

BALDWIN TOWNSHIP SPECIAL MEETING

February 24, 2009

Present – Supervisors Jeff Holm, Lester Kriesel, Bryan Lawrence, Jim Oliver and Paul Vollkommer.

Call to Order – The February 24, 2009 Baldwin Township special meeting was called to order by Chairman Bryan Lawrence at 7:01 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance - All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Informational Presentation Regarding the Ballot Question of Town Administrator
Chairman Bryan Lawrence read the Option C ballot question as it is presented in the *Optional Township Plans* paper from the Minnesota Association of Townships Information Library:

Option C – Town Administrator

a) Described: This option provides for the appointment of a town administrator.

b) Question: “Shall option C, providing for the appointment of a town administrator by the town board, be adopted for the government of the town?”

c) Implementation: If Option C is adopted, the town board is required to appoint an administrator as soon as practicable after the election on the terms the board deems advisable. The person appointed does not need to be a resident of the town, but the administrator must be chosen solely on the basis of training, experience, and administrative qualifications. The town clerk may be appointed as the administrator if he or she meets the qualifications. The appointment is for an indefinite period. The board may appoint a qualified person to perform the administrator’s duties during absence or disability. An administrator may be removed by the board at any time. However, if the administrator has served for at least one year, he or she may require the board to make written charges and hold a *public* hearing on the charges before the final removal takes effect. Until the hearing, the board may suspend the administrator with or without pay.

i) The powers and duties of the administrator are set out in the statute.

d) Upon Abandonment: If abandonment of Option C is approved, as soon as practicable after the election the board must abolish the office. The position should be abolished by town board resolution. Once abolished, the duties and responsibilities of the position shall be assumed by the town board or by the officer having responsibility for the function prior to the appointment of the administrator.

Jeff Holm asked that the information on informational hearings be read. In the Minnesota Association of Townships handbook the following is stated:

“Informational hearings, on the other hand, are not a necessary part of a statutory procedure. These hearings can be called anytime, upon sufficient notice, to discuss any item of town business. Informational hearings serve basically two purposes: (1) to provide information to the public; and (2) to allow the board to receive comments and information from the people of the community. A hearing held to seek input on whether the town should begin zoning at a local level is an example of an information hearing. The town board could use an informational hearing to provide information regarding the costs and benefits of local zoning, as well as to receive initial reactions from residents. Because informational hearings are not controlled by statute, there are no set procedural standards that must be followed to call these hearings other than compliance with the open meeting law. However, boards should conduct informational hearings using the same basic procedures followed when conducting statutory hearings.”

Giving background, Holm stated that starting on June 3, 2008 with a special workshop meeting, annexation and incorporation was discussed. A committee of eleven members plus two board members was created to study the options. The conclusions were:

Conclusions

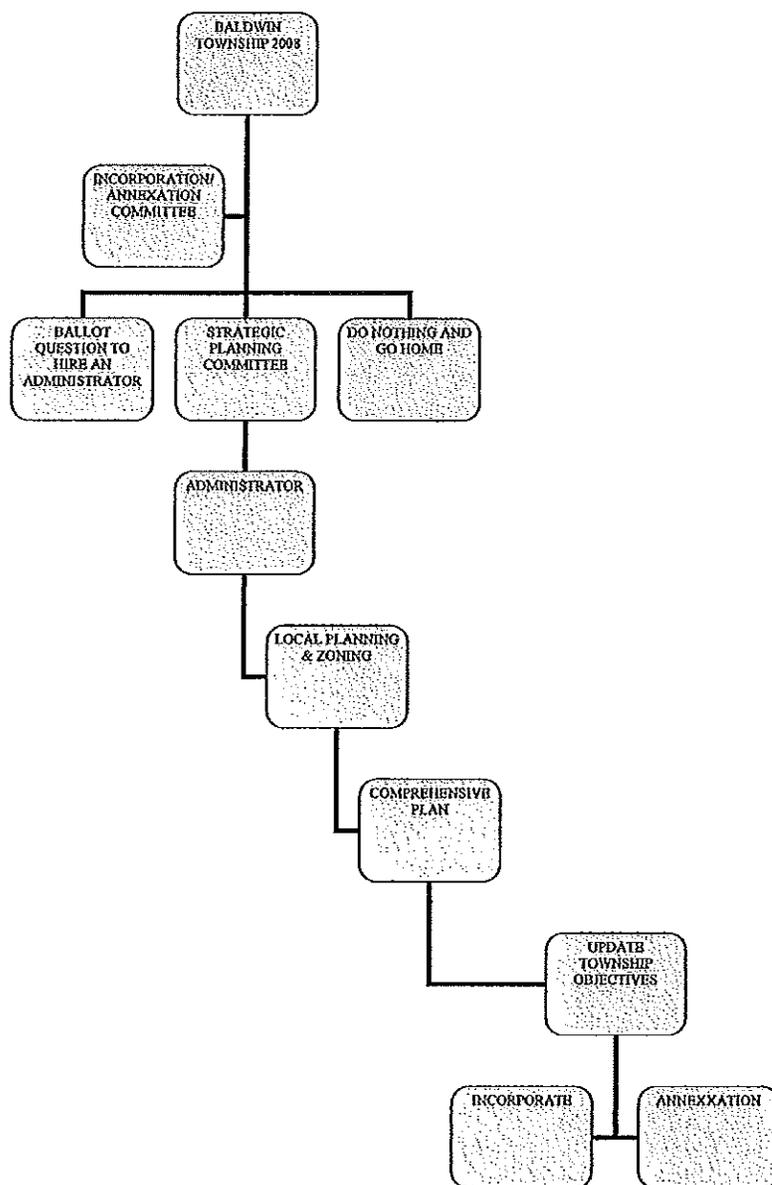
1. Baldwin Township is not in a position to incorporate as it is.
2. Cooperation between Baldwin and Princeton is just as important to Baldwin as it is to Princeton. (If Baldwin can't agree with Princeton, its future may be decided by a judge with preference to Princeton because they are more prepared than Baldwin)
3. Managing the township's affairs is in need of professional help.
4. A long term plan, with a budget and options needs to be established as soon as possible.
6. If incorporation is the goal, the ability to govern effectively and provide services must be proven.
6. A joint effort by Baldwin and Princeton to build and attract a meaningful industrial/business tax base is much more likely than competing with each other.

ACTION NEEDED

FIX UP WHAT EXISTS, TRY TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT WITH PRINCETON AND BE PREPARED FOR ANNEXATION/INCORPORATION HEARINGS AND PROCEDURES.

1. Draft a plan to pre-empt a possible petition.
2. Press forward with an agreement with Princeton.
3. Draft a long term plan with a budget and options.
4. Educate the public and collect significant opinion.
5. Include budget items to establish a contingency fund and allowance for professional help.
6. Form committees with funding and authority to support the plan.

Princeton, NJ
 10/1/80
 Mayor
 Princeton



There was discussion regarding White Bear Township who does not have an actual administrator but quite a large staff. Holm stated that he also spoke with an administrator from Columbus. He checked with the League of Minnesota Cities on their

salary and benefit survey but there was a charge for obtaining that information. He went on to DEED (Department of Economic Development) and obtained some salary information. Additional information is included in these meeting minutes.

E: Administrator

Page 1 of 2

RE: Administrator

a.nordby@att.net [d.nordby@att.net]

Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2009 12:38 PM

To: Holm, Jeffrey R [hoje0506@stcloudstate.edu]

----- Forwarded Message: -----

From: "Jim Willis" <JWillis@ci.rogers.mn.us>

To: <d.nordby@att.net>

Subject: RE: Administrator

Date: Fri, 13 Feb 2009 15:00:41 +0000

Date:

My responses to you questions follow in the order noted in your message.

1. My personal relationship with the leaders of both Hassan and Rogers is fine. That is not to suggest that everyone agrees with me or my recommendations, but we are able to work together on matters of common interest. The relations between the elected officials of both communities are good. I work only for the Town of Hassan as their interim Administrator; Rogers has hired a new City Administrator. It is possible that he will assume the duties of Hassan Administrator on a contractual basis between the City and Town.
2. Hassan has had full-time Town Administrators for a number of years -- and prior to the approval of the Orderly Annexation Agreement.
3. In my view there is no essential difference in the basic duties of the Rogers City Administrator and the Hassan Town Administrator. The Rogers organization is both larger and more complex than the Hassan one. That is an issue of scale, not basic responsibilities and accountabilities. Both administrative positions report directly to the elected officials and are charged with carrying out the directions of the elected officials.
4. The primary advantage of having an individual serving as the administrative head of the organization is to focus accountability in seeing that the functions and responsibilities of the organization are carried out effectively. As a community grows in population and as services are provided or expanded the ability of elected officials to effectively see that the functions of government become more problematic. In many townships, individual board members have a 'hands on' function -- directly supervising one or more town employees or functions. With an administrator in place, those various individual board operational responsibilities become responsibilities of the administrator. The board, in turn, holds the administrator accountable for the effectively carrying out his/her responsibilities.

Planning -- both operational and capital -- require a lot of effort and commitment on the part of the board and administrator. Effective planning is essential. As the old say goes, 'If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there'.

5. I could not venture an educated guess on what compensation would be required for an administrator for your community. I do not have access to current information on compensation surveys of local government administrators. The League of Minnesota Cities does have such survey information. The Township Association may also have this information.
6. If you determine there is a need for an administrator, I think you have answered the question on the value of the position and the return on your investment. I am not in a position to predict that you will save money in the short term; in the longer term [three to five years] I am very confident that an effective administrator would be able to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of the position. An administrator should be able to provide the elected officials with information and recommendations on how to more effectively carry out the functions and services you provide the residents of a growing community; how to plan and schedule public improvements to meet the needs of the growth without placing an undue burden on existing residents. It is my view that new

development should 'pay its own way' rather than for existing residents to carry that burden. An effective administrator, working in close cooperation with the elected officials, can keep the cost of government reasonable for the services provided.

7. The elected officials, in seeking to justify the need for an administrator, should at a minimum examine what needs the town has in terms of administrative leadership. Are the current employees doing their jobs effectively, are they well trained and able to grow in their positions; are the basic needs and service requirements of the citizens being met [inquires, complaints, etc.]; are forward looking plans being made for growth, including fiscal impacts; are board members able to individually and collectively carry out their policy making functions without undue time being spent on 'details'? Only the elected officials can appropriately evaluate the need to take the step to hire the initial administrator. If the decision is made to do so, the next challenge is to hire one who can meet you needs and expectations -- a task easier undertaken than to effectively accomplish.

My final observation is that the board clearly articulate it's plan for the new administrator and have a clear understanding with the administrator what he/she is to accomplish and how the board will evaluate the administrator's performance on the job.

Good luck to you and your board -- whatever direction you chose to follow.

Jim Willis

From: d.nordby@att.net [mailto:d.nordby@att.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:26 PM
To: Jim Willis
Subject: Administrator

Mr Jim Willis
 Interim City Administrator
 Rogers MN 55374

Thank you for your time on the phone today. If you would respond to the following questions it would very helpful.

What is your relationship with Hassan township and the city of Rogers?

Did Hassan township have the use of an administrator before their agreement with the city of Rogers?

Do you see any difference in the duties between the administrator of the town and the city?

What are the advantages to the city or town that have an administrator?

Could you offer us an opinion as to what the cost might be to a township such as Baldwin on a full or part time basis, in your experience?

What would you expect for the return on the dollars spent?

What other questions might you consider important in justifying an administrator?

Thank you again for your help

Dale S Nordby
 Incorporation/Annexation Committee
 Baldwin Township

FW: Re:

Page 1 of 2

FW: Re:

d.nordby@att.net [d.nordby@att.net]

Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2009 12:42 PM

To: Holm, Jeffrey R [hofs0506@stcloudstate.edu]

----- Forwarded Message: -----
 From: "Denny Seefeldt" <dennykom@frontiernet.net>
 To: <d.nordby@att.net>
 Subject: Re:
 Date: Thu, 19 Feb 2009 17:30:27 +0000

Dale S Nordby
 Incorporation/Annexation Committee
 Baldwin Township

I'll try to answer the questions you have regarding hiring an administrator. My answers in response to your questions are:

*We hired our administrator about six months before we became a city. Movement to an administrator had been in the works for about six years before we made the move. Our clerk had been very ill in 2000 and we anticipated a probable retirement so we developed a job description for an administrator clerk but didn't move until her retirement in early 2006

*We felt strongly that with the size of our staff, budget office administration, etc. we needed to go to day to day professional administration of the office, staff and township business.

*We did plan in advance for the change but didn't seek township approval.

*We didn't seek prior approval.

*The only budget change either prior too or after was about the \$30,000 difference between the clerk and administrator salary.

*It was about .012% of the total budget or about .018% of the levy.

*The job description conforms to state guidelines.

*The job description did not change after incorporation.

*The most important benefits of the administrator position have been supervision and goal setting with staff (she also got a retirement of a poor performing employee in a few months because she was there and could document things that we had a hard time doing as a town board), significant improvement in budget setting and management, slowly bringing us into conformance with state laws that we didn't even know about, professional management of the office and city, etc.

*The position has been a very good return on the cost.

*People who are knowledgeable on local government are very supportive on this issue. As a matter of fact I received many calls favorable to this move and none negative.

*There are some nay sayers regarding budget issues but they are all related to a personal agenda (jealousy, personal conflicts, trying to get us to spend more on the fire department -- all from people with a vested interest in the fire department)

*I don't have any questions but I feel very strongly that this is a very good move and if your township is similar to ours I'd highly recommend this move on your part.

If I can answer any other questions feel free to ask me.

Sincerely,

Denny Seefeldt, Mayor
 Sixty of Scandia

|----- Original Message -----

FW: Re:

Page 2 of 2

From: d.nordby@att.net
To: dennykom@frontiernet.net
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2009 4:36 PM

Mr Denny Seefeldt
Mayor
Scandia, MN 55073

THANK YOU for your time on the phone with me today. If you would respond to the following questions it would be very helpful.

Did you have a town administrator while you were still a township?

What caused the town to hire an administrator as opposed to a clerk or secretary?

Had the town prepared in advance for the position including voter approval?

What needs were established prior to approval?

What budget changes were made before and after?

Was this a large change relative to the total budget?

Did the job description conform to state guide lines?

Did the job description change after incorporation?

Looking back, what have been the most important benefits of the administrator position?

From a cost basis, has the position had a good return on the money spent?

Is there strong support by the voters on this issue?

Do you think it has changed to any degree in this economy?

What other questions might you consider important in justifying an administrator?

Thank you again for your help

Dale S Nordby
Incorporation/Annexation Committee
Baldwin Township
763 389 4853

Discussion was held on township administrator's duties and pay scale.

Informational Presentation Regarding Administrator Data – Stephanie Ketterl stated that she agrees that the township needs restructuring. She then presented other options available in lieu of a township administrator.

Announcements:

Bryan Lawrence stated that the candidate's forum is scheduled for this Saturday and the March 10 election involves voting for Supervisor "A" and Supervisor "E" along with the ballot question.

Adjournment – Vollkommer/Oliver unanimous to adjourn at 9:13 p.m.



Submitted By: (s/) Cathy Stevens
Clerk/Treasurer
Baldwin Township



Approved By: (s/) Bryan Lawrence
Chairman, Board of Supervisors
Baldwin Township

Attendees: Ron Dempski, Jay Swanson, Patrick Munro, Kevin Kleingartner, Curt, Selinsky, Lyman Stein, Daniel Osborn, Dennis Lindberg, Sue Nordwall, Brad Chambers, Gregg Nordwall, Ethan Nordwall, Dale Hurni, John Bowler, Victoria Hallin, Nels Hallin, Stephanie Ketterl