

**Sangamon Township
Regular Monthly Meeting**

Held at Sangamon Township Building, 1276 Old Rt 47 White Heath Illinois

December 11, 2014

Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of Sangamon Township was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Supervisor Ray Spencer. Roll call was taken. Elsie Robinson, Ray Spencer, John Foley, Bill Olson and Steve Harper were present.

Debbie Marshall-Clerk, Larry Sebens-Highway Commissioner and Brent Buckalew-Assessor were also present.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

There was no public comment.

The November 2014 minutes were mailed to the Board. Steve Harper moved to accept the minutes as received, and Elsie Robinson seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed.

The invoices were presented for payment. John asked Larry for clarification of a charge from Central Culvert & Tile. Ray asked Larry if his health insurance would now be billed monthly. He doesn't know for sure, but might be. After a motion from Elsie Robinson to approve and pay invoices as presented, which was seconded by John Foley, all were in favor and the motion to approve passed.

Announcements & Communications:

Ray gave us a follow up on the siren activation from Global Technologies in Decatur. The employee who had been working with us has left the company. They will look into this delay of activation and determine the snag.

Brent said that the assessing is wrapped up for 2014. The new year starts next month. It was a thin year for new building in our township.

Bill & John attended an open house for Paul Branch's 100th birthday. He served as Township Supervisor many years ago. Debbie will send a birthday card to Paul from the Sangamon Township Board.

Old Business: None

New Business:

The White Heath ball diamond buildings have hail damage. We received a small insurance check. T.O.I.R.M.A. suggests a discussion of replacing roofs on the pavilion, concession stand and dug out. Ray asked the Board if they wanted to obtain some bids for the repairs and roof replacements. The concession stand also needs a window repair.

Chris Carr-Secretary to the Monticello Schools Board of Education and Kevin Frye-Monticello School Board member, presented for discussion-- the topic of referendum failure in Sangamon Township precinct 1 & 2. They wanted the perspective of the Sangamon Township Board members and were asking for thoughts and input to determine what direction they need to go in formulating a new plan.

Steve said that residents want the White Heath School to remain open. Plans for the building is a concern. It is a community asset.

Brent shared that some folks would view a compromise by building a new school near Rick Ridings Ford, which would still be in Sangamon Township.

Mike Nolan pointed out that the School Board said the high school building was in bad shape, but it would then be used for a grade school. He also attended School Board meetings where the architect stated that the buildings were well maintained. His concern is with protecting teachers. Teachers educate—school buildings don't educate. The School Board should provide scenarios...such as...what happens if we lose Corporate Replacement tax funding? If we pass the tax referendum...what happens if more money is needed? The current debts should be paid off first. \$40 million referendum is too much to ask for. We have a building which is 10 years old, and are already putting new furnaces in it. In the next 30 years(amount of time to pay off the new bonds)there will surely be more repairs and replacements.

Chris said they want the majority of voters to support the referendum. Did having the sales tax on the ballot as well as the referendum confuse the voters?

John related a voter's uncertainty of the tax cost. A sales tax is a contribution from the outside-not just the property owners. Therefore, maybe why the sales tax passed.

What is the cost of putting dollars into existing buildings over the next 30 years v/s the cost of new buildings?

Mike had asked Vic Zimmerman, Superintendent of Monticello Schools, for a breakdown of the cost of energy for the various buildings and wasn't able to obtain one.

Chris said that they have been asked where will the new building be, and what is it going to look like? The Board is reviewing a low cost option to get plans drawn so that people can visualize the idea.

Kevin said they need to make a decision soon, while information is fresh and before construction costs go up.

Mike re-iterates...pay off debt, then buy land. Do it in stages. Mike also asked “can you show that building the new middle school improved test scores?”

Chris replied that could not be proven.

Chris says that we need to be competitive to retain and attract quality teachers. And new buildings provide that. No answer as to what would happen to White Heath school building.

The middle school and White Heath remodel is approximately 15 years old, funded by bonds that are still not paid off.

The School Board reps asked the Township Board if they would be interested in owning the White Heath School building. The answer in the discussion was a collective no.

Ray suggested the School Board devise a plan to present regarding the future of the White Heath School Building.

John also commented that they should pay off debt before proceeding with new debt and it would be risky to present the referendum to the voters again too soon. He also asked if we can remain status quo on the current buildings if we pay off debts first.

Chris responded that they do have to update some science labs and locker rooms regardless of building a new High School.

Ray asked the Township Board if they want to add an advisory vote to the ballot to see if the electors will choose to proceed to stage II in adding sirens throughout Sangamon Township.

John thinks that with the hard economic times we are in...the public wouldn't be interested.

Steve says we should let the public voice their opinion.

Bill said a concrete plan would be needed to illustrate the vision.

A motion to adjourn was made by Elsie Robinson and seconded by John Foley. All were in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:02 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Marshall

Sangamon Township Clerk