

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 April 17, 2024

Members Present:

J. Daryle Spiller, Trustee

Corey Kirschhoffer, Trustee

Mike Wells, Trustee

Frank Kaiser, Trustee

Jerome Berens, Assessor

Debbie Spurgeon, Clerk

Randy Whitmore, Supervisor

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, Corey Kirschhoffer, Mike Wells, Frank Kaiser, Jerome Berens, Debbie Spurgeon and Randy Whitmore.

Also present, Rodger Edmonds, Highway Department Director.

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

Motion by Kirschhoffer, second by Kaiser to approve the March 20, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes, Spiller, Kirschhoffer, Wells, Kaiser, Whitmore. Nays, none.

Motion passes, 5-0.

Reports:

Supervisor's Report:

Supervisor Whitmore comments on a 73-acre parcel on the NE corner of Kilbourne and 9th Street, commonly known as the Reiser Farm. He has spoken with Eric Wagner, Director of Lake Co Planning & Zoning regarding a proposed solar farm on the site. The supervisor would like to see the township get some tax funding if the project moves forward, and inquires about rezoning to Commercial. Assessor Berens indicates the property is zoned Agriculture, as it currently has row crops on it. Berens says once the property transitions from row crops, the township will be able to get additional tax monies. Whitmore says he's been advised from Wagner that a public hearing is necessary prior to the project moving forward. Rodger Edmonds adds there is currently a state bill which would give townships additional oversight to these types of projects (*i.e.*, solar, wind, etc.). A brief discussion occurs on the township's previous efforts regarding a solar project on township owned property.

The supervisor notes that Bruce Cramer's trustee term on the Newport Fire District Board is lapsing. Whitmore has spoken to Fire Chief Kirschhoffer and expects to re-appoint Mr. Cramer for another trustee term at the May Regular Board Meeting.

Whitmore indicates he will be holding a second Decennial Meeting by the end of April. Details will be worked out in the coming days. Whitmore summarizes findings of the Wendall Cox Report and notes the committee will be utilizing data from the report in their final summary to the county.

Highway Department Report:

Highway Department Director Rodger Edmonds reports the Village of Wadsworth will pave N Delany Road from Rt. 173 to Russell Road with grant monies and MFT funds that the village received. Edmonds says the project will go out for bid within the next month. This is good news, as this section of Delany is long overdue for attention beyond frequent patching.

Director Edmonds adds that he and Wadsworth Administrator, Pat DePersio agree that 9th Street will remain a weight limit road. Repairs to 9th Street this season will be limited to grind in place and pave. They are currently working together to reevaluate area roadways that the township and village maintain, regarding axel weight to class weight (ex: A,B,C) classifications. Edmonds also notes the Village of Wadsworth is soon expected to once again have hired police patrolling the village. All officers can write tickets for class weight violations, whereas only authorized truck officers can write-up axel weight violations, due to the need to weigh the suspected vehicles. No further details on the scope of the patrols at this time.

Edmonds says culverts located near Russell and Delany Roads are collapsing, possibly due to settling. While the township is currently responsible for the culvert maintenance, some of what needs replacing may be beyond the township's scope - township culverts intersecting a county road. Lake County may end up taking over these culverts, as they expect to repave Russell Road next

year. The county will make a final decision and notify Newport. The project is expected to go out for bid by the county in December.

Assessor’s Report:

Assessor Berens inquires on his bonus. He explains, the State used to pay the township assessors directly for hitting a specific goal, within 1% of assessment. Now, the state relies on the local entity to issue the bonus. Berens says he has met the goal required to obtain the bonus. (Supervisor Whitmore acknowledges the request.)

Berens notes the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is 3.4% this year, which is down from previous years. The CPI is used in the State’s calculation of the factor used by county and local assessors. The tax bills are coming out soon.

Berens comments on current average (between median and mean) Multiple Listing Service (MLS) valuations in Newport, including Old Mill Creek and Wadsworth, indicating \$275,000-\$309,000 (2020-2021). In 2022, the average rose to \$357,000 and in 2023, \$400,000. Housing valuations affect the sales ratio and ultimately the factor the state develops for local assessment.

Clerk’s Report:

Spurgeon notes the public budget hearing will be held at 6:45 p.m. on May 15th prior to the regular monthly meeting at 7:00 p.m. Final action on the budget will occur at the 7:00 meeting.

The monthly board audit report is routing for signatures.

Trustee Comments:

Daryle Spiller—No comments.

Corey Kirschhoffer—Trustee Kirschhoffer notes receiving an invitation to a ‘Mayor’s Luncheon’ being held at the Illinois Beach State Park facility. Kirschhoffer plans to attend, representing her business. Kirschhoffer indicates the event is being put together by Lynette Fisher in an effort to reinvigorate an area chamber of commerce for area small businesses.

Supervisor Whitmore notes that all Newport board members received invitations.

Mike Wells— No comments.

Frank Kaiser—No comments.

Township Business:

No new business.

Finances:

Supervisor Whitmore requests a motion to approve the township's bills.

Motion by Spiller, second by Wells to approve the April monthly bills.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes, Spiller, Kirschhoffer, Wells, Kaiser, Whitmore. Nays, none.

Motion passes, 5-0.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Motion to Adjourn:

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

Motion by Kaiser, second by Wells.

Voice Vote: Ayes, all. Nays, none.

Meeting adjourns at 7:40 p.m.

Dated the 17th day of April, 2024.

_____s/Debbie Spurgeon_____

Debbie Spurgeon, Township Clerk