

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN BOARD OF TRUSTEES HELD
TUESDAY, JULY 16, 2013 AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL,
ZION, ILLINOIS**

Chairman Neal called the meeting to order.

On call of the roll the following answered present: Trustees Taylor, DeTienne, Flammini, Hill, and Chairman Neal. Lisa Woodman, Township Deputy Assessor, was present.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Chairman Neal stated that, due to budget cuts, there would be no Volunteer Appreciation Dinner this year. She presented Gibbie Buchholtz with the Volunteer of the Year Award to memorialize him for his gift to the Zion community in the form of the countless hours he spends photographing and video-taping community events as well as time dedicated to the Zion Park District. State Representative JoAnn Osmond stated that Mr. Buchholtz is always there to cover her presence in Zion and she recognized him on behalf of the 98th General Assembly House of Representatives for receiving the Volunteer of the Year Award.

State Representative JoAnn Osmond was presented with the Friend of the Township Award for her support of the Zion Township and making herself available to staff for State level questions.

MINUTES

It was moved by Trustee Hill, seconded by Trustee Flammini that the minutes of a regular meeting held June 18, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. be approved as amended, all members having received printed copies prior to the meeting. The vote on roll call was: Trustees Taylor, aye; DeTienne, aye; Flammini, aye; Hill, aye; and Chairman Neal, aye. Motion carried.

Amendment: Page 3 - . She stated that no state funds will be spent to assist drug felons *with a Class X or Class 1 drug felony*.

BILLS

It was moved by Trustee Taylor, seconded by Trustee DeTienne that bills be authorized for payment as follows:

Township Fund

Assessor's Office	\$ 17,119.41	
Community Support	\$ 322.63	
Youth Services	\$ 4,801.61	
Senior Services	\$ 1,627.10	
Operating Expenses	\$ 34,345.85	
Township Fund Total Expenses		\$ 58,216.60

General Assistance Fund

Public Support	\$ 5,720.15	
Community Support	\$ 19,000.00	
Operating Expenses	\$ 9,188.33	
General Assistance Fund Total Expenses		\$ 33,908.48

FICA Total Expenses	\$ 4,262.27
IMRF Total Expenses	\$ 18,272.11
TOTAL BILLS:	\$114,659.46

The vote on roll call was: Trustees Taylor, aye; DeTienne, aye; Flammini, aye; Hill, aye; and Chairman Neal, aye. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING/APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE

Chairman Neal declared the Public Hearing for the Appropriation Ordinance for the fiscal year May 1, 2013 through April 30, 2014 open at 6:38 p.m.

Chairman Neal requested comments and/or questions from the public, and there were none.

Chairman Neal declared the Public Hearing for the Appropriation Ordinance closed at 6:39 p.m.

APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE

It was moved by Trustee DeTienne, seconded by Trustee Taylor to approve the Appropriation Ordinance 2013-02 for the fiscal year May 1, 2013 through April 30, 2014 for the total amount of \$1,493,143. The vote on roll call was: Trustees Taylor, aye; DeTienne, aye; Flammini, aye; Hill, aye; and Chairman Neal, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

JOINT TAXING BODY COMMITTEE MEETING UPDATE

David Knabel, City of Zion Director of Accounts/Finance, was present to update the Township Board regarding the July 1, 2013 joint meeting of representatives from the Zion taxing bodies. He stated that twelve elected officials representing six taxing bodies were present at the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to address challenges that affect the community as a whole. He stated that the taxing bodies share many of the same challenges. He stated that residents perceive the local government as the community of Zion and do not realize that the various taxing bodies exist. He stated that these challenges are difficult to overcome by individual taxing bodies, but together, progress can be made. Each representative was assigned the task of returning to their respective boards to request that they engage in discussion to identify the top three challenges they face and report back to the joint committee. Director Knabel read an email from a resident regarding the decline of his property value and asking what the City was planning to do to help reverse the downward turn. The resident also asked what he could do to help solve the problem of bringing home values back up. Mr. Knabel asked the Trustees to discuss the challenges the Township faces and identify the top three. Trustee Hill stated that the concept of the joint committee started with Trustee Flammini, Mr. Knabel and Chairman Neal addressing the Township budget. Revenues were down due to a property value decrease. They discussed why the values had decreased and how it was affecting the schools. It was then determined that the joint committee should be formed. He stated it is time to hold the tax levies steady and stop “cash grabbing” in order to offer more programs or provide more services. He quoted a school district representative stating that the long term financial sustainability of this town is the issue. Trustee Hill stated that the taxing bodies need to rebuild trust and forget past differences as there are new “players” involved. He stated that there is a need to start over and work together. Chairman Neal stated that there should be no looking back and only “win-win” solutions are acceptable. Trustee Hill stated that the top challenges for the Township are 1) provide more services with less revenue, 2) housing stock (increase in rental units, proliferation of foreclosures, vacant properties, Section 8 housing), 3) quality of schools and public safety (top issues for home buyers considering Zion), and 4) economic development. Chairman Neal stated that the top challenges are 1) jobs/training/untrained

workforce cycle, 2) housing, 3) lack of communication and community involvement, and 4) drug and gang issues. Trustee DeTienne stated that law enforcement is not out of control or overwhelming, but there is room for improvement. Full time staff has been increased and part time officers are being added to the department. He stated that the high crime perception is created by misinformation. He stated that goodness cannot be legislated and residents must be encouraged to take responsibility for their children. He stated that the top challenges are 1) schools, 2) vacant homes and 3) to be determined. Trustee Taylor stated that the challenges provided thus far are comprehensive and he will provide a list of challenges to Chairman Neal. Trustee Flammini stated that the top challenges are 1) housing, 2) schools, and 3) lack of parental and community involvement. Trustee Hill stated that the issue of taxes will be addressed by all taxing bodies. Director Knabel stated that the end goal of the joint taxing body committee is first to unify the community and then address soliciting public participation. The next meeting of the joint committee is scheduled for August 8, 2013.

ASSESSOR'S REPORT

Deputy Assessor Woodman stated that the books have been submitted. The publication date will be in mid-August which will determine the 30-day appeal period. She stated that the Assessor's Office will be hosting an open house to help residents with on-line filing. She stated that the Senior Freeze deadline has passed, however, residents can still apply if they act quickly.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Chairman Neal stated, due to time constraints, the Zion Township Monthly Report for June 2013 and the Supervisor's Report would be posted on the Zion Township website.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Clyde McLemore, 2815 Ezekiel, provided copies of Township General Assistance information regarding Class X and Class 1 drug felons to selected Trustees. He stated that there has been confusion regarding the Class X and Class 1 drug felons' receipt of assistance and that the 1996 law still stands. He stated that the Supervisor's office has performed background checks and denied general assistance applicants with drug dealings in their past. He stated that no other Township would provide a letter confirming that they offer general assistance to Class X and Class 1 drug felons but he did have the General Assistance handbook. He stated that a problem in Zion is the lack of residents trusting leaders and the community can't change unless they want to change. He stated that the ethnic make-up of the community is changing. He stated that both he and Chairman Neal were wrong and asked that the Township help citizens come out of poverty. He stated that he will bring felons into the Township office so background checks can be done to see if they have Class X or Class 1 drug felonies who have been denied General Assistance but do not have Class X or Class 1 drug felonies to help them get General Assistance.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, it was moved by Trustee DeTienne, seconded by Trustee Hill and unanimously approved the meeting be adjourned at 7:05 p.m. Motion carried.

Town Clerk