

Minutes

Joint Meeting of the Camden Town Council

And Jackson Township Trustee & Advisory Board

November 25, 2008

Camden Fire Station

Council President Peter Wagoner called the properly advertised meeting to order at 7:00 and expressed appreciation for the continued joint cooperation. Present were Jackson Township Trustee Bill Dittman, Deputy Trustee Cathy Dittman, Joe Wallace and Byron Rude, Advisory Board Members, Andy Kelly and Richard Fite, Town Council, Anne Briggs, Attorney and Pat Casserly, Clerk-Treasurer. Dan Shanks, Advisory Board, was absent.

The Town and the Township each gave a review of their financial situations. Each unit is in relatively good shape due to being financially conservative. Concerns were expressed about the effect from the property tax reforms and property assessments. Current economic conditions will have a negative impact on future tax revenue.

Animal control has not met for the past three months so there has been no progress. The Town recognizes the need for the service and is aware that the problem of stray animals continues to grow. Mrs. Dittman felt the meetings should be held at a more convenient time to allow for people's working schedule. Mr. Kelly mentioned the fact that there is low participation rate when the meetings are called.

The community should be well prepared for an emergency with both the fire station and the community building now being equipped with emergency power. Volunteers have been trained by the Red Cross in managing a shelter. The Town also maintains an agreement with the Red Cross in Tippecanoe County to assist if needed. The Town will be stocking the Community Building with dry soup, drinks and paper supplies to have on hand in the event they are needed. Mr. Fite and Mr. Ken Smith are working on securing a FEMA grant to construct additional restroom.

Mr. Rude reported everything is going well for the fire department.

Mr. Dittman expressed concern about vandalism continuing at the park. He hopes the cold weather will put an end to the destruction being done to the concession stand and playground equipment. There have been several break-ins and attempted break-ins. A new door was installed which was damaged but kept the intruders out. All incidents have been reported to the police. Mr. Wagoner stated there have been more problems in the past six months than in the prior several years. Citizens were asked to be watchful and report any suspicious behavior. Mr. Dittman felt a curfew would help – there are many young people out late at night. The vandalism needs to be curtailed. There is more trouble at the park than anywhere else in town. Mr. Dittman thanked Deputy Marshal Chapman for his efforts. Both Boards will have to consider what can be done to prevent vandalism next year.

Several improvements have been made to the park. A new public announcement system was donated; new playground equipment for 2 – 5 year olds was purchased with a grant from REMC, funds raised by the scrap metal drive and donated time & material. Community service hours have been used to repaint as needed. The deed for the property was returned by the school corporation to the township. The Youth Program was down a little at the start of the season but gained some back. Mrs. Dittman felt the program was successful and several tournaments were held.

A horse pull and tractor pull are planned for 2009. The horse pull will probably be the same weekend in '09 as '08 because of the circuit. The tractor pull is getting close to outgrowing the park.

The unsuccessful Fall Festival resulted in the town making policy changes in events where the Town's name is used. In the future, a performance bond may be required. The thought was expressed that this year's festival failed due to lack of volunteers, poor weather and poor organization. The garage sales were a success and in the future, the event may center on just garage sales. Mr. Fite stated he was told by Mr. Gurnick the festival vendors were reimbursed for their booth space.

The Carroll County Comprehensive Land Use Plan was approved by the Council at the November meeting. It was explained that the plan needed to be in place, by state statute, before the zoning ordinance could be updated. The current ordinance, written in 1971, does not address the county as it is today. The town of Camden will not be greatly affected by the land use plan other than the plan encouraging new development to take place near municipal utilities. The open spaces will have the most impact because the plan will be reflected in the updated zoning plan. The Steering Committee that worked on the Comprehensive Plan will now start to work on the zoning. The first tasks have been flood plains and the Hoosier Heartland Corridor overlay. The Area Plan Committee

supports the Steering Committee but there may be outside guidance sought for the project.

Progress is being made on the Heartland Corridor and the extension of Hwy 75 north. An information session was held with the landowners who would be affected by the extension of the highway and the town's thoughts were well received. One landowner met later with Mr. Wagoner and Mr. Smith for a tour of the area and he pointed out concerns for existing ditches and other concerns.

Ground was broken on the HHC at Lafayette in October. There was a lot of discussion at that time on the extension and there appears to be great support for the project. INDOT Community Advisory Committee met November 10th for more updates. The focus right now is on the Lafayette to Delphi section of the road. Overall, the project is on track and funding has been identified. The project, which has been divided into three segments, is expected to be completed in five years. Work will be noticed on both ends of the road – in Cass and Tippecanoe Counties- with the construction of bridges. Plans for the HHC have been modified to show Hwy 75 extending north by relocating one of the interchanges originally planned for Burrows. Grants and earmark money is being sought to make this improvement a reality. Mr. Smith is looking for grants to extend the Town's utilities north to a proposed industrial park. The new economic stimulus plans may make more funding available.

Mrs. Dittman discussed the Kernan-Shepard report on local government reform and its possible effect on township and county level government. The county would have a single-person elected official serving as the chief executive who would be responsible for administering the duties of the county auditor, treasurer, recorder, assessor, surveyor, sheriff and coroner. The duties of the trustees would also be transferred to the county executive. School corporations would be merged to achieve a minimum student population of 2,000 students. Concern was expressed for maintaining the local library, fire department and park if this plan is adopted. The possibility of holding a public meeting to discuss the impact of the Kernan-Shepard plan was discussed and favorably received. Mr. Dittman will investigate the possibility of holding such a meeting. Fear was expressed that the average citizen does not understand how they will be impacted by the proposed changes. The town pledged its support and willingness to help if a meeting can be arranged. If passed by the state legislature, the changes could go into place in 2011, the next year for trustee elections.

Mr. Wagoner concluded the by summarizing some of the Town's activities. The wastewater project is moving along and is expected to cost close to \$900,000. The town

has secured a grant for \$500,000 and a smaller grant for \$25,000 to help with the cost. A loan is arranged for the balance.

The Town Council meetings are now being held in the Library Reading Room on the second Thursday of the month.

A ten year lease was signed with Dr. Anderson insuring the town will have a doctor's office.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45

Camden Town Council

Peter F. Wagoner, President

Richard Fite, Vice-President

Andrew Kelly, Member

ATTEST:

P.A. Casserly
Clerk-Treasurer