

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

Union Township Trustee Advisory Board

2024 Budget Public Hearing

Meeting Date: August 22, 2023 – 6:00 PM, at the Union Township Trustee's Office

Members Present: Kelly Carrico, Trisha Carrico, Mike Wozny, Ryan Schafer

Public Present: Mike Carrico, Pam Urbanski

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Kelly Carrico, Union Township Trustee

A motion to approve minutes from previous meetings by Trisha Carrico, Seconded by Mike Wozny. All in favor.

The proposed budget for the 2024 year was presented by the Trustee.

She stated that the 2023 budget was \$ 947,757.00 and she was able to reduce it by \$ 52,679. The Fire Territory budget was increased by approximately \$ 5,000, Fire Replacement Fund increased by \$15,000, Fire Building and Fire Equipment Debt were previously established. Township Assistance was reduced by \$200, and the General Fund was reduced by \$50,000. The Rainy-Day Fund is \$148,000.

The Trustee went on to say that the reason for the overall reductions is that the Township is setting on a surplus of \$287,000 in cash. And the State Board of Accounts is stating until the township starts using money that they will not continue to allow townships to receive monies that are not needed.

Local Option Income Tax (LOIT) money can be appropriated to Fire and Emergency services, as long as it is designated to a line item in General Fund. She was able to create a line item for Fire and EMS supplies of \$10,000; and also to add Fire and EMS Equipment line item of \$10,000; also there will be an offset for utilities between Fire and EMS out of these funds. With that said there was an additional amount of approximately \$32,000 into the General Fund to help offset some of the Emergency Services expenses. These funds can be directed to Fire, Ambulance or wherever necessary.

Ryan Schafer stated that he appreciates the work that Kelly has done. He went on to say his belief is that the Township will be faced with some large expenditures in the future. Depending on what North Township does with their interest in the Union North Ambulance Service; in the case that they withdrawal from the service agreement with them. We may wish to provide Ambulance Service thru the Township itself. He went on to further state that it has been rumored that the Town of Lakeville may seek to withdrawal from the Fire Territory. Union Township may be faced with encumbering an Ambulance Service and a Fire Department. With that being said, he appreciates the idea of a large cash reserves, because public Safety is paramount to the community.

Trisha mentioned that the Town does not contribute but a small portion to the territory as compared to the Township. Ryan stated that the town consists of approximately 760 people compared to the township of approximately 3,600.

Kelly mentioned that the township assessed value is \$199M with the territory the assessed value for those funds increases to \$244M and the benefit to the territory is approximately \$33M in assessed value. That equals 12% of the territory. The town currently holds 50% of the vote in the Territory.

Ryan was concerned of the Townships ability to provide top notch services to the community with the current funding.

Kelly mentioned that she recently attended a meeting of the North Township Advisory board where they were discussing forming a Territory with North and the Town of Lapaz. She stated that at that meeting the intent was to provide Fire and Ambulance service. The concern is that the ambulance service is setting on approximately \$120,000 in surplus funds. Most of these funds come from the Taxpayers and Billing. Union Township and North Township own the equipment equally. North Township wants some kind of a guarantee that Union Township will continue to contract.

Ryan explained that the problem is that the Ambulance service is setting on a large cash reserve, and having personnel leave to go to another service that pays a higher wage. At a July 13th township board meeting with the Ambulance service, he asked for information from John Lampkins as to what it would take to bring the pay in line with the market. We need to be at the prevailing wage plus to attract people. Yet Ryan has not heard anything back from John.

A motion to adopt the proposed 2024 budget was made by Ryan Schafer, Second by Mike Wozny. All in favor.

Public Question: Union township funds fifty percent of the Ambulance Service If the Ambulance Service were totally funded by the township, what does the Town of Lakeville contribute to the Ambulance Service?

Ryan Schafer: Exactly nothing.

Public Question: So how could this be changed? The Ambulance service reports that 63% of their calls to this area are inside the Town of Lakeville.

Ryan Schafer: We as a Board realize that the Town is wanting to bill the Territory for certain Services, example being water for the Fire Department operations. It would be a nice gesture of the town to be willing to assist in funding the ambulance service.

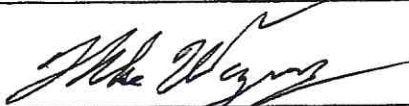
Kelly Carrico added: She and the North Township both have asked John Lampkins. President of the Ambulance service to approach the town for funding. At this time that has not been done.

A motion to adjourn was made at 6:41pm by Trisha Carrico, Second by Ryan Schafer. All in favor.

Budget adoption meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2023, at 6:00 pm at the Trustee's Office.

Minutes approved 28th day of September, 2023

Board Chairman



Board Member



Board Secretary



Trustee