

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
CITY of BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP

Tuesday, April 13, 2010
6:00 p.m.

City Hall Council Chambers
109 East Olive Street, Bloomington, Illinois

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order: Tracey Covert, Town Clerk
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Introduction of Town Officers
- IV. Nominations for Moderator
- V. Election and Swearing in of Moderator
- VI. Remarks by Moderator on Conducting the Meeting
- VII. Approval of Minutes of 2009 Annual Town Meeting
- VIII. Reports
 - Supervisor: Joe Gibson
 - Assessor: Michael Ireland
- IX. Public Comments
- X. Setting of time for Next Annual Town Meeting
- XI. Other Business
- XII. Adjournment

TOWN OF THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON TOWNSHIP
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
APRIL 21, 2009

The Meeting was called to order by the Chief Deputy Clerk, Renee Gooderham. She asked that everyone rise and join her in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Chief Deputy Clerk announced that the nominations for Moderator would be in order.

Motion by Randy Hoffman, seconded by Karen Schmidt, that David Stanczak be nominated as Moderator.

The chair called for further nominations from the Floor. There were no further nominations.

The chair announced that the nominations for Moderator were now closed.

Motion by Mike Ireland, seconded by Randy Hoffman that David Stanczak be elected Moderator by acclamation.

Motion carried.

The chair announced that David Stanczak had been elected as Moderator.

David Stanczak came forward and was given the Oath of Office as Moderator by the Chief Deputy Clerk.

Mr. Stanczak stated that the agenda had been set and published and therefore could not be changed. He introduced Ruth Ann Fraker, Township Supervisor and recognized her for her hard work and dedication. This is Ms. Frakers last meeting. He also introduced Mike Ireland, Township Assessor. Members of the Township Board were also present: Steve Stockton, Steven Purcell and Karen Schmidt.

The Moderator asked the Chief Deputy Clerk to verify the publishing of the "Annual Town Meeting."

Renee Gooderham, Chief Deputy Clerk, confirmed the publication of said.

The Moderator requested all present to sign in. Records prepared for the Annual Town Meeting were available.

Chief Deputy Clerk, Renee Gooderham, presented the 2008 Annual Town Minutes.

Motion by Randy Hoffman, seconded by Steven Purcell, that the minutes be approved as presented.

Motion carried.

Ruth Ann Fraker, Township Supervisor, welcomed those present. She acknowledged the City of Bloomington's elected officials and City Manager David Hales who were present. The elected officials are individuals who also serve as the Township's Trustees. Financial statements for both the General Town Fund and General Assistance Fund had been prepared. These reports had not been subject to audit. The Township audit begins April 22, 2009. She presented the Annual List of Meetings. She noted that in township government the primary duty of the Township Supervisor was the General Assistance (GA) program. She was in her eighth (8th) and last year as Township Supervisor. She recognized the staff members who were present. Some were employed with the Township while others were employees of John Scott Health Resources. The following individuals were present: Dianne Beverly, Joe Gibson, Cathy Hadden, Tammie Turner, and Stephanie Uzueta. They were busy serving the people and interacted well with the Township's clients.

She was pleased with the attendance at the meeting. The City Township was a coterminous urban township. Its two (2) key functions were Property Assessments and GA. GA can be applied to individuals who live within the township's boundaries. GA offers a flat grant of \$265 per month. This grant can be applied to rent, utilities, food, etc. GA's goal was to improve an individual's circumstances. There were three (3) types of assistance offered: 1.) the monthly grant; 2.) medical care; and 3.) Emergency Assistance. All medical services are paid at the public aid rate with the exception to prescription drugs. She had also prepared a PowerPoint presentation which included graphs depicting GA Fund Expenditures, Number of Cases vs. Dollars Spent FY 2006-2009, and GA Expenses by Percentage.

It was very difficult to determine the funds needed for GA. When preparing the Tax Levy, she prepared a forecast of the number of persons who might qualify for GA and the dollars needed. She cited that this year cases have decreased with the expansion of unemployment benefits to 59 months and an increase of \$25.00 per week.

On April 7, 2009 the "Help is Here Express" bus came to the Township. The Partnership for Prescription Assistance has assisted more than five (5) million people find ways to pay for their prescriptions. Individuals bring in a current listing of medicines taken and meet eligibility requirements to qualify.

Ms. Fraker also cited an article, "Drug Industry to Push Health Care for the Poor", from National Public Radio (NPR) to increase government coverage under the Medicaid program. The goal is to expand Medicaid, up to 33 percent more beyond the federal definition of poverty. The expansion would reach adults without children, single or married for the first time. She also stated that if this program is approved it would be a big difference in how GA expenses are used; currently 27 percent goes to medical.

Ms. Fraker addressed transportation services to GA recipients. Bus passes are issued at the Township Office. She had prepared a slide which documented the Average Cost per Recipient. In FY 2009, this was \$411. The cost reflects the monthly grant, plus medical and transportation costs.

GA also provided individuals with educational opportunities. She noted that fifty percent (50%) of the GA clients do not have a high school diploma or GED (General Equivalency Diploma). The Township had partnered with the Regional Office of Education and Heartland Community College (HCC) to provide educational opportunities. She believed that these partnerships were important. She addressed HCC's Skills for Success program. 137 Township clients had successfully completed classes which are offered four (4) times each year and had increased in length from four (4) weeks to eight (8). Currently there are sixteen (16) clients at are enrolled for the May 1, 2009 session. HCC's Business Essentials program may be the next step. HCC's also offered Manufacturing and Technology Essentials programs. These are a sixteen (16) week credit based programs. Basic Life Skills classes are taught by Mid-Central Community Action at the Township office. The twelve (12) series of classes include budgeting skills, time management, stress management, nutrition and other topics. Light Duty are assignments given under the supervision of Township staff to provide clerical help. Ms. Fraker stated that it's exciting when people succeed.

A partnership between the Township and YWCA of McLean County assist in providing the needed transportation to the recipients. This partnership offered transportation options for areas east of Bloomington which led to Bloomington Normal Public Transit Service (BNPTS) expansion of bus service on August 1, 2007. People can now get to the many employment opportunities in that area via bus. Last year, the YWCA assumed door to door Medivan transport for persons who are unable to use the bus and need rides to medical appointments or home from the hospital. Township is providing local match of \$30,000/year for three (3) years. This allowed the YWCA to qualify for a Federal grant and purchase a new vehicle.

Ms Fraker addressed community agency funding. She cited ODC (Occupational Development Center) under GA, the Baby Fold and Bloomington Day Care Center under youth services and Prairie State Legal Services under senior services.

Ms. Fraker stated that the primary goal of Township General Assistance is to get people back into employment.

Onia F. Dunigan, 1218 Orchard Rd., addressed those present. She is honored to be here. Township gave her the push she needed. She completed Skills for Success and is currently attending HCC working towards her Associates Degree. Her goal is to attend Illinois State University to study Business Management. She recognized her case manager, Danivle Pentina from the Home Sweet Home Mission. She is thankful for the people in her life.

Scott Health Resources is also located in the Township center building. It's a one stop shopping for residents who may qualify for Township or Scott Trust services. Qualifying for one program or the other and sometimes both is under one roof. We have staff that is bi-lingual which has opened up services to a diverse population. It is a good partnership.

Ms. Fraker reflected back on her career with John M. Scott Health Resources. She has been with said since June 1992 and with the Township since May 1, 2002. She is very proud of the programs and services which work in conjunction with the community partnerships and individuals. Changes have happened. Her goal has been to have a long term positive impact with clients and to assist them in finding their potential. She thanked John Pratt, Township Attorney; David Hales, City Manager; persons from ODC; and trustees, Karen Schmidt, Mayor Stockton, Steve Purcell.

Ms. Fraker introduced the next Township Supervisor, Joe Gibson. His term will begin May 1, 2009.

Jack Porter, 1504 W. Locust, congratulated Ms. Fraker on her years of service. He asked if the monthly stipend of \$265 is enough, what are some of the challenges and what wages are earned when individuals become employed.

Ms. Fraker responded that the State of Illinois gives \$225 monthly the Township amount has gone up over the years. The amount is an incentive towards employment. Some clients have criminal backgrounds which prohibit employment. Some can have their records expunged. The earning level is between \$11-12 per hour it's not a 40 hour work week with benefits.

Ms. Fraker stated that it has been a blessing and a joy to come a job you want to come to everyday. She thanked the Community Agencies and the people here for the opportunity to work with them.

Mr. Stanczak thanked Ms. Fraker for her years of service to Township and Scott Health Resources. Her combination of creativity and enthusiasm brought innovation to the office.

~~Mike Ireland, Township Assessor, addressed those present. His comments would be directed at the assessing function. He had prepared a PowerPoint presentation. All of the slides presented were also available on the new web site www.wevaluebloomington.org. He introduced the staff members who were present Terry Joyce, Dee Brines, Cindy Schultz, Brian Davis, and Randy Hoffman.~~

The Township Assessor job is to develop the tax base for the taxing bodies which includes City of Bloomington, Township, District 87 schools, Unit 5, Tri-Valley and Olympia. The total value for all property in 2008 with no exemptions exceeds 1.8 billion. Growth has been constant in both residential base and commercial base.

Citizens have the right to appeal their assessments. The Board of Review took action on close to 524 parcels. 273 appeals had EAV (Equalized Assessed Value) reduced by the Board. This resulted in reduction of \$12 million. Twenty-five (25) parcels were increased by the Board resulting in \$9 million. No changes were made to 93 parcels.

Mr. Ireland referred to the top ten (10) property taxpayers. Their EAV adds up to \$250 million which is 13% of the 1.8 billion. There are approximately 27,500 taxable parcels in the City.

Mr. Ireland presented the comparison of property value for 2005 through 2008. National news is reporting that there is a decline in real estate. In Bloomington the market is stable. The Assessor's office job is to track the value of property from year to year. In 2003 the median price for a home was \$130,000 compared with the assessed value of \$116,500. The assessed value is generally below the property value. Assessments are a three (3) year average of the property value.

Mr. Ireland addressed Market Activity. The slides presented are done by quarter and year (2005-2008) for residential transactions. The real estate market follows a season usually the middle of the year. The 1st quarter and last quarter show the fewest transactions. In 2006 reached a high mark of 252 recorded transactions compared to 2008 of 210. Demand is down a little which affects other parts of the market segment. The 1st quarter of 2008 the median selling price increased. The price divided by amount of living space results in equalization in other areas. This is another indication that our real estate market is solid. Median price changes as the size of living area changes. There have not been big shifts in our market. Increases have been only 3-5% compared to 10-20%. The number of transactions by price intervals shows the market fell in the \$150-\$200 range. Prices have gone up 3.7% in 2005, 4% in 2006, 3.2% in 2007 and 2.75% in 2008. Property assessments follow the market.

Levy amounts were also addressed. Increases in taxes are relative to the taxing authorities increase. An increase in EAV and not in the levy amount taxes decline.

The Assessor's office has been tracking foreclosures for two (2) years. The map "Foreclosures with City of Bloomington" shows actual foreclosures. These are recorded deeds showing transfer of title to a bank or governmental entity. In 2007 there were 92 and in 2008 94. Foreclosures are very regional and local. Mr. Ireland also referred to the quarter map of foreclosures which showed 31 properties in 2009. The tracking of this information assists in assessing property values.

Jack Porter, 1504 W. Locust, asked if the foreclosures had an effect on the tax base. Mr. Ireland responded none. Evaluations are done neighborhood by neighborhood.

Mr. Ireland stated that it's been a great pleasure working with Ms. Fraker. That with her guidance the Township has become a true unit of government.

Mr. Stanczak thanked Mr. Ireland for taking incredible amounts of data and analyzing it.

Ms. Fraker thanked Ms. Dunigan for attending and sharing her story. She also thanked Mr. Porter.

Mr. Stanczak noted that the next Annual Town meeting would be held on Tuesday, April 12, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.


Motion by Randy Hoffman, seconded by Stephanie Uzueta to hold the Annual Town Meeting on Tuesday, April 13, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

Motion carried.

Motion my Ruth Ann Fraker, seconded by Mike Ireland to adjourn. Time 7:19 p.m.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,


Renee Godderham
Chief Deputy Clerk