

## Town Council Retreat Meeting Minutes

April 17, 2021

Police Training Room – 7:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

### Roll Call

- Council Members Present: Barry Wood, President; Greg Brewer, Larry Longman, Tom Strayer and Branden Williams.
  - Staff present: Paul Casey, Tonya Galbraith, Mark Witsman, Ryan Crum, Ron Crider and Stephanie Crider.
  - Clerk-Treasurer: Staci Starcher
1. **Welcome and Overview of 2020** – Barry Wood gave a brief overview of the activities that came out of the 2020 Council Retreat and stated that they are much like the agenda items for the 2021 Retreat.
  2. **Discussion of CSX/CR 600W road improvements** – Mr. Brewer indicated that in his opinion the only viable alternatives were the At-Grade solution and the Underpass. Mr. Longman stated that he was disappointed that the Underpass is only two lanes and feels that we should request funding for all four lanes. Mr. Crum replied that two lanes can handle 20K cars a day. Mr. Brewer said that if we need four lanes it should be four lanes to CR 1000N. Mr. Strayer asked if the project is a Federal Aid Project, do we ask for funding for all four lanes. Mr. Crum stated that if it is a Federal Aid Project that we should request funding for all four lanes, but if it an MPO funded project we should not ask for funding for all four lanes. Mr. Strayer stated that another issue is economic development. He said that we would not get a viable Town Center without a bridge or underpass because most of the people we will be drawing into Town Center are coming from the north. He added that if we want to be more than a bedroom community we need a Town Center. Chief Casey stated that the police department is not slowed down by the railroad crossing very often, but it does happen. He felt that it happened maybe once a month. President Wood asked how the tunnel helps with intersections. Mr. Witsman said there would also be intersection improvements as part of the project. Mr. Brewer asked if timing of the traffic light on Broadway could be fixed to allow more cars. Mr. Witsman said that the light has been set for timing as much as is possible. President Wood asked this question – “if funding were not a problem what would be want?” The consensus was a four-lane underpass – “now go find the funding.” It was requested that staff prepare a firm cost analysis of a four-lane underpass. Mr. Witsman will contact McMillen Jacobs to come up with the cost.
  3. **Discussion of Town Hall facility planning and staffing** – Ms. Galbraith explained the organizational flow chart which included current staff and what each department felt was needed in the future. After much discussion, President Wood asked that a matrix be prepared by staff which would provide justification of the hiring requests. There was also a question of where new employees would work since we are basically out of space. There is office space available for a few more employees. Chief Casey and Mr. Crum brought up the possibility of a Public Safety Facility in the future, which could also house another fire station. A move to a separate facility would free up space in the current town hall for several years or until a firm

plan to build a new town hall in Town Center was approved. Mr. Brewer suggested forming a committee to study a possible Public Safety Facility, which was agreed to. The members of the committee would be Mr. Brewer, Mr. Crum, Chief Casey, a representative of the Fire Department and a representative of the Metro Board. Mr. Longman would serve in a technical support capacity.

4. **Discussion of Town Center planning and housing needs** – There is approximately 39 acres under contract by Rebar. They are also asking the Town for appraisals of the Old Town Hall property for a potential land swap for Town Hall in the Town Center development. Mr. Strayer indicated that a Public Safety Facility could be near the Town Center development, but not actually in it taking up valuable space for other development. A BOT can be used for a Public Safety Facility, which might be a viable funding option. Another option for Town Hall could be leasing space for a short time in a building in Town Center. Another aspect of Town Center development is the potential of using ARP funds for the storm water park. Mrs. Starcher indicated that she asked whether ARP funds could be used for storm water funding and was told that it was not an allowable use. However, a National League of Cities webinar indicated that storm water conveyance was considered as part of sewer. We need to get further clarification of the uses of the ARP before a decision is made on funding.

Mr. Brewer is concerned that if certain parcels of Town Center are developed one way and other parcels develop in another way that is not consistent with the plan that we would end up with a hodge-podge of buildings. Mr. Crum explained that we would still have zoning authority in Town Center. Mr. Brewer is concerned that since the one developer is not buying all the property that a town council several years from now could change the direction. Mr. Strayer stated that he felt that any future council would have the same vision of Town Center as the current council. Mr. Longman suggested that the Jacobi's and Tower could allow the PUD to extend over their future parcels. Mr. Crum stated that they did a short-term zoning as requested during the retreat last year. However, long-term zoning has not been done yet. We continue to keep Veridus in the loop on advising us when the appropriate time for a long-term zoning might be. Now that Rebar has come along do we want to be progressive on the zoning? Mr. Longman said that we want to be progressive on the zoning, but reactionary on other aspects until we see what the "ask" from Rebar is. We also need to weigh incentives for Town Center against the underpass and other projects that are important to the Town.

Mr. Strayer stated he wanted to thank the staff because everything went so well today at the retreat because of all the work which was done last year.

**Housing needs** – Mr. Crum showed an exhibit where executive level housing could go. Mr. Strayer said that if Town Center goes, executive level housing could be a good fit there, too. Mr. Crum went through the exhibit and explained the history of housing construction in Town. This would give staff some institutional knowledge on where we would like to see executive level housing. President Wood felt it was a good depiction of where executive level housing would be appropriate. Mr. Crum then showed an exhibit where attainable level housing could go. Mr. Longman asked what the zoning is at 1000N and 600W. Mr. Crum explained that everything except Good Nature, which is zoned commercial, is zoned R-1.

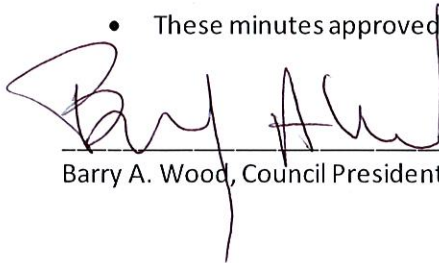
Mrs. Starcher said that the DLGF rep has told her that the Fortville/Vernon Township Library becomes our responsibility when our AV reaches 50% , which it has. If they go over the growth quotient for the year we would have to review and sign their budget. Ms. Galbraith signed their budget last year due to this provision, but they had not gone over the growth quotient for that year. Ms. Starcher also explained how the CCD fund works and the uses it could be used to fund. Which includes roads. We need to also talk about parks funding. Ms. Galbraith explained that Parks Boards can have their own tax rate, which would be a good way to make parks funding sustainable.

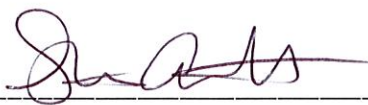
#### **Adjournment**

- Mr. Brewer made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Longman.

#### **Minutes Approval**

- These minutes approved this 11<sup>th</sup> day of May 2021.

  
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Barry A. Wood, Council President

Attest:   
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Staci A. Starcher, Clerk-Treasure