

Meeting Minutes

JOINT MEETING involving

North Township Advisory Board and the Lapaz Town Council

Held at the Fire Station in Lapaz, IN

October 4, 2023

North Township Advisory Board Members Present:

Steven Davenport, President

Steve Barber, Secretary

Carmen Megonnell

Lapaz Town Council Members Present:

Ryan Young

Cathy Welch

(the reader will note that Mr. Ecker was not present for this meeting)

Emily Haskins, Trustee, North Township

Lorraine Dove, Lapaz Town Clerk

Mathew Haskins, Fire Chief

John Lampkins, EMS President

Pete Agostino, Attorney (retained to advise about the Fire Territory)

For other community members present, please refer to the attached sign-in sheet.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Davenport at 6:01pm

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Final Operating Budget proposed by the committee prior to forwarding this to Baker Tilly for a Full Study pursuant to the proposed Fire Territory – consisting of the taxing units of North Township and the Town of Lapaz. The reader is referred to the handout entitled, Final Operating Budget.

The format for the meeting consisted of Ms. Haskins, Mr. Haskins, and Mr. Lampkins providing explanations for each of item listed on the proposed Final Operating Budget. Questions were answered during the course of the discussion. While not an exhaustive description, here are a few things that were explained.

1. Volunteers will continue to be a vital part of providing emergency services to our constituents.
2. Two paid firefighters will be at the station during the day, Monday through Friday, to cover the time periods during which volunteers are in short supply.
3. Six paid EMS workers will enable 24x7 staffing.
4. It is anticipated that firefighters and EMS workers will become cross trained in order to respond to all calls.

5. There are four levels of response to medical emergencies:
 - a. First Aid
 - b. Basic Life Support, BLS (this is the current level of the Union-North Ambulance Service)
 - c. Advanced Life Support, ALS (The department would like to move toward this in the future).
 - d. Paramedic (this is a long-term goal for the department)
 - i. Tri-County charges us \$300 per event when they are called upon to provide paramedic assist/intercept.
 - ii. South Bend Fire does not charge us for paramedic assist/intercept.
6. The committee recommends that North Township be identified as the Provider Unit.
7. The committee noted that there are two types of boards which can be utilized for Fire Territories
 - a. Advisory Board for the Fire Territory.
 - b. Executive Board for the Fire Territory
 - c. The committee recommends that an Executive Board, which would be empowered to make decisions related to the Fire Territory.
8. Mr. Agostino's assessment is that the proposed Final Operating Budget is on the low side and recommends that this be increased.
9. Mr. Agostino clarifies that in addition to the tax increase for the proposed Fire Territory, there would need to be a separate and additional levy for an Equipment Replacement Fund, which would be initiated by the Fire Territory Executive Board. The maximum levy would be three and thirty-three hundredths cents (\$0.0333) per one hundred dollars (\$100) of assessed value. Furthermore, unlike the establishment of the Fire Territory and its associated tax levy, constituents could seek a remonstrance for the Equipment Replacement Fund levy.
10. Mr. Agostino identified the following timeline for the hearings in the spring of 2024.
 - a. Mid February: First notice is sent out (14 days before the first hearing)
 - b. 7 days later: Second notice is sent out (7 days before the first hearing)
 - c. Three (3) Hearings spaced out as desired by the boards
 - i. The first hearing would be in early March
 - ii. These may be held in different locations, days, and times.
 - iii. These may be joint meetings of the two taxing units.
 - iv. At these three hearings, both the Fire and EMS must share the need, data, purpose, and rationale for seeking/pursuing a Fire Territory.
 - d. The final and 4th Hearing must occur **before** April 1, 2024. The purpose of this meeting is to vote on whether to officially establish a Fire Territory.
11. It was clarified that a vote to submit the Final Operating Budget to Baker Tilly will not obligate us to proceed with the hearings in the spring of 2024. Another vote would need to be taken later this year, in order to set in motion the hearings in the spring of 2024.

- 12. It was also clarified that Memorandums of Understanding would need to be developed prior the hearings in the spring of 2024. As a result, Mr. Haskins does not believe there is sufficient time to include Polk Township. If the board chooses to do so, then it would take at least another year to accomplish this.
- 13. When the full study is completed by Baker Tilly, it will include specific information about how taxes will be effected for all constituents.
- 14. Mr. Davenport closes the public comment opportunity.
- 15. Mr. Davenport gains consensus and requests that the committee meet again before our scheduled meeting on Monday, October 9, 2023. The purpose is to consider Mr. Agostino's recommendation to increase the Final Operating Budget.
- 16. Mr. Young moves to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Mr. Barber and was passed 5-0.
- 17. The meeting was adjourned at about 7:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Stephen Barber, Secretary
 North Township Advisory Board

Approved: As written As Amended As Corrected

 Steven Davenport, President

 Date

 Stephen Barber, Secretary

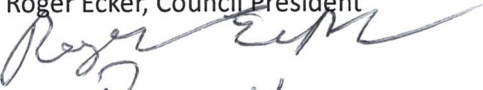
 Date

 Carmen Megonnell

 Date

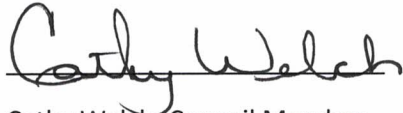
_____ ABSENT _____

Roger Ecker, Council President

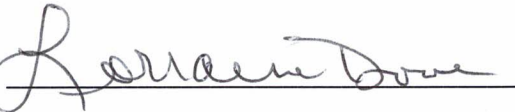


_____ Ryan Young _____

Ryan Young, Vice-President



Cathy Welch, Council Member



Attested: Lorraine Dove, Clerk-Treasurer

date
10-11-2023

_____ 10-12-2023 _____

date

_____ 10/12/2023 _____

date

_____ 10/12/2023 _____

date