meeting adjourns at 7:50 p.m.

Dated the 20th day of July, 2016.

s/Debbie Spurgeon

Debbie Spurgeon, Township Clerk