

## Meeting Minutes

Joint Meeting of the North Township Advisory Board and the Town of Lapaz Town Council

Held at the Fire Station in Lapaz, IN

November 21, 2023

North Township Advisory Board Members Present:

Steven Davenport, President **(in person)**

Steve Barber, Secretary **(in person)**

Carmen Megonnell **(in person)**

Town of Lapaz Town Council Members Present

Roger Ecker, President **(Virtually via Zoom)**

Ryan Young **(in person)**

Cathy Welch **(in person)**

Emily Haskins, Trustee, North Township

Lorraine Dove, Clerk, Town of Lapaz

Mathew Haskins, Fire Chief

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

Mr. Davenport called the meeting to order at 6:14pm.

The meeting began with the release of the recently completed study from Baker Tilly (dated November 7, 2023) regarding the proposed Fire Territory for the taxing units of North Township and the Town of Lapaz. The reader is directed to a copy of this study by Baker Tilly.

The format of the meeting consisted of both question and answer as well as discussion. Participants included Ms. Haskins, Ms. Dove, Mr. Haskins, Fire and EMS volunteers, the public, members of the North Township Advisory Board and members of the Lapaz Town Council. Topics included an identification of the problem, options for addressing the problem, and the process of considering a Fire Territory. Several shared their personal stories about how they benefitted from the prompt response by our volunteer emergency personnel.

Key items presented and discussed included:

1. Total Operating Budget utilized by Baker Tilly for this study was \$1,248,080. This was the figure which was most recently proposed by the committee.
2. This results in an estimated change in tax liability as follows:
  - a. Residents of North Township may expect an increase in their property taxes of 34.0%.
  - b. Residents of the Town of Lapaz may expect an increase in their property taxes of 19.9%.

Mr. Barber did clarify that he recognizes that there is a problem. He voiced a willingness to support a Fire Territory but expressed concern about the increasing budget figures. He is not convinced that he could support the higher budgetary amount of \$1,248,080.

After a period of additional public input, Q&A, and discussion, Mr. Davenport closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

Mr. Davenport moved that we move forward with the process of the Fire Territory such that we would have public hearings/meetings beginning in January. He clarifies that he is not specifying a budget amount currently. Ms. Megonnell seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote (required due to a member attending virtually via Zoom):

- Mr. Barber – Yes
- Ms. Megonnell – Yes
- Mr. Davenport – Yes

Mr. Ecker thanked those who attended the meeting this evening. Mr. Ecker moved that they move forward (with the Fire Territory) and set up a meeting in January to proceed with this process. Mr. Young seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote (required due to a member attending virtually via Zoom):

- Mr. Young – Aye
- Ms. Welch – Aye
- Mr. Ecker – **Aye (Virtually via Zoom)**

Mr. Davenport moved to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Mr. Barber and passed 6-0. The meeting was adjourned about 7:55pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Stephen Barber, Secretary

Approved:  As written     As Amended     As Corrected

\_\_\_\_\_  
Steven Davenport, President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen Barber, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

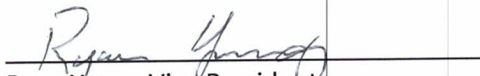
\_\_\_\_\_  
Carmen Megonnell

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Attesting to the minutes of the joint meeting of the North township Advisory Board and the LaPaz Town Council dated 11/21/2023. Minutes written by Steve Barber

  
Roger Ecker President

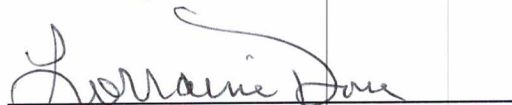
12-14-2023  
Date

  
Ryan Young Vice President

12-14-2023  
Date

  
Cathy Welch Council Member

12-14-2023  
Date

  
Attested: Lorraine Dove, Clerk-Treasurer

12/14/2023  
Date

