

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

MINUTES OF JACKSON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES SPECIAL MEETING

AUGUST 22, 2012

Walters called the special meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Jackson Township Hall with all Trustees, Fiscal Officer, Lyon, Fitzgerald, Poindexter, Hogue, Ruwadi, Zink and Boger present.

Walters said the meeting was called to provide information on the current expense levy.

Gonzalez explained that what caused this issue is the fact that the Township will lose a total of \$2,970,000.00 in cuts from the State. He said \$1,000,000.00 will be lost in 2013 from the estate tax. He said the Township has been averaging well over \$1,000,000.00 a year, every year in estate taxes and that has pretty much funded Jackson Parks which operates on a budget anywhere from \$800,000.00 to \$1,000,000.00 yearly. He said we've also lost a portion of the undivided local government funds from the State. He said the Board of Trustees has known this has been coming and they've been working on it for years. He said that even with everything that has been done the difference can't be made up for that amount of loss. He said the Board has cut as much as they can and any more cuts will result in loss of services.

Walters pointed out that one of the major changes was to combine several departments into the Public Works Department. He said several department heads were reduced and we're down eight or ten employees in those departments. He said a lot of the credit goes to the township employees across the board who have done a great job working with the Township and Board to help make a lot of the changes possible. He pointed out that it wasn't up to the Board to raise taxes. He said it was up to the residents to decide whether to fund the parks and roads in the manner the Board thinks is the best way.

Pizzino thanked everyone for attending and gave Mr. Gonzalez a lot of credit for getting the law changed in Columbus that allowed us to have a number of capital accounts to put money away. He said the previous Boards of Trustees started putting money away about ten years ago and that was done to get by the levies. He pointed out that the levies haven't been increased for about ten years and there was enough money to get through the Police, Fire and Highway levies with the capital funds until these reductions happened. He said there will be other problems down the road but the first problem is with the park department. He pointed out that the parks department has never had an operating levy, that their budget came out of the general fund, and the previous Boards said they wouldn't ask for money unless they need money. He said "unfortunately we are here today because of that." He reiterated some of the cuts that have been made and said the goal is to provide the best service to the residents. He said the highway levy will expire the end of 2013. He pointed out that even though the park department and maintenance department is now part of the public works department, highway funds can't be used for those departments. He said the highway department is now down to nine labor specialists and no more cuts can be made. He said thirteen years ago there were approximately 170 miles of road now there are 202 miles of road to take care of.

Gonzalez explained that each department has set up three capital funds accounts. He said the ones for police and fire have been used to supplement those departments and the Board hasn't had to ask for new millage in ten years. He said this isn't available for the park department because they have never had a levy. He said that is where the confusion is to Jackson residents. He said it's possible they think that when they vote for the Stark Parks levy it is assisting Jackson Parks but Jackson gets nothing from the Stark Parks levy. He explained how a lot of the highway projects have been completed by leveraging the highway levy. He said the current highway levy that will expire at the end of 2013 is a 3 mill levy that generates about \$1.16 million. He said if it was at current millage it would generate over \$4 million dollars but currently it generates \$1.6 million. He said he was asked what would happen if this levy failed and the answer is that the parks would be mowed, there would be no work on any of the ball fields. He reviewed some of the numbers for the audience.

Hawke said putting the levy on the ballot wasn't something they wanted to do and that they realize money is tight but it's becoming tighter for the Township to provide the services that the residents are used to. He reiterated some of the points made by the other Trustees.

Gonzalez also pointed out that this is a five year levy and that number is fixed. He explained that means they have to live with that number for five years. He said they will have to be very careful when doing the budget.

Walters asked if there were any questions.

Pizzino moved and Hawke seconded a motion to adjourn.

3-0 yes

James Walters

Randy Gonzalez