

Minutes Annual Town Meeting

STATE OF ILLINOIS

LAKE COUNTY

TOWN OF NEWPORT

THE ELECTORS OF NEWPORT TOWNSHIP met at the office of the Town Clerk at the Township Offices on April 10, 2018.

Public Present: The voters present at the Annual Town Meeting were verified by the clerk with the registered voter list as provided by the Lake County Clerk's Office on April 6, 2018.

Call to Order: Spurgeon called the Annual Town Meeting of Newport Township to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: The clerk led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Appointment of a Moderator and Oath of Office: Spurgeon requested nominations for Moderator of the April 10, 2018 Annual Town Meeting.

Motion by Beth Hartford, second by Tom Hartford to nominate Mike Dolan as moderator for the April 10, 2018 Annual Town Meeting.

Voice vote: Ayes all; nays none. Motion passes.

Mike Dolan is sworn in as the Moderator and signs Oath of Office.

Approval of Annual Town Meeting Minutes from April 11, 2017:

Minutes from the Annual Town Meeting held on April 11, 2017 are available for elector review.

Motion by Beth Hartford, second by Tom Hartford to approve the minutes from April 11, 2017.

Resident Tom Hartford inquires on whether the ATC deal with the township is dead. The clerk reports her recollection of what has been reported by the supervisor at the township meetings, is that the deal is dead. The project was deemed unnecessary by the State of Wisconsin, and therefore the extension into Illinois is not moving forward. Newport can keep any monies received to date, which includes an option for the current year. Landowners in the vicinity were notified by letter from ATC, however, that the project is unlikely to go forward. The clerk invites two township trustees present in the audience to add additional comments (nothing to add).

Resident Irene Martin asks whether the highway commissioner got back to Mildred Corder on her questions from the 2017 Annual Town Meeting. The clerk does not have the answer, and the highway commissioner is not present at tonight's meeting.

Susan Zingle comments that Millie Corder has asked several questions regarding the subsidizing of 100% of highway employees healthcare expenses and is curious whether Corder has received a response from the highway commissioner as promised. The clerk does not know, noting no recollection of public statements made by the commissioner at township meetings during the year addressing Corder's concerns.

No additional discussion by residents.

Voice vote: Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion passes.

The Supervisor's Annual Financial Statement/Settlement for March 1, 2017-February 28, 2018 is posted as required according to state statute and copies are available at tonight's meeting.

Motion to accept the Supervisor's Annual Financial Settlement Statement by Beth Hartford, second by Stan Williams.

Resident Beth Hartford notes in reference to comments made earlier regarding employee health expenditures, it does not appear that anything has changed, as the reported expenditure for road district health insurance is \$24,432 (Gravel Fund). It appears they're still paying 100% of the insurance costs.

Mike Dolan asks how many employees the road district has. The clerk indicates the number varies as some employees are considered seasonal during the snow-plowing season. Trustee Stan Williams is asked whether he can speak to the number of road district employees (no). Questions are best directed to Highway Commissioner Rodger Edmonds.

Residents comment the expenditure amount for road district health insurance is a big number, calling it a very nice benefit at the taxpayer's expense.

Mike Dolan says his tax bill does not have a line item for Building & Equipment, citing only:

- Township of Newport, Special Road Improvement
- Gravel
- Road & Bridge

The clerk asks if Trustees Mike Wells, Stan Williams or former trustee Beth Hartford can shed light on Dolan's question. Hartford says her recollection is that historically monies are transferred into that fund from either Gravel or Road & Bridge as a kind of savings account. Williams agrees, Building & Equipment is transferred monies. Wells has nothing to add.

Resident Irene Martin inquires on whether the township pays rent to the Village of Wadsworth for holding its regular meetings there (no, it is a public courtesy extended to the township). Rent is paid for the Township Offices, now located at 19020 W. Grass Lake Road, Old Mill Creek, IL where we are meeting tonight. Rent expenditures are split between the General Town Fund/ General Assistance and Road & Bridge.

A question is asked on whether the township has entirely vacated the former township office location on Hunt Club Road, Wadsworth, IL (no) and whether the taxing body is still paying rent there as well (no, courtesy has been extended by owner Larry Leffingwell allowing extra time to vacate.)

Susan Zingle notes a comment from Mildred Corder at last year's Annual Town Meeting that \$11,749 for legal services has come down from the previous year (2017), however Zingle notes this is still a large number for a township with Newport's population size. She wonders what other measures are being taken to reduce this expenditure, and how much of this expense is related to an ongoing lawsuit. What can be done to bring this number down? Is there a monthly retainer being paid?

The clerk notes the supervisor recently reported to the township board that the retainer is no longer in place, and the township is now paying the same firm (Ancel Glink, et al.) on an hourly basis.

A question is asked on the hourly amount paid to Ancel Glink for legal services. It is noted the supervisor reported to the board that the hourly fee went up when the retainer was eliminated. The current hourly rate is \$185.00/hour.

A resident asks if the attorney is still coming to every township meeting. The clerk indicates the attorneys have not been coming since the retainer was dropped, noting this was part of the retainer services.

No further discussion.

Voice vote: Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion passes.

Township Business:

Old Business: No old business.

New Business: No new business.

Motions, Questions, Discussion for the Electors Assembled (Public Comment):

Susan Zingle---When do items for the 2019 Annual Town Meeting need to be submitted to the clerk to be requested for next year's agenda. (March 1, 2019)

Mike Dolan--- Is the Gravel tax levied or something that just comes from the county? (The Gravel Fund is levied.) Dolan recalls that in the past most of the township's monies were levied

thru the Road & Bridge Fund and he notes this has changed in recent years and Road & Bridge generates hardly any income compared to the Gravel tax. Does the Gravel Fund have the 5% cap? (Yes, all levied township funds have an annual increase cap of 4.99%. If the board wants to levy anything more than 4.99%, a Truth in Taxation Hearing must be published and held.) Dolan would like to see the township move away from the Gravel tax and back to Road & Bridge income generation, as it requires a township-wide referendum rather than a small group of people who put the Gravel tax in place. Dolan says it used to be the case that if you lived in the Village of Wadsworth or Old Mill Creek, these entities would get a portion of the road money back. This would be nice for Wadsworth, which has an inter-governmental agreement with the township for snowplowing. He believes this is a good direction to consider returning to.

Irene Martin--Regarding Dolan's comments: How would we make this happen if this is something that people support? Dolan says it could be an advisory referendum, then the township board could act on it from there.

Susan Zingle—If this issue is to be put on an advisory referendum when would residents need to have it in by?

Dolan responds it is his understanding is that one method is for 15 electors to submit a petition for the question to be included as an agenda item for the Annual Town Meeting. If approved, it would then go to the county to be put on the next ballot as an advisory referendum. The outcome would be up to the township board to determine what they want to do from there. The timing of what is needed and when it is required needs further research.

Date and Time of next Annual Town Meeting: The electors assembled determined the next Annual Town Meeting will take place on April 9, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at the Newport Township Offices located at 19020 W. Grass Lake Road, Old Mill Creek, IL 60046

Announcement of the Close of Business: Moderator Dolan announces the close of business at 7:25 p.m.

Motion to Adjourn: Moderator Dolan requests a motion and second to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Rick Neal; second by Irene Martin.

Voice Vote: Ayes, all; Nays none. Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Dated the 10th day of April 2018.

s/ Debbie Spurgeon

Debbie Spurgeon, Township Clerk

s/ Mike Dolan

2018 Annual Town Meeting Moderator