

**Official Proceedings of the Washington Township Board of Trustees**

**February 1, 2010**

**Washington Township Center  
30200 Town Center Road, Beecher, IL**

Meeting called to order **at 7:00 p.m.** to pay bills for the month of January and transact any other business that may come before the Board of Trustees. Meeting agenda and guest sign-in sheet are attached.

Supervisor Howard led the Pledge of Allegiance and then asked for a moment of silence for the men and women serving in the United States Armed Forces and for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

**Roll call:**

Present: Supervisor Robert Howard; Trustees: Elmer Becker, Dan Waterman, Ted Deery, Teresa Peterson Absent: NONE

**Other Officials present:**

Clerk Joe Burgess and Highway Commissioner Jerry Meyer

**Approval of the Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes Dated January 4, 2010:**

Supervisor Howard asked if there were any corrections or additions to the January 4, 2010 board meeting minutes as presented. Being none, Howard asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

**Motion:**

Trustee Becker made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 4, 2010 Board of Trustees meeting as presented. Trustee Waterman seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. Roll call vote as follows: Becker – yes, Waterman – yes, Howard – yes, Deery – yes, Peterson - ABSTAIN. **Motion passed 4-0.**

**Public Commentary:**

Township resident George Willy read a prepared statement to the Board regarding his concerns with the proposed airport and the negative impact it would have on the area and the pollution associated with the aircraft. Willy has requested that board members from the Village of Beecher and Washington Township accompany him to a Will County Board meeting to discuss the airport. He also expressed “concern” that “nobody cares” or talks about the airport coming to our area.

Crete Township resident Laurie Summers told the board that Crete resident Betty Schultz had passed away last week. Betty was one of the first individuals who used Washington Township transportation to transport her to chemotherapy during her lengthy illness. Laurie told the board that Mrs. Schultz asked her to tell the board that she was very “appreciative” of everything that Washington Township did for her.

On behalf of the entire Board, Supervisor Howard publicly congratulated Trustee Teresa Peterson on the birth of her granddaughter, Mia Marie Foushi.

## Reports

1. Road Commissioner – Commissioner Meyer presented his written report (attached) and asked for questions or comments. In addition to his written report Meyer said he was going to Champaign with the Highway Commissioners from Will and Peotone Townships to meet with vendors regarding road oil for the upcoming season. The three townships joined in an intergovernmental agreement last year to pool their usage of road oil to obtain optimal pricing. The Road District has had 17 salting events this winter and two events required salting 100% of the roads in the township. Meyer said a typical salting event using salt on only hills and corners cost the district \$1700, however the two events requiring the use of salt on all roads cost in excess of \$3000 per event.
2. Assessor – No report. Assessor Blume was not in attendance.
3. Town Clerk – Clerk Burgess reported that 27 residents voted early at the Washington Township Center prior to the February primary election. There have been updates to the website including new pictures and adding an active link for the Community Building. Burgess is currently working on adding an entire “Freedom of Information Act” link that will allow residents to download minutes, agendas and budgets. The link will also include other information as required by state statutes.
4. Washington Township Planning Commission (WTPC) – No report.
5. Supervisor’s Report – Supervisor Howard commented that many experts believe the housing market will be coming back however it will consist of smaller homes and a higher density of homes. The rebound will help local municipalities regain their tax base but could have a negative affect on the school district. Requests to use the meeting room at the Washington Township Center have increased and scheduling the use of the room has become more challenging. Howard suggested that using space at the Community Hall be considered for now and a long-term solution may need to be determined. General Assistance cases are very busy and Howard said use of the Food Pantry has been an important part in helping GA needs. Supervisor Howard asked the Board to consider reviewing any goals they may have for the future of Washington Township.
6. Transportation Report – Supervisor Howard told the Board that there are now 5 volunteer drivers who assist with transporting a disabled resident from Beecher Manor to her home and back on weekends. There were 194 Dial-a-ride trips reported last month and the service continues to grow.
7. Foundation for a Green Community – The Committee will be meeting at the Washington Township Center on February 9 at 6 pm. The public is urged to attend.
8. Community Building Report – No report.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. *Washington Township Employee Handbook* – Trustee Waterman passed out a “rough” draft of the proposed employee handbook for the Board to review. Waterman said the policy was modeled after a TOI sample policy and he modified it for the township. He asked the board to review it and to consider how holidays and vacations would be addressed for future full time employees. Once the Board agrees on the final content of the policy it would need to be reviewed by legal counsel before final passage.
2. *Washington Township Appreciation Dinner* – Supervisor Howard explained that in these difficult economic times, the township should consider many options before deciding on the fate of an Appreciation Dinner. Howard said in an effort to control costs, the Board may consider a picnic or cookout that could be held in the summer for employees and volunteers. Trustee Deery preferred a formal setting and believed that a formal setting worked better for recognizing township employees and volunteers. Deery agreed the event should not take place during the holiday season but expressed his desire to have the event in February, March or April. Trustee Becker commented that the original dinner was held to honor former Highway Commissioner Clarence Bunte on his retirement and the event just continued every year thereafter. Becker said the event was important and he believed former Trustee Dennis Koehn should be honored this year as others have been honored in the past. Highway Commissioner Jerry Meyer also preferred a formal dinner and said his employees enjoy the annual event. After some additional discussion the consensus of the board was that the event should be continued and it needs to be affordable for the township. Commissioner Meyer volunteered to assist with planning the event and he will work to propose a March date for the event.
3. *Review of Township Investment Policy* – Supervisor Howard explained that it was necessary for the board to review township policies on a regular basis and that the Investment Policy needed to be reviewed to stay current with changing laws and to ensure that the Supervisor is properly covered as he makes financial decisions. The Board reviewed the policy and no revisions were recommended. Howard told the board that legal counsel has approved the revised policy and asked for a motion to approve the policy.

## **MOTION:**

Trustee Waterman made a motion to approve the Washington Township Investment Policy revised and dated February 1, 2010. Trustee Deery seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. Roll Call vote: Waterman – yes, Deery – yes, Peterson – yes, Howard – yes, Becker – yes. **Motion passed 5-0.**

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. *Consideration and Approval of Planning Commission Recommendations* – There were no Planning Commission recommendations to be acted upon.

2. Consideration and Approval of resolution #10-01, “A Resolution Adopting Policies Regarding The Freedom Of Information Act And The Open Meeting Act And Designating The Township’s Freedom Of Information Act Officers And Those Who Will Receive Open Meeting Act Training” - At the January 4, 2010 meeting the Board approved the Washington Township Freedom of Information Act Policy and resolution #10-01, “A Resolution Adopting Policies Regarding The Freedom Of Information Act And The Open Meeting Act And Designating The Township’s Freedom Of Information Act Officers And Those Who Will Receive Open Meeting Act Training”. After reviewing last month’s agenda, Clerk Burgess believed that the agenda item for the resolution was not properly worded and passage of the resolution at January’s meeting could be challenged. Clerk Burgess contacted legal counsel and it was recommended that an agenda item properly listing the resolution for consideration and approval be added to the February 1 meeting agenda. Being no discussion, Supervisor Howard asked for a motion to approve resolution #10-01.

**MOTION:**

Trustee Waterman made a motion to approve resolution #10-01, *A Resolution Adopting Policies Regarding The Freedom Of Information Act And The Open Meeting Act And Designating The Township’s Freedom Of Information Act Officers And Those Who Will Receive Open Meeting Act Training* as presented. Trustee Peterson seconded the motion.

Discussion: Trustee Becker asked how the policy affected an individual’s privacy. Supervisor Howard pointed out that the new state statutes were very clear on what items could be released to the public and an individual’s privacy was protected. Roll Call vote: Waterman – yes, Peterson – yes, Deery – yes, Becker – yes, Howard – yes. **Motion passed 5-0.**

3. Washington Township Meals Program – Supervisor Howard and Laurie Summers, a Registered Nurse and former Beecher resident living in Crete, have been investigating the current Meals on Wheels program coverage in Washington Township. Howard said the current program is very beneficial to those in need however; the program only serves the Village of Beecher and does not deliver to residents who reside in the country. Howard suggested that the township supplement the current program by filling the void for the residents in the rural areas who cannot receive the service.

Laurie addressed the Board and explained that she has been talking to Sally Fuhrmann, the Rich Township Senior Director, about their successful meals program and believes the township could follow their model for success. Laurie said the township could start a private program that would serve seniors who have disabilities or who have health issues and need the additional assistance of a meals program. The program could also serve people who may need temporary assistance because of a current health condition or people who need short-term assistance while going through medical rehab. In these cases, a doctor of a hospitalized patient would make the recommendation for their patient to utilize the program to ensure their dietary restrictions (if any) are being followed.

Volunteers would run the program and guidelines would need to be established, a small amount of equipment would need to be purchased and meal costs would need to be determined. The program could sustain itself if meals are properly charged and enough volunteers are available to assist in running the program. The township would provide the start up costs. Ms. Summers has been in contact with Village Woods Retirement Community and they are very interested in providing the meals and they have capacity to handle the needs of Washington Township. Current estimates for a prepared meal is between \$3 and \$4. Meals are delivered in one-time use microwavable containers and volunteers would deliver meals once a day (or less often) and up to two meals at a time. The microwavable containers are not supplied by Village Woods and these containers would need to be secured through a vendor.

It was suggested that a three-day delivery be established with deliveries on Monday, Wednesdays and Friday. This would allow users an opportunity to receive two meals on these days with the extra meal being used on the non-delivery day.

The Trustees discussed the concept and Trustee Deery was concerned about the liability to the township if drivers did not show up and meals were not delivered as scheduled and the burden that would cause for those depending on the deliveries. The possibility of giving volunteers a stipend for “gas money” was suggested and Deery said the township should be very cautious about stipends and was concerned about additional financing the program may need in the future. He added that it would be unwise to start a program only to have to stop it down the road because of financial issues. Trustee Waterman asked that additional information including projected start up costs and volunteer information be made available at the next board meeting.

4. Dial-a-ride Fees - Supervisor Howard proposed implementing a free ride voucher program for the Dial-a-ride service. Weekend drivers are volunteers and some have waived the customary \$1 ride charge because of their volunteer status. Howard said the volunteers can waive the fees, however, in order to maintain accurate rider-ship records and to properly monitor all funds associated with the service, residents would need to sign a free ride voucher for the driver for any free ride.
5. Assessing Reasonable Fees for FOIA Requests – Supervisor Howard has requested a legal opinion regarding how much the township can charge for property record cards and what is considered to be a reasonable fee. Property cards can be requested through the Freedom of Information Act and Howard wants to ensure that any fees associated with copying these records is properly documented. The Supervisor said that in no case should a public official receive a check made out to them personally to cover the costs of any requested records.

**Payment of Bills:**

**Town Account**

The Board reviewed the bills as presented by Supervisor Howard and Clerk Burgess. Trustee Deery questioned a bill for Sun Ray Heating and Cooling. Supervisor Howard explained that Sun Ray was contacted to do work on the furnaces in the Washington Township Center. Deery questioned why L&H Services, the local company that installed the units, did not do the repair work. Howard explained that Sun Ray was a local company and was able to get to the job sooner.

**MOTION:**

Trustee Waterman made a motion to approve payment of all applicable payroll, bills, debits and appropriate transfers as presented for the **Town Account** totaling **\$13,927.34**. Trustee Becker seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. Roll Call vote: Waterman – yes, Becker – yes, Deery – yes, Peterson – yes, Howard – yes. **Motion passed 5-0.**

**Road & Bridge**

The board reviewed the bills as presented by Commissioner Meyer.

**MOTION:** Trustee Waterman made a motion to approve payment of all applicable payroll, bills, and appropriate transfers or debits for the Road & Bridge Account totaling **\$39,295.97**. Supervisor Howard seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. Roll Call vote: Waterman – yes, Howard – yes, Deery – yes, Peterson – yes, Becker - ABSTAIN. **Motion passed 4-0.**

**Announcements:**

None

**Upcoming Seminars and Meetings:**

1. March 1, 2010 – Washington Township Board Meeting - 7:00 pm at the Washington Township Center.

**Adjournment:**

Being no other business or discussion, Trustee Becker made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Trustee Peterson, and after being unanimously approved by voice vote, the Board Meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Joseph Burgess – Town Clerk

Approved by Board of Trustees Date: \_\_\_\_\_