

# Minutes Board of Town Trustees

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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 16, 2020

**Members Present:**

J. Daryle Spiller, Trustee

Stan Williams, Trustee

James Zegar, Trustee

Mike Wells, 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, Mike Wells, James Zegar, Debbie Spurgeon and Randy Whitmore.

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

Motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from August 19, 2020 by Zegar, second by Williams.

Roll call vote: Ayes, Spiller, Williams, Wells, Zegar, Whitmore. Nays, none.

Motion passes, 5-0

**Reports: Supervisor's Report:**

Supervisor Whitmore reports on his compensation recommendation for elected officials for the next term of office. He comments that the board will need to vote on the compensation resolution at the October meeting.

The supervisor indicates that while Illinois remains under phased Covid-19 restrictions, Newport's meetings are again being held in-person since August 2020. However, we may need to return to Zoom meetings at some point if the State's Covid positivity situation deteriorates.

### **Highway Commissioner**

Commissioner Edmonds reports that the district will start brush cutting next week from Plaza Drive, south along the roadway.

Edmonds updates the township board on Lake County's progress with the Wadsworth Road/Dilly's Road round-about, indicating that the roadway is now expected to open earlier than originally planned, with re-opening likely toward the end of October.

The commissioner indicates the inter-governmental agreement (IGA) with Benton Township is proceeding forward. With this new agreement, Newport will take on the responsibility for the winter maintenance of approximately 5 miles of Benton Township roads. Edmonds notes that with an IGA, the township cannot make a profit-- under Illinois law, it must be a break-even arrangement. He says Benton Township does not have a road department. Edmonds will have 3 employees snow-plowing, with an additional 2 'snowbirds' he can add on if the season's snowfall warrants.

Newport needs to have 15 miles of roadway in order to maintain a road district under the new IL State mandate. Newport is short of the minimum mileage requirement, which has landed the road district on the State's dissolution list. Highway Commissioner Edmonds comments that Scott Stelesky, Lake County, is working with the district to see what can be done to meet the minimum mileage requirement, but that it must be accomplished legally. He will continue to update the board as needed.

Lastly, Edmonds says his daughter, Beckie Mitton, is working with Newport's bookkeeper, Nancy Lech on investigating a bookkeeping system update for the district. Products they are evaluating range from \$8,500 to \$26,000. A recommendation will be made to the board in the near future. The supervisor comments that an update to the current system, shouldn't need to cost \$26,000 and suggests a more modest proposal.

### **Assessor's Report:**

Assessor Berens comments on his current salary, and reads aloud a letter to the board advocating for an increase to \$40,000 annually.

The supervisor notes that compensation for elected officials is intended for the office, not for the individual, as there is no guarantee that a person will be re-elected.

**Clerk's Report:**

The clerk asks trustees to review and sign the monthly audit report.

**Trustee Comments:**

Daryle Spiller—No report.

Stan Williams—No report.

Mike Wells—No report.

James Zegar—No report.

**Township Business:**

Supervisor Whitmore provides salary compensation comparison to other area townships, then lays out his proposal for compensation increases for the next term of office, as follows:

Highway Commissioner +35%

Assessor +15%

Supervisor +25%

Trustees +40%

Clerk +25%

A brief discussion occurs on Newport's low compensation in comparison with other area townships. The low compensation for officials in Newport is often justified as being relative to the size of the township, however it is noted that the township's size can also mean officials have more on their plate with less assistance from staff, and may need to be available at off hours.

Highway Commissioner Edmonds comments that Clerk Spurgeon does a good job keeping the township on track, meeting its requirements, deadlines and legal filings.

A new compensation resolution will be prepared by the township's legal counsel and a vote is expected to take place at the October Regular Meeting.

**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 Wells.

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 Zegar.

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 Zegar, second by Spiller.

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

Motion passes, 5-0.

**Public Comment:**

