

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, temporarily at the Newport Fire District, Wadsworth Station #1 on August 19, 2020

Members Present:

J. Daryle Spiller, Trustee

Stan Williams, Trustee

James Zegar, Trustee

Debbie Spurgeon, Clerk

Randy Whitmore, Supervisor

Jerome Berens, Assessor

Rodger Edmonds, Highway Commissioner

Call to Order: Supervisor Whitmore calls the Regular Township Meeting of the Board of Town Trustees to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: Supervisor Whitmore leads the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: In attendance, Daryle Spiller, Stan Williams, Rodger Edmonds, Jerome Berens, James Zegar, Debbie Spurgeon and Randy Whitmore. Absent, Trustee Mike Wells.

Approval of Minutes: Supervisor Whitmore requests a motion and a second to approve the July Regular Meeting Minutes.

Motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from July 15, 2020 by Zegar, second by Spiller.

Roll call vote: Ayes, Spiller, Zegar, Whitmore. Nays, none. Abstain, Williams (was not present at July Regular Meeting.) Absent, Wells.

Motion passes, 3-0, 1 abstention.

Reports:

Supervisor's Report:

Whitmore introduces Joe Stanonik, Newport Fire District Trustee. Stanonik announces he resigned his trustee appointment with the fire district after 14 years of service, effective Thursday, August 13, 2020. Stanonik, who is also a 24-year member of the Newport Fire District, wants to spend more time focusing on training lesser experienced first responders in the fire department.

The board unanimously thanks Stanonik for his years of service. His departure as trustee leaves an opening on the district's 3-person governing board.

Supervisor Whitmore says the township board should begin discussing future township compensation at next month's board meeting in preparation for the next term of offices. He will provide compensation comparison information to the full board for review, prior to next month's meeting.

Indicating his accounting background, Trustee Jim Zegar volunteers to give a summary report regarding the results of the township's annual financial audit. As in years past, Evoy, Kamshulte, Jacobs, and Co. performed the township audit and Zegar notes their long-standing experience and competency with municipal auditing. Zegar comments on the method of accounting being used (modified cash basis) and highlights the township's financial position--including no unfunded pensions or bonded debt. Zegar concludes, the auditor did not find any reason for concern regarding Newport's financial situation for the audited period, ending February 29, 2020. Trustee Zegar suggests the board vote to accept the audit report.

Trustee Mike Wells joins the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

Motion by Zegar, second by Spiller to accept the Annual Financial Report for the period ending February 29, 2020.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes, Spiller, Williams, Wells, Zegar, Whitmore. Nays, none.

Motion passes, 5-0.

Supervisor Whitmore comments he will have a report on elected official compensation for townships at the September meeting. He suggests board members do some research on their own, noting Newport's compensation is much less than most other Illinois townships. The board will begin discussing compensation for the new term of office at the September Regular Board Meeting. Assessor Berens provided the supervisor with compensation information for area assessors. Trustee Zegar relays his experience with the Village of Wadsworth and how compensation for officials was adjusted with an annual 3% increase, going back to the last time

officials received an adjustment and allotting for 3% every year thereafter. The Village President's compensation was similarly adjusted.

The clerk reminds the supervisor an ordinance is necessary to change compensation, and suggests Whitmore contact township legal counsel to prepare any necessary documentation and confirm the last date compensation can be voted on for the next term.

Highway Commissioner

Commissioner Edmonds says the road district is again employing JB Trees to perform tree trimming, and additionally, storm clean-up resulting from the recent Derecho. Rodger Edmonds says his team is spending a number of days working in Antioch on Grass Lake Road, commenting that the road district is helping Antioch out.

The Daughters of the American Revolutionary (DAR) have recently begun working in the Newport area at the Mount Rest Cemetery, where graves of revolutionary war soldiers are located. Edmonds notes the Village of Wadsworth recently made a generous donation of \$1,500 to the DAR to help with plans to repair, clean and reset gravestones. Commissioner Edmonds says he is donating township labor/equipment to further assist in the revitalization effort, including the installation of a new entrance gate and tree trimming. Edmonds indicates his wife; Toni Edmonds is on the cemetery board. If anyone has questions regarding the Mount Rest Cemetery, they can contact Mrs. Toni Edmonds.

The commissioner indicates the road district's portion of Mill Creek Road work has been completed by Lake County DOT. The exception is the grindings discussed at the June and July meetings. Edmonds notes he has yet to come to an agreement with the county on the grindings he had planned to use for shoulder enhancement. The commissioner would like to install limestone shoulders for area bike and pedestrian traffic. The district's portion of work has come in under budget at ~\$150,000.

Rodger Edmonds comments the district is receiving \$8,911 every six months for three years thru the REBUILD ILLINOIS program initiated by Governor JB Pritzker's administration. The funds must be used for allowable road related expenses, and all funds must be used within three years or be forfeited. Newport has already begun receiving such funds.

Finally, Edmonds looks for board consensus for an IGA with Benton Township to perform snowplowing and mowing activities. (Consensus received.) Edmonds says this is strictly for an IGA, similar to the work the district does for the Village of Wadsworth, and is not an effort to combine townships.

Assessor's Report:

Assessor Berens comments that the property tax "blue sheets" are out and he briefly reviews factors stated on the sheet. Berens says Newport's equalization factor (assessment) rate of +4% is in the middle of rates, as compared to nearby communities. Berens says his office is not

accepting walk-ins during the Covid-19 Emergency Declaration period, and further indicates his office has reduced its hours. The Newport Assessor's Office is currently operating Monday-Wednesday-Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., however Berens says they prefer emails. Appointments are required for visitors.

Clerk's Report:

The clerk notes all board members have been provided with a copy of the Annual Financial Audit for the fiscal year March 1, 2019-February 29, 2020. As required by statute, the audit has been posted at the Township Offices, filed with the county clerk's office and a publication notice has been provided to the newspaper. Additionally, copies are available for the public both at the Township Offices, or by request.

Trustee Comments:

Daryle Spiller—No report.

Stan Williams—Trustee Williams extends his thanks to Highway Commissioner Rodger Edmonds, for assisting with clearing township and village roads during the recent Derecho storm. Williams says Edmonds stepped up to the plate, while Village of Wadsworth personnel were unavailable.

Mike Wells—No report.

James Zegar—No report.

Township Business:

Finances:

Supervisor Whitmore indicates the warrants for the monthly bills are available for trustee review.

Whitmore requests a motion to approve the General Town Fund bills.

Motion by Spiller, second by Zegar.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes, Spiller, Williams, Wells, Zegar, Whitmore. Nays, none.

Motion passes, 5-0.

Whitmore requests a motion to approve the Road & Bridge bills.

Motion by Williams, second by Wells.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes, Spiller, Williams, Wells, Zegar, Whitmore. Nays, none.

Motion passes, 5-0.

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

Motion by Spiller; second by Zegar.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes, Spiller, Williams, Wells, Zegar, Whitmore. Nays, none.

Motion passes, 5-0.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Closed Session:

No closed session.

Motion to Adjourn:

Supervisor Whitmore requests a motion to adjourn the Regular Board Meeting.

Motion by Williams; second by Wells.

Voice Vote: Ayes, all. Nays, none.

Motion passes, 5-0.

Meeting adjourns at 7:40 p.m.

Dated the 19th day of August 2020.

_____s/Debbie Spurgeon_____

Debbie Spurgeon, Township Clerk