

DON GRAY

CAPITAL TOWNSHIP CLERK

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MINUTES

CAPITAL TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

FEBRUARY 8, 2021

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, and Lakeisha Purchase. Alysse Aiello Hewell was absent. Mark Crawford, Joe Roesch, Mary Hardy Hall, Bill Houlihan, and Sheila Scott Smith were also present. Bruce Stratton was present as Legal Counsel.

A motion was made by Trustee Purchase, seconded by Trustee Berning, to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. A motion was made by Trustee Berning, seconded by Trustee Carlson, to amend the minutes of January 11, 2021. Trustee Berning stated on Page 6 in the sixth paragraph, Zim Zerkle should be changed to Jim Zerkle. Upon a roll call vote, there were 4 Yeas – 0 Nays for approval of the minutes as amended.

A motion was made by Trustee Carlson, seconded by Trustee Purchase, to approve payment of the Supervisor/Collector/General Assistance Administration Expenditures, in the amount of \$750.00. Upon a roll call vote, there were 4 Yeas – 0 Nays.

A motion was made by Trustee Berning, seconded by Trustee Carlson, to approve payment of the Township Clerk/Township Assessor’s Administration Expenditures, in the amount of \$339.92. Upon a roll call vote, there were 4 Yeas – 0 Nays.

REPORT FROM LEGAL COUNSEL

There was no report from legal counsel.

ENOS PARK TIF DISTRICT

Supervisor Aiello stated Capital Township and its trustees are for development and like what Enos Park has done in that district with the balance between shopping, the YMCA, neighborhood improvements, and the restaurants. There has been some concerns raised, not only by Capital Township, but also by other taxing bodies, with regard to the extension of TIF districts. It is well documented and discussed among different districts. He received some feedback from a couple trustees.

Supervisor Aiello stated at this point they could get this on the floor or just have an open discussion. He asked legal counsel to guide them on the proper course of action on this. Bruce Stratton stated there has never been a motion to approve the request for an extension. There has just been general discussion amongst taxing bodies, but he does not think Capital Township had a motion to take formal action. Supervisor Aiello stated there was a motion made by Trustee Purchase for a letter, but there was no second to that motion. Mr. Stratton stated if you want to do something you will have to make a motion to do it, but you can have general discussion on this.

A motion was made by Trustee Purchase, seconded by Trustee Berning, to put discussion on the floor to discuss the TIF letter for Enos Park. A voice vote was unanimous. Supervisor Aiello asked for any comments from the public.

Sheila Scott Smith stated she would prefer to respond after she has heard some of their discussion. She sits on the Springfield Economic Development Commission, and has not heard Capital Township's discussions or concerns about this yet. They have not formally discussed this as a commission. She knows the City's Economic Development Department does have meetings every other month to go over all the TIF's. There is also a joint review board where all taxing bodies are invited annually. They had a meeting fairly recently, and she doesn't recall anyone from the township being there to address their concerns. There was someone from the Park District on the call. Supervisor Aiello clarified that he was on that call last year.

Bill Houlihan, with Senator Dick Durbin's office, addressed the board. He was asked to get involved with this in May 2020. Senator Manar was working the Senate on this. He was asked to get in touch with the Speaker of the House at the time to see if they were going to go along with the TIF here in Springfield. He thinks there were two or three others asking for another extension. After speaking with Speak Madigan, he reported back they would take it up in one bill, but the Speaker wanted to make sure all the local governments submitted their letters of support. He forwarded that back to those who needed to hear it, and they never got it done in May. He was asked again in December to get involved, and they still did not have the letter. Now they have a new speaker so they are at a place where they have to start over and have conversations. He is having a meeting with the Speaker this Thursday.

Supervisor Aiello stated he has spoken with Representative Butler on this issue and recently appointed Senator Turner. He asked what their timetable is on this.

Mr. Houlihan stated he probably would not even bring it up on Thursday. There is no reason to bring it up unless you have support of the extension from all the local governments. Supervisor Aiello asked if this is something typically done late in legislation. Mr. Houlihan stated they normally do it later in the legislative year. Supervisor Aiello asked when they are coming back. Trustee Carlson stated the House comes in Wednesday just for some rules. They are not coming back until early March. Historically, any legislation that addresses TIF's throughout the state are not addressed until May.

Supervisor Aiello stated from his perspective in talking with School District #186 and the Park District, they have always said they are not against development or what Enos Park has been doing. Right now, there are some struggles with the Enos Park District agreement. He does believe there are three letters outstanding right now. The original Park District letter was a no, and Capital Township has not said no or yes. In light of some historic challenges they have seen by the City and some missteps about TIF districts, and challenges with Enos Park, they have talked about some oversight accountability and transparency. The purpose of a TIF is to jumpstart an area, surrender tax dollars to TIF districts, then the taxing bodies will get that money back. The problems it creates with taxing districts is well documented. One of the problems is the fact that the City of Springfield took \$750,000 out of the TIF District to pay their own bills. They know it cramps the style of some of the taxing districts when they have to do different things for themselves, and they are also living with tax caps. That is why there has been so much pushback by the taxing bodies, and there are issues raised by the Park District and School Board. It is important to know they are trying to look for a path forward but he thinks something needs to change, and he does not think status quo is going to work. When they extended the downtown TIF District, they got the letters but they are giving \$1.4 million back to all the taxing districts. That is not what Capital Township wants. They do not want any money back. They just think there needs to be better accountability, transparency, and oversight. He doesn't know what the answer is on that, but it's on the floor for discussion.

Trustee Purchase agreed with the bullet points he put in the last email to them, and that accountability definitely was not there. She is a homeowner in Enos park and definitely knows some of the challenges they faced before the new administration came in. When Mayor Langfelder came into office, they made some changes to policies and procedures. She thought if they put their concerns in the letter then they would be good to go. She suggested they all participate in the annual TIF review so they can have some input in it as well. Supervisor Aiello stated he did listen in on that call and took it all in. Some of the concerns are with administrative expenses that come out of TIF Districts and go into different departments at the City. They can address those things in the letter. Trustee Purchase said she stated in her letter that she strongly agrees TIF's require a high level of transparency, accountability, and input from the public and taxing bodies. The City does have all their TIF reports on their website.

Trustee Carlson agreed with Trustee Purchase on this. They should keep a narrow focus on Enos Park only. Maybe it's time they start drafting a letter and work it that way the next couple of months. They had some good discussions the last three meetings. They can start putting pencil to paper so they can actually see the specifics, whether it's independent audits

on a yearly basis or every six months. You can take different money from different TIF districts They can start drafting a letter and work on it for the next couple of months.

Mary Hardy Hall, residing at 3509 Crystal Spring Drive in Springfield, addressed the County Board. She asked if there is an oversight evaluation procedure. Supervisor Aiello stated he thinks there is a program with Enos Park for home improvements. Mary asked if there is a general form for oversight evaluation. Supervisor Aiello stated there is a report turned into the comptroller and there is also a joint review committee the EDC Committee. He doesn't know if all requests go to the EDC Committee. Some of the smaller requests may just be signed off by the Mayor. Mary stated that it sounds like there needs to be a standardized oversight evaluation procedure to adhere to. Supervisor Aiello stated he could look into it.

Sheila Scott Smith stated it is not her understanding that the Mayor can sign off on any TIF, regardless of size. It goes through the City Council for approval, and it goes through the Economic Development Commission. Many of the requests for TIF's are handled at the staff level then they move forward through the extensive process. There is a lot of paperwork they have to fill out. They usually then come back to the EDC and then go to the City Council. There is a significant amount of oversight. That is the opportunity for the taxing bodies to voice their concerns and have input how any particular thing moves forward. It is not as if the Mayor just decides everything. Supervisor Aiello stated he could reach out to Val and find out how it goes through the system. He thinks this is a great opportunity for them to learn a little bit about this since all the taxing bodies are surrendering their funds to the TIF District. He has heard a couple different things on how it goes through the system, so he will find out how it works.

Sheila asked for clarification as to why they are doing only the Enos Park TIF and not the Madison Park TIF as well. She thinks it is coming up for renewal. One of the criticisms she heard from taxing bodies is this whole process was started too late. They will have to do this again for Madison Park. Why would you only want to consider the one? Supervisor Aiello stated he got feedback on that issue and was told it would be dead on arrival if they were together. Enos Park is different from Madison Park. They want to not only extend it twelve more years, but also expand the boundaries to pick up Pillsbury. From what he understands, it is a different type of area. Sheila asked if the other letters of support are only for one or for both. Supervisor Aiello stated he is not sure, but will check into that. He asked Bill Houlihan what his thoughts are on this. Mr. Houlihan stated legislature most likely wants to deal with one. It will all end up as one bill. Historically, legislature wants to deal with that one TIF when there are going to be changes and have it be a separate bill. In the final analysis, it will all end up in one bill. Sheila asked if the Mayor is still proposing that they be submitted together. Supervisor Aiello stated that was his understanding. He cannot speak to all the things that are happening over there, but he will follow up on this as best he can.

Trustee Berning stated they could put together a letter to address the issues. When they wrote the original legislature, many acts were written to be vague. The original legislation had time limits and allowed for one renewal. It is really a redistribution of funds between tax districts in an effort to increase the size of the pie. It is fine, if it works.

The issue brought up by Mary Hardy Hall is really about oversight and evaluation of the individual projects. He agrees there needs to be some type of accountability, not just with the staff, but they need to have someone else involved in that audit. Mary Hardy Hall stated that is exactly what she meant.

A motion was made by Trustee Berning, seconded by Trustee Carlson, to amend the motion on the letter to direct the Supervisor to draft a letter for the purpose of the board's position on the Enos Park TIF District for the trustees to review. Upon a roll call vote, there were 4 Yeas – 0 Nays. Joe Roesch clarified that the letter would be a letter in support with certain guidelines and restrictions. On the motion, as amended, there were 4 Yeas – 0 Nays.

Supervisor Aiello thanked everyone for a very productive discussion.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Supervisor Aiello stated they continue to provide lunches to the Helping Hands Homeless Shelter. These are provided to those who are in the facility and do not leave. Trustee Purchase asked what the cost of this is at now. Supervisor Aiello stated they ended the fiscal year at \$91,000 and he will send them all a report. Trustee Purchase asked if they could help Contact Ministries for lunches. Supervisor Aiello stated he has not heard from them. Trustee Purchase said she has heard from them and will send their contact information to him. She just wants to spread it out a little bit and help others.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Trustee Berning, seconded by Trustee Purchase, to adjourn the meeting to March 8, 2021 at Noon. Upon a roll call vote, there were 4 Yeas – 0 Nays.

Don Gray
Town Clerk