

Colerain Township Financial Advisory Committee (FAC)

Minutes

June 11, 2013

OPENING OF MEETING

Mr. Michel called the meeting to order at 7:47PM with the following members present: John Kerr, Dennis Mason, Doug Moore, Scott Taylor and Doug Michel. Heather Harlow, Township Fiscal Officer, and James Rowan, Township Administrator, were also in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes for the May 28, 2013, meeting were reviewed. Mr. Mason made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Taylor offered the second. All voted "aye."

TOWN HALL MEETING FOLLOW-UP

Mr. Kerr pointed out the relative value of the categories, 4s and 5s, with increasing order of importance: senior, parks, public works, police, fire. He said that some people left early and 30-40 didn't complete the survey. The hall wasn't as crowded as last time.

Mr. Michel said that the combined safety service levy approach message was lost and this question least responded to. Mr. Mason said that when it's explained, they understand. Still, they don't understand about the combined safety service levy or about road repairs.

Mr. Michel said that there is confusion about what's a township vs county vs state road.

Mr. Taylor said that there seems to be discussion about who broke the contract, us or the sheriff.

Mr. Rowan said that Leis changed position 2-3 times. He cut 12 deputies and we used the reserves to back-fill.

Mr. Taylor said that they pulled the plug, it's clearly documented. But, that's not the story they told at the meeting.

Mr. Kerr asked about a timeline for placing an item on the November ballot. Mr. Rowan said the budget is due on July 1 and they levy on August 5. The Board must pass two resolutions.

Mr. Mason discussed the question on the survey about supporting a levy versus spending down the reserves.

Mr. Taylor said 86% were for a levy, either now or next year.

Mr. Michel said that he is surprised by that as a couple of speakers talked about spending the reserves

Mr. Rowan said that is still eating into the general fund reserve,

Mr. Taylor said that we shouldn't wait to start the JEDD.

Mr. Rowan said the Hamilton County Development Corporation is starting to do estimates, with areas from Colerain to Struble to Galbraith. There is a certain square mile maximum so we could have separate JEDDs. He said that there is some concern with legislative changes.

Mr. Taylor proposed the following:

The FAC recommended that the administration expedite the study and potential implementation of a JEDD or JEDDS in Colerain Township. The target date, if determined advantageous, should be to have JEDDs in place by 1-1-15.

Second by Mr. Mason.

Mr. Taylor said we should do this sooner rather than later.

Mason, Moore, Taylor and Michel -- aye

Kerr – nay.

Mr. Michel turned the discussion to the police and asked if we are willing to pay a premium for our own police force. The Trustees seem to feel it is important, but control comes with a price.

Mr. Rowan said that we must consider what level of service we want to provide, then cut to be within our means. He said the \$376,000 Sheriff contract would be the first to go if a levy fails and cuts are needed.

Mr. Mason said that if we throw out the contract, we do lose other services., the beat patrol, traffic car, detective services.

Mr. Rowan said that with the mutual aid agreement, technically were paying for street cops. They are first responders to contracted agencies.

Mr. Michel asked how to repair relationship with HCSO.

Mr. Rowan said that is up to the Board

Mr. Taylor said that 2/3 of the survey responders said to do it in '13. The longer it is pushed out that draws down reserves.

Mr. Mason said that he would not support a '13 levy. He would like to see it get further out, and use a small part of reserves.

Mr. Kerr there seems to be no tolerance for reduction of services.

Mr. Taylor proposed the following:

Based on the town hall meeting discussion and survey feedback and a lengthy discussion, the FAC recommends that the Board go forth with a police levy of approximately 1.5 mills for election in 2013.

Mr. Michel seconded.

Michel, Taylor – aye

Kerr, Mason, Moore -- nay

Mr. Rowan said that the Board might be interested in non-safety and fire department funding/expenses.

Mr. Kerr proposed the following:

Recommend the Board utilize general fund reserves to maintain substantially the same police service level through 2014 and consideration be given to planning an approximately 1.75 mill levy on the May 2014 ballot, the suggested milage to be re-evaluated in early 2014.

Mr. Moore offered the second.

All aye.

Mr. Taylor proposed the following:

The FAC supports a balanced approach to achieving financial stability by spending some level of general fund balance to maintain the parks, community center, public

works and roads departments in 2014. All departments and the Board should continue to look at cost reductions, shared services and new revenue streams to deliver these services.

Mr. Kerr offered second.

All aye.

NEXT MEETINGS

In September, unless needed for a special meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Committee, at 9:21PM, Mr. Taylor made a motion for adjournment and Mr. Mason offered the second. All voted "aye."



Fiscal Officer



Committee Chairman