

Spencer Township Trustee Meeting

April 20, 2016

Meeting called to order at 10:05am by Trustee Shawn P. Valentine

Roll Call

Trustee Shawn P. Valentine	present
Trustee Teresa M. Bettinger	present
Trustee Michael B. Hood	absent

Pledge to the Flag

Spencer/Whitehouse JEDD

Legal Counsel, Sheilah McAdams, spoke on the benefits of a JEDD with the Village of Whitehouse. The District would encompass the area of the Old Spud's Salvage Yard. After discussion on the matter, Trustee Bettinger made a motion to sign the resolution, Trustee Valentine seconded. Roll call vote: Trustee Bettinger: yes, Trustee Valentine: yes.

Employment Contracts

Trustee Valentine entertained a motion to enter into executive session to discuss employment contracts of current Township employees. Trustee Bettinger made the motion, Trustee Valentine seconded. Roll call vote: Trustee Bettinger: yes, Trustee Valentine: yes.

Executive session ended at 10:25am. Trustee Bettinger made a motion to return from executive session. Roll call: Trustee Bettinger: yes, Trustee Valentine: yes.

Trustee Valentine made a motion to rescind the contracts of fire and road employees. Trustee Bettinger made the motion, Trustee Valentine seconded. Roll call vote: Trustee Bettinger: yes, Trustee Valentine: yes.

Trustee Valentine explained these contracts would be rewritten as the employees never signed them and certain clauses were not legal such as severance pay.

Nuisance and Blighted Property District

Trustee Valentine explained that properties were placed in a blighted slum district within the Township at the previous Township meeting; he agrees there are blighted areas in the Township, but he would like to rescind the resolution that the specified area is a slum district due to property devaluation.

Trustee Bettinger explained there are other grants the Township will be available to receive to clean up blighted areas. Trustee Bettinger made a motion to rescind the resolution, Trustee Valentine seconded. Roll call vote: Trustee Bettinger: yes, Trustee Valentine: yes.

Drug Testing

Trustee Valentine asked Lucas County Prosecutor John Borell if random drug testing was allowable. Prosecutor Borell explained yes. Trustee Bettinger asked if the elected officials could be randomly drug tested. Mr. Borell said it would be voluntary. They (elected officials) could not be compelled to submit to drug testing.

After discussion, Trustee Valentine made a motion for pre-employment drug screening, Trustee Bettinger seconded. Roll call vote: Trustee Bettinger: yes, Trustee Valentine: yes

Trustee Valentine made the motion to enact a policy of post accident drug testing; Trustee Bettinger seconded. Roll call vote: Trustee Bettinger: yes, Trustee Valentine: yes.

JEDZ Board Members

No Action

Land Use Committee

Trustee Valentine asked the Land Use chair to explain the progress of the Board. Mr. Morgan explained the Board is waiting on Requests for Proposals that have been submitted. No changes were made to the Land Use Committee, but Trustee Valentine asked for an update by Mr. Morgan to the Board by June 1, 2016.

Fire and EMS

Trustee Valentine explained the rising costs at the Fire Department. He explained, he has been in conversation with the Springfield Fire Department to contract out services. The first year would cost \$128,000 with a 3% increase for 10 years.

Spencer equipment would be exchanged for the first year's payment, which would begin July 1, 2016.

Resident, Curt Lancaster, asked if the Trustees felt they could make a decision that lasted 10 years when they may or may not be in office. Trustee Valentine explained, this decision is in the best interest of the Township. Mr. Lancaster asked if it is legal to transfer granted equipment to Springfield. Mr. Borell explained it is probably ok, but he would have to look at the specifications of which the grant was obtained with.

Trustee Bettinger went over the financials of the fire department. She explained the fire department has costs that are not covered by the income by at least \$200,000. She also explained the fire station would remain open and can be upgraded.

Barry Cousino, Springfield Township Fire Chief, explained the coverage his department could provide along with honoring the existing contracts with Harding and Swanton Townships.

There were many questions from the audience about the cost of the equipment being exchanged.

Ray Croskey asked for clarification if our equipment would be used in our Township. Chief Cousino explained it would.

Tim Lewis asked what about the current employees at the fire station. Chief Cousino stated they could apply with Springfield. Currently Springfield employees will staff the Spencer Fire Station.

Springfield Trustee, Marilyn Yoder, explained she was not aware of these negotiations.

Trustee Valentine stated this is a fiscal decision. The costs will continue to rise, and eventually the Spencer Township may not be able to absorb the costs.

Dean Croskey asked if volunteers would be allowed. Chief Cousino stated it would be looked into.

Ray Pawlacyzk mentioned Johnson Controls might not stay forever in the community.

Carol Shull asked if this information could be put in writing before a decision is made. Trustee Valentine explained he feels this is in the best interest.

Clynell Robinson, resident, stated the residents should have a chance to have their say. She stated this contract signing feels rushed.

Trustee Valentine stated he is trying to provide stability.

Trustee Bettinger stated there is no time to wait; financially this does not make sense. When the JEDZ money leaves, we will not be able to afford the fire department as it is she explained.

Chief, Carl Arnold explained our current service is comparable to Springfield.

The contract with Springfield was read.

Chief Arnold was given the floor. He explained his history with Spencer Township. He stated Spencer Township service is comparable to Springfield. He also stated in July of 2015 this matter came up. He reminded Trustee Valentine he promised at this time they would not shut down the fire station. August 2015 once again Trustee Valentine promised he would not close the fire station.

Chief Arnold explained he has not had time to make a difference. This is affecting the life of the men and women who work at the department. He feels his service has been a waste of time.

Trustee Valentine explained this contract is too good of a deal to turn away from.

There was more discussion on the matter, and Chief Arnold asked that this matter be tabled to let the public speak on this matter. He stated the men and women of Spencer Township Fire would continue to serve until told not to.

Trustee Bettinger stated this has been a difficult decision. Now funds will be available to deal with roads, drainage and blighted areas.

Carol Shull implored to give Chief Arnold a chance, get the public involved to see if a difference can be made. Trustee Valentine explained the fire levy failed when a full time station was propositioned 3 years ago.

Jack Gulvas, resident, stated the fire levy was voted down.

Chief Arnold asked for a provision to have Springfield Township absorb Spencer Township personnel. Trustee Valentine was not in favor of this. Springfield may consider giving a preference to Spencer personnel.

Curt Lancaster asked if dispatching fee would go away, the answer was yes. He asked who would get Harding and Swanton contract money. The funds would go to Springfield Trustee Valentine explained. Mr. Lancaster stated he thought the Township JEDZ was to gain jobs not lose jobs. Mr. Lancaster asked who would pay for fire chief's contract since

it was broken. It was explained the contract was rescinded. Mr. Lancaster asked what was so special about this meeting.

Mr. Lancaster stated he is confused. He thought Trustee Valentine's seat as a Trustee was declared vacant, Trustee Hood tried to rescind the vacancy, Trustee Bettinger would not rescind. So the Ohio Supreme Court has not ruled. Mr. Lancaster also stated that Prosecutor Borell can state his opinion, and that is all it is an opinion.

Mr. Warwick Goodwin, business owner in Township, asked who authorized Trustee Valentine to enter into negotiations with Springfield through the backdoor since no one was aware of these negotiations. Trustee Valentine explained a Trustee does not need authority to negotiate.

Jacky Dale, resident, stated the contract is wrong and it affects her and this entire community. What about the fire department Trustee Valentine tried to open on the West end of the Township a couple of years ago she asked Trustee Valentine.

Chief Arnold wanted to acknowledge he had to leave and is available for comment.

Ms. Shull asked one more time to table the signing of the contract.

Ms. Roth, resident, asked what other departments are running over budget. It was explained, just the fire department.

Chief Cousino wanted it to be clear the equipment transferred should be equipped.

Trustee Valentine made the motion to enter into a contract with Springfield Township, Trustee Bettinger seconded. Roll call vote: Trustee Bettinger: yes, Trustee Valentine: yes.

Trustee Valentine adjourned the meeting adjourned at 12:10pm.

Roll call Trustee Bettinger: yes, Trustee Valentine: yes.

X

Dawn E. McDonald

X

Michael B. Hood

X

Teresa M. Bettinger