

DON GRAY

CAPITAL TOWNSHIP CLERK

200 SOUTH NINTH STREET – ROOM 101
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62701
TELEPHONE: 217-753-6700/FACSIMILE: 217-535-3233

MINUTES

CAPITAL TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

DECEMBER 14, 2020

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The Capital Township Board of Trustees met by phone due to the Governor’s Executive Shelter in Place Order regarding COVID-19. The following members answered to roll call: Joe Aiello, Richard Berning, Brad Carlson, Alysse Aiello Hewell, and Lakeisha Purchase. Mark Crawford, Justine Macklin with the General Assistance Office, and Michelle Ownbey with Enos Park Neighborhood Association were also present. Bruce Stratton was present as Legal Counsel.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Trustee Purchase, seconded by Trustee Berning, for approval of the Minutes of the November 9, 2020 meeting. Upon a roll call vote, there were 5 Yeas – 0 Nays.

PUBLIC SPEAKER

Supervisor Aiello stated that Michelle Ownbey with Enos Park Neighborhood Association will speak regarding the TIF districts. Michelle addressed the board. She explained there are concerns and challenges with the way the current administration has overseen the various TIF districts throughout the city. She’s had a chance to speak with some of the township board members one on one and with a number of people from the park district board. She has heard the same things over and over. There are concerns the current administration has used TIF districts as a bait and switch. When the east side TIF renewed last year, the boundaries were extended, and the Mayor has already been vocal about their intention to renew the Madison Parkway TIF and then extend those boundaries to include Pillsbury. She definitely understands the concerns with continuing to extend those boundaries based on existing TIF’s. There have also been concerns expressed about the use of TIF funds for some projects, particularly some downtown that have been controversial. From the Neighborhood Association’s perspective,

they share some of those concerns and questions. It is important to hold the administration accountable for the way the TIF money is used in the various parts of town. She sees Enos Park as an example of a very successful TIF. There has been no discussion about changing their boundaries. There have not been any projects in their neighborhood that have caused issues. They have a program in place, which is an incentive for veterans and first responders to move to the neighborhood and receive a 20% down payment assistance. That program would cease once the TIF expires. They also have the new YMCA, and the commitment for that is to be funded half through the Enos Park TIF and half through the downtown TIF. Once the Enos Park TIF goes away then the downtown TIF is on the hook for another \$3 million. The downtown TIF is always under water, so that is a huge concern for them. They are hoping the TIF can be retroactively renewed in the spring legislative session next year. She hopes they will consider supporting the renewal of their TIF, which she sees as a separate issue from supporting the current City administration as a whole. She stated she would be happy to address any questions or concerns.

Trustee Berning stated his family are longtime residents and his descendants have actually lived in the area. The whole idea of the TIF law was to provide an incentive to start a redevelopment project. All of the TIF's seem to be extended way past what was written in the law. That is one of his concerns. He worked in City government for a portion of his career and noticed a lot of approvals when there was plenty of money for projects he questioned in his mind. Other governmental agencies who are being deprived of the increased assessed valuation are not getting it and still have expenses; therefore, they have to get money somewhere else. He does think Enos Park has done a very good job.

Michelle explained that the Enos Park TIF has never been renewed. With the downtown TIF being renewed for an unprecedented second time, she thinks that has made many folks much more conscious of the question of when will it end. She had conversations with Economic Development at the City, and she understands they can create a new TIF with the same boundaries as the existing TIF. They could start from scratch with the initial period of 23 years with a 12-year renewal. From her understanding, that is the Cities intention. If Enos Park doesn't get renewed, they will just start over with a new TIF. That does not require approval at the state level.

Supervisor Aiello asked if the \$500,000 in tax dollars would be distributed to the taxing bodies when this expires and is then renewed. Michelle stated that is not correct. Her understanding is that the TIF expires and there already is an obligation to the YMCA. They are going to take any money remaining in the TIF fund, including the money already allocated for the homeowner match and the first responder down payment. They will take those funds and make a payment towards the balance of the obligation to the YMCA, so no funds would go back to the taxing bodies. Supervisor Aiello clarified he is referring to when you reset the TIF. That \$500,000 that goes to Enos Park will then go to the taxing districts going forward. Then the value of the TIF's starts all over again. Michelle stated that is correct because the EAV would start at a new level.

Trustee Purchase stated she has seen the work they are doing. It makes sense to be in support of the renewal for 12 years instead of resetting to another 23 years.

Michelle explained they have their own challenges working with the current Mayor's administration. Her fear is they will end up being collateral damage in all of this. She thinks they have done a lot of good in the neighborhood, and there is a lot of potential to continue the momentum. Unfortunately, they will lose a lot that as a bi-product of some of the actions of the administration.

Trustee Berning asked if they believe the administration will not ask for an extension on this. Michelle stated that is not her understanding. She believes the Mayor is going to renew it retroactively, even though they know it is going to expire. He said he intends to renew it in the spring session retroactively. If that does not occur, at that point the City intends to start over and create a new TIF with the same boundaries.

Trustee Purchase asked where they go from this point. She asked if they call a question and vote in support or how do they proceed? Supervisor Aiello stated he thinks they can follow the wishes of the board or they can put it on the board as an action item. They can then do a little more research. It would probably make more sense to do that. He will send out Michelle's contact information out to the board today.

SUPERVISOR/GENERAL ASSISTANCE EXPENDITURES

A motion was made by Trustee Purchase, seconded by Trustee Berning, to approve payment of the Supervisor/Collector/General Assistance Administration Expenditures in the amount of \$1,500. Upon a roll call vote, there were 5 Yeas – 0 Nays.

TOWN CLERK/TOWN ASSESSOR EXPENDITURES

A motion was made by Trustee Carlson, seconded by Trustee Aiello Hewell, to approve payment of the Township Clerk/Township Assessor's Administration Expenditures in the amount of \$867.06. Upon a roll call vote, there were 5 Yeas – 0 Nays.

2020-2021 LEVY ORDINANCE

A motion was made by Trustee Berning, seconded by Trustee Aiello Hewell, for the adoption of the 2020-2021 Levy Ordinance. Upon a roll call vote, there were 5 Yeas – 0 Nays.

2021 TOWN BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

A motion was made by Trustee Aiello Hewell, seconded by Trustee Berning, to approve the 2021 Town Board meeting schedule. Upon a roll call vote, there were 5 Yeas - 0 Nays.

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING DISCUSSION

Supervisor Aiello stated he has talked with the Township Officials of Illinois and not everyone had their meeting. They hoped to have their meeting by the end of the year. Attorney Justin Reichert reviewed the last order by the Governor and was not comfortable holding the meeting according to those orders. Attorney Bruce Stratton stated he thinks they have little choice given the Governor's actions. They are bound by it until that period is up. Justin's email said he doesn't believe they can have the annual meeting as long as the current Governor's order is in effect. Trustee Purchase asked if they had to set it right now or if they could wait until they get a little bit closer due to the Governor's order. Supervisor Aiello stated he thinks they can take it month by month and follow the orders of legal counsel.

SUPERVISOR'S UPDATE

Supervisor Aiello discussed the status of the 11th Street property. The Veteran's office has moved in and they want to do some additional signage for the outside of the building. They want to put all the medals from the armed forces on the side of the building. They want to do signage on the outside of the building as opposed to just the windows. Trustee Purchase said she agrees with this as long as they put it up in the same place as the signs before. Trustee Carlson said he is fine with this since it is written in the contract that they put everything back to its original condition. Trustee Berning suggested they use fasteners that aren't as destructive to the siding. He will work with them since they have to put everything back to the way it was. Supervisor Aiello stated the board would be okay with this as long as they use the old placement of the signage. He will tell them they can move forward with using the existing holes in the building.

Supervisor Aiello reported the homeless shelter is still providing lunches, and the City of Springfield has opened the old Salvation Army building that has taken place of the winter warming center. They've had a few issues over there with a small COVID outbreak. They are not feeding that group. The Salvation Army is feeding them. Helping Hands has been under lockdown since they started providing lunches. They only have 40 to 45 people. People are required to take a COVID test before they go in there. They are still sheltering in place at Helping Hands, and they are still providing meals to them. He is assuming they still want to continue with that. He asked the board for any thoughts on this. Trustee Purchase asked Joe to send an email to them on how much they have been providing to them. Supervisor Aiello stated he would send out an update of the number of meals they have provided, when they started, and the cost.

Supervisor Aiello introduced Justine from the Capital Township General Assistance Office. Justine spoke to the board regarding the transition with the merger. She explained that their clients have been hit pretty hard. They have been able to help more people using Community Resources as a community partner. They have been able to send some people with no income to Community Resources for assistance. General Assistance helps the people they can and Community Resources has been able to help those they cannot with rent and utilities.

She feels like their numbers will increase and maybe even get better in the future. For rent and utility claims, the clients are required to have an income. They need to provide things like pay stubs, proof of child support, or proof of social security. They will accept those as long as they are ongoing income. Trustee Purchase asked if they refer them to Community Resources if they have no income. Justine stated they do refer them when they say they have no proof of income. Supervisor Aiello asked why the numbers dropped off on utilities. Justine stated many people lost income due to COVID. Some people were able to get unemployment and others were not able to. Trustee Purchase asked if Justine could provide a summary of what she said and what the process has been. Supervisor Aiello stated he could send out a report to them.

Supervisor Aiello explained that he had called eight or nine townships regarding some of their services and no one is changing anything of any significance about general assistance services they are providing. What he is hearing from some townships is that other entities such as Catholic Charities, service organizations, fraternities/sororities, and corporations are stepping up to help out. No one is making any significant changes or increasing any dollar amounts; they are just getting help from other groups. He can call around to see what people are doing with workfare. Whatever the board's wish is, he would be more than happy to follow up on it. Trustee Berning agreed with extending the workfare. He knows there are many people who have raised money through donations. They do have a disbursement program. Maybe they need to contact a few of these other organizations to let them know we have that mechanism and would be more than willing to partner with them to distribute some of the funds. Supervisor Aiello stated he would be willing to do that and the board can send people their way if they know of some who are willing to contribute. Trustee purchase asked if there is something they can send out to show them how that process will work. Supervisor Aiello stated he would. Trustee Aiello Hewell asked how they would communicate this to the public if they do expand this service. Supervisor Aiello stated he would work with Mark Crawford and Justine to see what network they can use. He knows Community Resources also has a network of people to work through.

Supervisor Aiello stated he knows things are starting to move a little bit with the homeless issue. He knows they are working on the continuum of care and they hired an executive director. He thinks they are working with the city and county, SIU, and other groups, and it may be something for them to look at. He will reach out to them as well regarding some of the homeless initiation money. He may have the executive director meet with them at some point.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Trustee Purchase, seconded by Trustee Berning, to adjourn the meeting to January 11, 2021 at Noon. Upon a roll call vote, there were 5 Yeas – 0 Nays.

Don Gray
Town Clerk