

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 August 18, 2021

Members Present:

J. Daryle Spiller, Trustee

Stanley Williams, Trustee

Mike Wells, Trustee

James Zegar, Trustee

Randall Whitmore, Supervisor

Jerome Berens, Assessor

Call to Order: Supervisor Randy 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, Mike Wells, Jerome Berens, Jim Zegar and Randy Whitmore. Absent, Debbie Spurgeon. Also present, Rodger Edmonds, Highway Department Director.

[Note: At the clerk's request, Daryle Spiller is acting Clerk for the August meeting. All pertinent information was provided to Trustee Spiller in advance of tonight's meeting.]

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

Motion to approve the July 21, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes Zegar, second by Wells.

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

Motion passes, 5-0.

Reports:

Supervisor's Report:

Whitmore discusses a weekend safety concern identified by a resident on Country Lane near the grounds where the seasonal Renaissance Fair is held. Highway Department Director, Rodger Edmonds also received several area resident complaints regarding the same situation and says traffic was parked uncontrollably alongside the road all the way south to State Line Road. Fair attendees traipsed through the area neighborhood yards of residents without regard, and if emergency access would have been necessary, it would have been impossible for emergency vehicles to get through. Apparently, parkers were being charged by one area business owner \$5 per vehicle, but since no permit was issued by Lake County or Newport Township to allow for a controlled situation, and vehicles were parked in fields and along the roadside, the current fee or parking is illegal. To assist the area township residents, Edmonds closed Country Lane the following morning to stop the situation from repeating on Sunday. He intends to barricade Country Lane for the remaining weekends of the fair's season.

Whitmore reports Lake County is taking over the Dial-A-Ride program. Newport will no longer have to pay the township portion to support the service locally.

Highway Department Report:

Edmonds reports on wind damage from recent storms, which necessitated the township to hire additional support from J&B Tree Solutions in Zion at a rate of \$2,500 per day. Three trees from Benton Township were also included in the round of cleanup. Benton Township will be billed by Newport for their portion.

Director Rodger Edmonds says the department has received the 2.5-yard yellow 450 Ford dump truck back from the repair shop. The vehicle sustained significant damage due to negligent operation by an employee. The incident necessitated replacement of the vehicle's hoist ram, at a cost of \$2,500. The employee had the box of the vehicle up in the air, with a full load of dirt on it while situated at a severe angle. Edmonds additionally says he also had the John Deere in for repairs, with a relief valve issue. The entire cab requires removal to complete the relief valve repairs. The cost to the township for this repair is \$4,500.

Edmonds inquires with Whitmore on the status of the tribute sign for the late Ken Harvey. The supervisor signed the county's application form and submitted it for approval electronically. A small ceremony will take place with Ken's family and township board members in attendance, once the sign is installed.

Edmonds comments that the township road department will participate in Winthrop Harbor's 'Touch a Truck' children's event at the Schlader Recreational Building on Saturday, August 21st.

Rodger Edmonds has been in contact with Village of Wadsworth Trustee Ben Dolan regarding the new IGA between Newport and Wadsworth. Dolan confirmed he has everything he needs from the township and promised to have the paperwork completed and over to Edmonds within a few days. Edmonds says that was a month ago and no further update has been received.

Edmonds says he continues to be frustrated with the Village of Wadsworth maintenance department during emergency response situations. They outright refuse to assist in storm clean-up within the village. Lake County Sheriff deputies were unsuccessful in reaching anyone in charge at the village, therefore tying up policing resources at the site of a fallen tree across the roadway. The storms were predicated, yet no village resource was reachable or available, to deal with life/safety concerns. During these storm events, Newport Township employees again performed clean-up work for the township and village roadways with no assistance from Wadsworth's maintenance department, says Edmonds. While he and his team were continuing clean-up efforts on village streets the following day, Edmonds sees both Wadsworth maintenance employees sitting idle in the Village Hall parking lot. He says he has expressed his ongoing frustrations to Village of Wadsworth Trustee Ben Dolan on the matter. Trustee Williams shares concerns about the village's lack of a sense of urgency, and a lack of an identified on-call resource for life safety events.

Edmonds further comments on the lack of trash pick-up along roads situated within the Village of Wadsworth, calling it an overall disgrace and citing a dysfunctional organization at the village.

Lastly, Edmonds needs the village to complete the updated IGA they have repeatedly promised, in order that the township can finally move forward and bill the village for work already performed.

Assessor's Report:

Assessor Berens reports the property tax 'blue sheets' have been mailed. Newport Township's average increase is 2.38%. He notes the top 4 area township increases were as follows: Waukegan 7%, Zion 6%, Avon 5% and Wauconda 5%. Assessor Jerome Berens says everyone can generally afford a modest increase. Berens also notes the MLS annual report identifies an increase of approximately 10% in home values, which he says could cause next year's increase to climb. Trustee Williams counters that a home has only two values: the purchase price and the sales price. Berens prefers Williams email him if he has comments or questions.

Clerk's Report:

The clerk notes the monthly board audit report is circulating for board signatures.

The Annual Financial Audit for the year ended February 28, 2021 has been provided to each board member.

A resident (Judy Cashmore) called suggesting that Newport create a more comprehensive brochure for Senior's, essentially a quick access guide for area emergency and important phone numbers. Ms. Cashmore indicates she received Newport's existing Dial-a-Ride pamphlet at the fire station senior day, but feels it is lacking information that it could include, which would make it more helpful. Cashmore asks the board to consider improvements in the future. (Supervisor

Whitmore responds the township may consider doing a new pamphlet in the near future, once new tax monies are received.)

Trustee Comments:

Daryle Spiller—No report.

Stan Williams—No report.

Mike Wells—No report.

James Zegar—Trustee Zegar inquires on the status of a Dial-A-Ride usage report for Newport Township. (The supervisor will provide the report at the next meeting.) Zegar says he will review the Annual Financial Audit and give the board a summary next month during his comments.

Township Business:

The Annual Financial audit is presented to the Board of Trustees for the year ended February 28, 2021.

Finances:

Supervisor Whitmore indicates the monthly bill warrants are available for board review.

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

Motion by Zegar, second by Williams.

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

Motion passes, 5-0.

Public Comment:

None.

Motion to Adjourn:

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

Motion by Williams second by Spiller.

Voice Vote: Ayes, all. Nays, none.

Motion passes, 5-0.

Meeting adjourns at 7:37 p.m.

Dated the 18th day of August 2021.

 s/Debbie Spurgeon

Debbie Spurgeon, Township Clerk