

**MINUTES - BOARD of TOWN TRUSTEES**

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**STATE of ILLINOIS**                      **TYPE OF MEETING HELD:** Regular  
**LASALLE COUNTY,**                      **SS.**     **TIME MEETING BEGAN:** 5:00pm  
**TOWN of BRUCE**                         **TIME MEETING ENDED:** 5:57pm

The May 10, 2017 meeting of the Bruce Township Board of Trustees opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Highway Commissioner John M. Barton was in attendance. The meeting was conducted by Mr. Henry Araujo as chairman and recorded by Clerk Sheryl Sedlock.

**APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING'S MINUTES:**

The first order of business was to read and approve the minutes from the April 11, 2017 Regular Meeting. Trustee Steve Biroschik was absent from the April 11, 2017 meeting and wanted clarification on the suggestion Trustee Randy Baumrucker made during that meeting concerning the creation of a new policy concerning the Public Comment section of the meetings. Trustee Biroschik was concerned that having a new policy limiting the amount of time an individual can speak would stifle the public. Supervisor Araujo responded indicating this is intended for when there is a large number of individuals wishing to speak. Trustee Biroschik mentioned that the Streator Township High School Board has an unwritten rule of allowing individuals 5 minutes but, as the former President of that board, he never enforced it. Supervisor Araujo and others commented on other governmental bodies in the area, such as the Streator City Council and the county, that have policies in place concerning public comment. Clerk Sedlock commented that in training she had taken she was told that you cannot enforce unwritten rules. The training encouraged townships to set the policy noting that the township does not have to enforce the limit on time for public comment. But, by having the policy, it allows the board to limit the time individuals speak if need be. The discussion concluded with no changes being required to the April 11, 2017 meeting minutes.

MOTION MADE BY: Trustee Jerry Christensen                                 2<sup>nd</sup> BY: Trustee Bob Harrison  
That the minutes of the April 11, 2017 Regular Meeting be approved.

No further discussion was required. Trustee Biroschik abstained from voting since he had not been present at the meeting.

Aye's: 4                      Abstained: 1                      Nay's: 0                      Motion: Carried

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

There were no public comments raised at the meeting.

**TREASURER'S REPORT/APPROVAL OF BILLS**

A summary of the bills was distributed for review. Trustee Biroschik noted the line item for Wex Bank. He strongly suggested putting in place a book keeping policy to clearly show which township vehicles each purchase of gas is being made for. He felt even just a memo on the receipt would be helpful when responding to inquires on spending. Trustee Baumrucker asked if this would be a problem for Highway Commissioner Barton. Highway Commissioner Barton noted that his department rarely charges fuel to the credit card. His department more commonly fuels up at their fuel pump at the shop. However, he did indicate that it would be reasonable to keep a log of the fuel being dispensed and the vehicle it is dispensed to.

MOTION MADE BY: Trustee Baumrucker     2<sup>nd</sup> BY: Trustee Biroschik  
That the bills be allowed and paid.

No further discussion was required. Clerk Sedlock took the roll call vote:

- Trustee Bob Harrison: Aye
- Trustee Jerry Christensen: Aye
- Trustee Randy Baumrucker: Aye
- Trustee Steve Biroschik: Aye
- Supervisor Henry Araujo: Aye



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Aye's: 5

Nay's: 0

Motion: Carried

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### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

#### SUPERVISOR'S:

Supervisor Araujo reported that he had transferred the funds as instructed in Resolution 2017B – Transfer of General Town Funds to the General Assistance Fund. The resolution was passed on April 11, 2017 at the Annual Town Meeting. He went on to say that he is still trying to get an Emergency Assistance (EA) program started for the township. He was told that the Township Officials of Illinois are revising the book that is used to guide Supervisors in running their General Assistance (GA) and EA programs. He indicated that he plans to wait to buy the book and will not fully implement a program until the revisions are complete. Trustee Biroschik asked if there was a State of Illinois Statute that allowed townships to take GA money and put it for EA. Supervisor Araujo responded that GA and EA is essentially the same thing. Trustee Christensen agreed with Supervisor Araujo and shared with the board that Bruce Township offered EA back when he first joined the board. There was a brief discussion on EA and how the program might be run including the criteria for who would be eligible, how much could be given (both minimum and maximum amounts), limitations on what types of expenses would qualify and the type of records that would need to be maintained. Supervisor Araujo shared with the board that he is already receiving calls from the public inquiring about the program. Supervisor Araujo will keep the board apprised of progress he makes on this effort.

#### HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER'S:

Highway Commissioner Barton did not have anything to report to the board at this time. When asked by Trustee Baumrucker for an update on the progress the City of Streator was making on Eastwood Avenue, Highway Commissioner Barton responded that the work was progressing and that the road was in much better shape than a few weeks ago. He noted that a coat of asphalt had been laid but that it was not the final coat.

#### ASSESSOR'S:

Assessor Sullivan was not in attendance.

#### TRUSTEE'S:

Trustee Biroschik acknowledged that this is his last meeting as a Trustee for the township and that he had a few remarks he wanted to share with the board. He started by acknowledging that he had had some disagreements with members of the board and he hoped that no one had taken it personally. He felt that some of the things he had brought up had affect some change on this board and it has made things more transparent which he felt was a good thing. He went on to encourage the current and new member of the board with the following points:

- continue to question because there is always room to make thing better
- really watch things and look for errors
- when they attend classes go into it in a little more depth than in the past
- become more involved in the development of the levies and budgets
- as stated earlier, put in place better accounting procedures for spending
- lower or eliminate some of the levies, especially pertaining to GA, with the intent of getting some of the surpluses down
- continue to be transparent and resist the need to stifle or hide the township business (not that he was saying that is being done)
- remember the tax payers are the boards bosses and that is who they are beholden to
- reconsider getting a forensic audit

He went on to say that he felt he opened some dialogue and accomplished getting some transparency in his 8 years on the board and he felt that was an accomplishment that made his time on the board worthwhile. He went on to say that he really enjoyed being on the board and that it has been a pleasure serving the public over the years. He went on to thank those who voted him into office over the years and hoped that he hadn't disappointed them. He expressed that it is everyone's duty to give something back to the community. He acknowledged it is a tough thing to put your name on a ballot and serve and to remember,

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it's never the wrong time to do the right thing. And finally, he complemented Highway Commissioner Barton for the fine work he does on the township roads and bridges. He went on to acknowledge Assessor Sullivan for the way she runs the Assessor's Office like a well oiled machine. He also felt she is an example to the other assessors. He also acknowledged Clerk Sedlock for the work she does on the board. To everyone else he wished them well as they continue on and offered his assistance if they would ever need it saying he is only a phone call away. Supervisor Araujo acknowledge there had been some controversy for a while but what Trustee Biroshchik had brought up changed a lot of people's way of thinking including his own. He appreciated Trustee Biroshchik bringing the mistake to his attention and noted that he never profited from the mistake but he likes to think that he helped the seniors as much as he could. He went on to thank Trustee Biroshchik for his year of service.

**OTHER:**

There were no other reports presented.

**REPORTS BY SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

**HEALTH BOARD:**

Supervisor Araujo reported that he had received a complaint about a property that has a septic tank leak which is affecting the neighbors. He met with the resident who had made the complaint and observed the issue. He plans to contact the La Salle County Health Department to report the issue. When asked by Trustee Biroshchik if any further follow up had been done on the process to clean up properties. It was his understanding that if the county did not follow up and clean up the properties on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets that the township could do so. Supervisor Araujo reported that the township attorney had been consulted. The township attorney indicated that there was a lengthy process that would have to be followed and that the township would have to accept the liability associated with it. He went on to talk about a specific instance on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. There was a brief discussion on the problem in general.

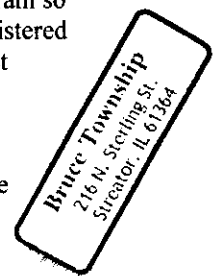
Highway Commissioner Barton indicated that the Clerk-Elect Marsha Johnston had shared with him a letter from the La Salle County Health Department concerning mosquito abatement and some larvacide they are offering to municipalities. Highway Commissioner Barton indicated that his department has never done any kind of mosquito abatement in the past. A brief discussion followed. Highway Commissioner Barton indicated that he had not received any complaints about unusually large amount of mosquitoes in the township and doesn't plan on pursuing this at this time.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Supervisor Araujo opened the discussion on the draft version of the Ordinance 2017A: 2017-2018 Budget and Appropriations – Road District that was distributed at the April 11, 2017 meeting. A brief discussion followed and several minor corrections were identified. Trustee Baumrucker noted that there was nothing in the budget concerning acquiring a truck formerly used for GA as had been discussed in previous meetings. He asked if something needed to be added. A discussion followed on the topic and expanded to include other equipment formerly used for GA with the end result being no need to add a line item in the budget concerning this matter. Trustee Biroshchik reminded the board to follow the appropriate procedures and have the proper documentation when transferring the equipment/trucks between departments within the townships control.

Trustee Biroshchik indicated that he had to leave the meeting early. Clerk Sedlock asked him, as a follow up to an item discuss at the March board meeting, if he had contact from the Streator Township High School (SHS) who was coordinating the implementation of the Free Summer Meals program through the Summer Food Service Program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by the Illinois State Board of Education. She shared that she had called the 800 number to get a confirmation on the program so the township would have details to provide the public when asked and was told that SHS was not registered with them as providing Free Summer Meals as yet. Trustee Biroshchik agreed to pass along the contact information Clerk Sedlock had to the appropriate person at SHS so they could follow up and get the program registered.

Supervisor Araujo then asked for any comments and/or changes for the draft version of the Ordinance 2017B: 2017-2018 Budget and Appropriations – Township that was distributed at the April 11, 2017



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meeting. There was a brief discussion on the ordinance and several line items were discussed and minor corrections and changes were identified. Clerk Sedlock made a list of changes for both ordinances for follow up. She also reminded the board that the Public Hearing to discuss and approve both ordinances would be held on June 14, 2017 starting at 4:45pm with Ordinance 2017A followed immediately by the public hearing on Ordinance 2017B. She indicated the notice for the Public Hearings would be posted in The Times on Friday, May 12, 2017 as well as on the Township Website and the door to the Township Office Building. Also, copies of the updated ordinances including the changes identified during this meeting would be made available for inspection by the public on May 12, 2017 in the lobby of the Township Office and online at the Township Website.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

No new business was discussed.

MOTION MADE BY: Trustee Christensen  
That the meeting be adjourned.

2<sup>nd</sup> BY: Trustee Baumrucker

Aye's: 4

Nay's: 0

Motion: Carried

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