

Official Proceedings of the Washington Township Board of Trustees
February 4, 2008
Washington Township Center
30200 Town Center Road, Beecher, IL

Meeting called to order 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 called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance and 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 Bob Howard Trustees: Elmer Becker, Dan Waterman, Ted Deery and Dennis Koehn

Other Officials present:

Clerk Joe Burgess

Supervisor Howard asked Clerk Burgess to read the following notice: “DJ and Heather Wilson passed away on Tuesday, January 29, 2008 in an auto accident. Heather graduated in 2004 and DJ graduated in 2007, both from Beecher High School. The siblings were the only children of Donald Sr. and Kathy Wilson. Donations can be made to the 1st National Bank of Grant Park.” Howard remarked that a tragedy such as this is a tragedy to the entire community and asked that people keep the Wilson family in their thoughts. Howard indicated that a moment of silence would be observed for the Wilson children prior to adjournment of tonight’s meeting.

Approval of the January 7, 2008, Board Meeting Minutes:

Motion:

Trustee Becker made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2008 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, Deery – yes, Koehn – yes, Howard - yes. **Motion passed 5-0.**

Public Commentary:

Township resident George Willy told the board that the Village of Crete sent out postcards to all Crete residents urging them to support the proposed “rail and logistics” park development that is heavily supported by Crete officials. Willy does not support the proposed development and urged all in attendance to voice their opposition at local meetings and forums.

Reports:

1. Road Commissioner – No report. Commissioner Meyer was not in attendance.
2. Assessor – No report. Assessor Blume was not in attendance.

3. Town Clerk – Early voting concluded on February 2 and three residents voted at the Washington Township Center and 33 residents voted early at the Beecher Village Hall. Burgess questioned if it was necessary to have two early voting sites in the township but recommended at least one site is open for the presidential election in November.
4. Washington Township Planning Commission (WTPC) – No report.
5. Drainage District – No report.
6. Park Board Report – Trustee Waterman had no report. Village Trustee Scott Wehling, who is the village’s representative on the Park Board, told the board that he wanted to set up a Park District Exploratory Committee to determine if there was enough community support to pursue a referendum to create a Park District. The committee would include various members of local community groups and Wehling asked for a township representative to be part of this committee. One of the committee’s first tasks would include sending a questionnaire to area residents to determine how much support there was for a Park District and to determine what types of activities residents would support. Wehling said cooperation between the village and township was vital to the success of this project. Drew Beck, representing Beecher Recreation, indicated that a Park District could offer additional activities for people of all ages and possibly merge many of the activities being offered by various groups. The board discussed the proposal but it was noted that the township had just approved moving ahead on an Open Space Initiative to ask the voters to support a referendum to purchase land to preserve open space within the township that could eventually be developed for recreational use and even ran by a Park District. Supervisor Howard recommended that the Open Space Committee give their report before any additional discussion regarding a Park District take place.
7. Supervisor’s Report – Supervisor Howard had no formal report but said he would interject information on agenda items as they were addressed.
8. Open Space Initiative Committee – Mike Mach reported that the committee recently met with an attorney from Ancel Glink to begin formalizing the process of securing land through the terms of the Open Space Act. Items covered included the steps necessary to circulate the initial petition needed to move forward and reviewing the levy process. Mr. Mach also noted that law enforcement of any property outside the village limits should also be addressed with the village and county to ensure the timely arrival of law enforcement if the situation became necessary. Mach also noted that the committee would eventually need to start fund raising to cover the expenses that cannot be legally covered by the township.

Scott Wehling questioned if the Park District should be created before any land was acquired. Wehling said that he and Drew Beck were part of a group of “concerned citizens” that were in favor of starting a referendum to create a park district. Mr. Beck told the board that he believed that a Park District and Open Space referendum were in conflict of each other and neither would pass if attempted at the same time.

Supervisor Howard explained that the township’s goal was to secure open space within the township that could be used for recreation and parks and that after securing property the next step would be to set up a park district. It was also pointed out that the township has been talking about acquiring open space for several months and Supervisor Howard presented the idea at a “Joint Taxing Bodies” meeting during the summer. Trustee Deery

agreed with Howard and believed that the “time was right” to use the Open Space Act to acquire land and purchasing property should be the priority. Trustee Koehn expressed his concerns about the township and “concerned citizens” going in different directions and recommended that the Park District Exploratory Committee meet with the Open Space Committee and attempt to work together. It was agreed that all groups must work together before any referendum would have a chance of being approved. Howard invited Mr. Wehling and Mr. Beck to attend an Open Space Committee meeting so they could continue the dialog. Trustee Deery volunteered to sit on the Park District Exploratory Committee.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Establish Guidelines to utilize the Washington Township Center as a Heating/Cooling Center – Supervisor Howard reported that guidelines for using the Washington Township Center as a heating / cooling center are being prepared and will be available to the board at next month’s meeting.
2. Not for Profit Status – Supervisor Howard told the board that the application requesting Not-for-Profit status for Washington Township would be filed next month.
3. Pace Bus Application – Rich Township Transportation Director Pat Peters brought a small Pace bus, similar to what the township is considering, to the meeting and the Board took a short break to go outside and inspect the bus. Ms. Peters then gave a brief overview of the Pace system and told the board that Pace expects the bus to be used as much as possible. She added that there were many grants available to help fund Dial-a-Ride services and Rich Township also receives donations from local businesses that benefit from the service dropping off patrons at their establishments.

Supervisor Howard explained that if the board wanted to move forward and apply for a bus, he had four local residents, Jim Rehborg, Pat Peters, Fred Hoffmeyer and Sally Furham, that were willing to sit on a Transportation Committee. This committee would help run the program.

There has been no additional information if the Village of Beecher was willing to participate in funding the program so Howard recommended that the township move forward with the application and approach the village board if the application is approved. Clerk Burgess, working with Accountant Tom Brislane, presented the board with a preliminary transportation “Pace” budget that assumed the township would fully fund the Dial-a-Ride program. Burgess explained that it would cost the township approximately \$16,000 annually to run a bus two days a week. A sample Washington Township Dial-a-Ride Brochure (attached) was also presented to the board members. After discussing the benefits of providing bus service to the seniors and disabled members of the community and the cost to run the service, Trustee Koehn recommended that the township move forward and complete the application to receive a Pace bus and start a Dial-a-Ride program.

MOTION:

Trustee Waterman made a motion for the Washington Township Supervisor to complete and submit the “Pace Locally Based Service Program Agreement” to Pace for the purpose of obtaining a small 10-12 passenger bus and to establish a Dial-a-Ride program within Washington Township. Trustee Koehn seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. Roll Call vote: Waterman – yes, Koehn – yes, Deery – yes, Becker – yes, Howard – yes. **Motion passed 5-0.**

Trustee Howard and Ms. Peters will present the Township’s proposed Dial-a-Ride program to the village board at an upcoming village meeting.

4. *Travel Policy* – The board reviewed the attached proposed Washington Township Travel Policy with the changes recommended at last months meeting. The board discussed the policy and there wee no additional changes recommended.

MOTION:

Trustee Koehn made a motion to approve the Washington Township Travel Policy as presented. Trustee Waterman seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. Roll Call vote: Koehn – yes, Waterman – yes, Deery – yes, Becker – yes, Howard – yes. **Motion passed 5-0.**

5. *Purchasing Policy* – The board reviewed the attached proposed Washington Township Purchasing Policy with the changes recommended at last months meeting and there were no additional changes proposed.

MOTION:

Trustee Deery made a motion to approve the Washington Township Purchasing Policy as presented. Trustee Koehn seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. Roll Call vote: Deery – yes, Koehn – yes, Waterman – yes, Becker – yes, Howard – 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. *2008 Budget Discussion* – Clerk Burgess gave board members a current copy of the Budget Report and recommended that the board begin the 2008 budget process at the next board meeting. Trustee Koehn recommended that the board hold a budget workshop immediately following the Annual Town Meeting to discuss and prepare the 2008 budget. There were no objections to the request and Supervisor Howard will call and post for a meeting, to be held April 8 after the Annual Town Meeting, for the purpose of discussing the budget.
3. *Consideration and Approval of Proposal from Ancel Glink* – Supervisor Howard is waiting for a proposal from the law firm of Ancel Glink outlining the cost of legal fees necessary to ensure the committee conforms to the provisions of the Open Space Act. Howard said that Ancel Glink does not do work on a “retainer” basis and only bills on an hourly basis. Howard anticipated that the cost for legal services to prepare and review the

necessary information for the Open Space Committee would be between \$3000 and \$4000. The board asked Supervisor Howard to request Ancel Glink's hourly rate and an outline of the additional legal services required to move forward with the Open Space Initiative.

4. Appoint Township Resident on Park District Exploratory Commission – As discussed earlier under the Open Space report, Trustee Deery volunteered to sit on the Park District Exploratory Committee.
5. Senior Breakfast – The next Senior Breakfast will be held on Saturday, March 29. The board discussed holding the event at either the Amvet Hall or Community Building and also discussed preparing the food for the senior breakfast instead of having the event catered. The event would be co-sponsored with the Village of Beecher.
6. Snow Removal from Hillcrest Drive – School Board President Tom Stluka told the board that there are three special education children living on Hillcrest Drive, which is a private road that is not maintained by the village or township. Stluka said that “by law” the school must provide door-to-door service for these children and it's difficult for a school bus to get down the drive after heavy snow because it is not plowed. Mr. Stluka said that Superintendent Obradovich contacted the village and they have agreed to plow the drive for the remainder of this winter but Stluka asked if plans could be made for the future. Highway Commissioner Meyer was not in attendance and Supervisor Howard offered to talk to Meyer and the village about this issue.

Payment of Bills:

Road & Bridge

The board reviewed the bills as presented. It was noted that the voucher report submitted by Clerk Burgess had the dollar amounts for ComEd and Verizon Wireless reversed. The ComEd bill was \$413.42 and the Verizon bill was \$53.47. Clerk Burgess made the necessary changes on the voucher sheet.

MOTION:

Trustee Deery made a motion to approve payment of all applicable payroll, bills, and appropriate transfers or debits as presented for the **Road & Bridge Account** totaling **\$26,197.83**. Trustee Waterman seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. Roll Call vote: Deery – yes, Waterman – yes, Koehn – yes, Becker – ABSTAIN, Howard –yes. **Motion passed 4-0.**

Town Account

The Board reviewed the bills as presented by the Supervisor. Voucher #1671, a payment to the Beecher Amvets for hall rental for the Senior Christmas Dinner was removed and changed to record a reimbursement to Trustee Dan Waterman for the payment of the Amvet Hall rental charges.

MOTION:

Trustee Koehn made a motion to approve payment of all applicable payroll, bills, debits and appropriate transfers as presented for the **Town Account** totaling **\$6,872.03**. Trustee Becker seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. Roll Call vote: Waterman – yes, Koehn – yes, Becker – yes, Deery – yes, Howard – yes. **Motion passed 5-0.**

Announcements:

None.

Upcoming Seminars and Meetings:

1. March 3, 2008 – Washington Township Board Meeting - 7:00 pm at the Washington Township Center.

Adjournment:

Prior to adjourning, the Board stood and a moment of silence was observed in memory of Donald (DJ) Wilson, Jr. and Heather Wilson, who were tragically killed in an automobile accident on January 29, 2008.

Being no further business or discussion, Trustee Waterman made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Trustee Koehn, and after being unanimously approved by voice vote, the Board Meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Burgess – Town Clerk

Approved by Board of Trustees Date: _____