

Special Township Meeting

DATE: May 19, 2010

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: St. Clair Township
107 Service Street
Swansea, IL 62226

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Buchanan, Supervisor
Mary Carroll, Clerk
Bob Trentman, Trustee
Dave Barnes, Trustee
Richard Schobert, Trustee
Greg Bridgman, Trustee
Mark Burk, Hwy Commissioner

MEMBERS ABSENT Robert Knee, Assessor

OTHERS PRESENT: Dean Wallen
Rhonda Burk
Tom Kroupa
John Frazier

Roll Call:

The special meeting of the St. Clair Township Board was called to order by Supervisor, Tim Buchanan with the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken. All present except for Assessor, Robert Knee.

Public Comment:

Supervisor Buchanan asked for any public comment. There was none.

Business Items:

a) July 2010 Regular Meeting. At the last meeting, it was voted to move the July meeting from July 13, 2010 to July 20, 2010 because of a scheduling conflict. Supervisor Buchanan said there is no longer a conflict, and he would like to move the meeting back to the originally scheduled date of July 13. Trustee Barnes made a motion to move the meeting back to the date of July 13, 2010 at 7:00 p.m., and it was seconded by Trustee Bridgman. Roll call vote. All in favor.

b) Permanent Road Tax Abatement Resolution. Supervisor Buchanan ask the Board members to review the Tax Computation report that was provided to them. He went over the numbers and explained how the property value had gone down about 1.5%. He also reviewed what had been levied and what the Township was expected to receive from the tax payers. Hwy Commissioner Burk said he felt that he could operate efficiently and finish the work that is planned for the year on what was levied last year rather than accepting the higher amount in the tax computation report. This would keep the tax rate down. Trustee Trentman said he was concerned we would be leaving out work that needs to be done if we take less money. Commissioner Burk explained that there is only physically a certain amount of work that can be accomplished in one year. He said he feels based on how things went this year and the work that is projected, the road crew can adequately get the job done with the same amount of money as last year. Trustee Bridgman gave his compliments to Commissioner Burk on the good job of keeping costs down.

Supervisor Buchanan pointed out there was a Tax Abatement Resolution in their packets and the Board would be voting on the abatement. He also noted this was only an advisory vote to provide the board's opinion, and that Commissioner Burk had the authority to give the final approval on the tax abatement.

Trustee Bridgman made a motion to support the St. Clair Township Highway Commissioner's request to abate the Permanent Road Tax and reduce the amount of tax that would be collected. The motion was seconded by Trustee Barnes. Roll call vote: Trentman- Nay, Bridgman-Aye, Schobert-Nay, Barnes-Aye, Buchanan-Aye. Aye's-3, Nay's-2. Motion passed.

c) Swansea Sewer Use Agreement. Supervisor Buchanan provided a very brief update.

d) Town & Road Budgets. Hwy Commissioner Burk went over the Road budget worksheet first. There is a line item of donated money to the Township which is part of Hwy Commissioner Burk's salary that he gives back to the Township. Trustee Schobert asked why is it not in with regular revenue and then budgeted out. Supervisor Buchanan said the Township's accountant said this was the acceptable way to do it

Commissioner Burk said that he would be reducing the Animal Control line item from \$6,500 to \$4,000. Supervisor Buchanan added that in addition to the Road District, the Township is also billed for animal control for a total bill of \$8,500 per year. He said he made a call to find out what this was for, and was told it was a donation to the Humane Society. The Humane Society explained that several years back, Animal Control and the Humane Society were a comingled organization. However, Animal Control is now handled by St. Clair County, and we pay taxes to the County for these services. He was told that we were the only municipality that supports the Humane Society. Commissioner Burk said that even though we do not have to pay this at all, he did not want to cut them off immediately. He said he would like to slowly start reducing it by going from \$5,400 to 4,000 for the Road District this year.

Trustee Schobert pointed out that you can only put 5% in the Contingency line item. Commissioner Burk said he appreciated the input, and he would make that change and have it ready for the Budget meeting in June.

Supervisor Buchanan then directed everyone to the Town Worksheet to review that budget. Supervisor Buchanan had a flow chart drawn on a marker board to explain to the Board members how in the past, sewer fees were being used to pay for maintaining the park and this practice needs to be changed. After a thorough review, all the Board members said they were clear. He said these changes would be reflected in the budget in employee sharing line items.

Supervisor Buchanan also said that he would like to reduce the amount of money the Township is donating to the Humane Society. Commissioner Burk said that it should be up to individuals to make donations to various causes they feel passionate about, and we should not use the taxpayers money for this. Supervisor Buchanan made a motion to donate \$2,000 to the Humane Society out of the Township budget this year instead of \$3,000, as was done in the past. There was no second. The motion died.

Trustee Bridgman made a motion to reduce the donation to the Humane Society to zero. There was no second. The motion died.

Supervisor Buchanan pointed out that he has added \$9,000 to the budget for a newsletter that would be distributed to the residents two times per year. The sewer, road and town funds would share

equally in this expense. He said the cost of the newsletter would be reduced as we get advertisers for the newsletter.

Supervisor Buchanan said he added money to the budget for election expenses that was included in rental equipment last year. He pointed out that each township is responsible for delivering and picking up the election booths and supplies to the polling places.

Assessor Robert Knee said that he may need more for travel expenses this year, so this line item was increased by \$500.

Supervisor Buchanan said the budget for the parks was low and to compensate for this, he was willing to reduce the contributions made to RSVP and Alternative Transportation. He asked for input from the trustees. Trustee Barnes, Schobert and Trentman all said do not reduce the contributions to these two agencies. Trustee Bridgman said he would like to have a clearer picture of the services these agencies provide for the Township.

Supervisor Buchanan went over the park budget and went into detail regarding the employee sharing expenses and how it would be allocated to the different budgets. He said that the Park equipment repair was bumped up because the truck was getting. He also said Park maintenance was being bumped out because the bridge in Centennial Park is in need of repair.

Again with the sewer budget, Supervisor Buchanan explained the various employee sharing expenses and how it would be handled. He said that the electricity budget was dropped down \$10,000 due to switching from purchasing electricity from Ameren to an outside service. He said the garbage disposal was also dropped down due to a new provider. Supervisor Buchanan pointed out that the fuel cost went from \$21,443 last year to \$9,129 this year. He said part of this reduction has to do with getting Moto Mart cards and they are not charged tax. In addition, the employees are driving in ways to reduce gas use. The State of Illinois loan was paid off, so this was dropped to zero.

A large budget item is \$100,000 for the Piper Hills project. Supervisor Buchanan also said that \$280,000 was being budgeted for the sewer plant upgrade that the EPA is mandating. He pointed out that if we get the IEPA loan applied for, we would not have to pay that all at once.

He told the Board, the budgets would be ready at the hearing on June 8, 2010 and they would need to vote on it then.

Trustee Bridgman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Schobert seconded the motion. Roll call vote. All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Mary Carroll
Township Clerk