

BALDWIN TOWNSHIP SPECIAL MEETING

April 30, 2012

Present – Supervisors Jay Swanson, Kimberly Good, Larry Handshoe and Tom Rush. Randy Atwood arrived at 6:38 p.m.

Call to Order – The April 30, 2012 Baldwin Township special meeting was called to order by Chairman Jay Swanson at 6:34 p.m.

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

Interview Planning Commission Applicants – Swanson initiated the meeting by saying that the Planning Commission is going to be a forever Baldwin committee, referring to the temporary committees of the past. Therefore a commitment from all the applicants will be necessary. He said that Baldwin has hired Bridget Chard as the Baldwin Township Planner on a contractual basis.

Question: Tell us your background.

Peggy Patten: Has a nursing degree; has lived in Baldwin for 43 years; was involved with the planning and zoning for Sherburne County; has sat on multiple task forces for Baldwin Township; wrote the cemetery rules and regulations for Baldwin.

Scott Case: Is a captain on the St. Paul fire department for 22 years; has been a Baldwin Township resident for 12 years and plans to retire here; is now a captain on the Baldwin Fire Department; has been involved in government for the last 26 years in law and fire safety.

Richard Harris: Spent 5 ½ years in the Air Force; was employed for 30 years in an industrial controls company in Maple Grove; has attended most of the Baldwin Township annual meetings for the last 4- 5 years; was recently involved in the Baldwin Township Government Innovations Task Force.

Terry Carlile: Is currently working for Baldwin Township even though he planned to retire in February he was called back temporarily; spent 4 years in the Air Force; worked for the railroad for 13 years; was service manager for Elk River Ford; is involved with the Baldwin Township Cemetery Committee and the Baldwin Township Capital Improvement Committee.

Elly Rittenour: Moved to Baldwin Township in 1970; worked for ECM for 25 years then opened her own printing business in Milaca in 2007; went to college in St. Cloud but did not graduate; served 3 years on the Baldwin Township board of supervisors; love Baldwin Township and is proud to live in the township.

Ross Perry: Moved to Baldwin Township in 1994; has vocational training, and is now currently self-employed; has no experience with government but is very interested in the process; thinks Baldwin Township needs to do some preparation for the 21st century.

Robert Weeks: Has no governmental experience; is retired; has lived in Baldwin Township for 13 years; worked for Acorn in Minneapolis; has free time and would like to be involved with Baldwin Township planning.

Question: What skill(s) do you bring to this project?

Peggy Patten: Would like to have a clearer vision of Baldwin Township's planning and zoning by keeping the rural nature of the township.

Scott Case: Is looking for a smart sensible growth of Baldwin Township for the future. He would like to keep the rural flavor but also feels a need to look at what other entities are doing, and plan so we know what will happen 20 years from now.

Richard Harris: Feels there is a challenge especially with all the growth that has happened in Baldwin Township. Feels there is a conflict of interest with property owners and their neighbors. Most people expect freedom to do what they want with their property. He would like Baldwin Township to remain rural in nature with some business, but maintain a population under 10,000.

Terry Carlile: Feels the main focus is to have a commercial base expanded before we lose what we have with the City of Princeton. County Road 9 and 169 would be a good spot for a liquor store, convenience store and gas station.

Elly Rittenour: From 2003-2006 sat on an Baldwin Township investigative committee into planning and zoning; preserve a rural character, but maintains there is a big difference in the definition of what is rural; previous boards allowed massive amounts of development without a comprehensive plan; has a keen interest in trying to do the right thing for our citizens and providing a guide for future town boards.

Ross Perry: Questioned if the joint powers with the county was working for the township. Swanson replied that as there is no development there are not too many issues. Previous to that the county allowed the township to have a say in the plats. As soon as the township forms a planning commission the county could not approve a plat without township approval so, in some ways, we will be doing some zoning.

Robert Weeks: Would like to see it cleaned up where he lives in order to have a better place for the seniors and young kids.

Question: Have you ever worked on any other Committee(s)?

Scott Case: Has worked on different committees, and is familiar with constantly working with a crew. He is used to working with diverse personalities.

Richard Harris: Has spent multiple years on church boards and in sportsmen groups; also was a part of Baldwin Township's Government Innovation Committee.

Peggy Patten: Whatever committee previously sat on, the town board would do just the opposite of what the committee recommended. Would appreciate seeing the board let this commission go forward.

Richard Harris: Would be helpful if the board could get past those deficiencies as well and work as a group. Swanson replied that a professional will be involved and that includes that person telling the board what is the proper thing to do to go forward.

Terry Carlile: Worked on the Capital Investment Committee and the Cemetery Committee. He had no concerns or problems with either of these committees.

Elly Rittenour: Said she has never been on a committee she didn't love being on, but also have been selective of which committees she participates in. She sat with the Princeton Area Partnership, Healthy Communities, and supported the Initiative Foundation. She was also on the planning investigative team for Baldwin and made recommendations to the board. She feels she can work with people and maintains there is always room for negotiation in developing a plan.

Ross Perry: Has had no public committee experience and no government experience.

Robert Weeks: Worked with Acorn for 2 years, and learned that the more you put into it, the better it comes out, but it also depends on who you're working with. Also was involved with a neighborhood watch group. His involvement has mainly been community based.

Question: How do you deal with new challenges and being a team player?

Richard Harris: Try to remain calm, get the data and pay attention to the opinions of the stakeholders.

Terry Carlile: Is willing to compromise, but will strive for the best scenario that works for the public.

Elly Rittenour: Loves new ideas, and agrees with Harris.

Ross Perry: His strong suit is to collect data. Everyone has to utilize their best abilities.

Robert Weeks: Find out what the goal and guidelines would be, and everyone works toward that goal.

Peggy Patten: Open mindedness.

Scott Case: Keeping calm in high stress situations; make good decisions and listen to others on the committee; with a consensus come up with a good plan of action.

Swanson said that in the beginning there will be training sponsored by GTS Educational available for the planning commission appointees. A comprehensive plan could take a year to a year and a half; although Baldwin will be ultimately implementing that comprehensive plan. Zone will be farther in the future. The commission would write its own bylaws and pick a chair. By that time the commission will be well equipped. Bridget Chard will be present every step of the way since it's important to get this started on the right foot. There will be nothing unexpected and no surprises. The commission will be an advisory committee to the town board.

Rush asked what the applicants thoughts were about the drama between the City of Princeton and the township.

Carlile said he would like to see an orderly annexation but after 30 years of no progress, he can't see it happening with the City of Princeton.

Rittenour said she's always been for orderly annexation, and did challenge people who wanted to become their own city. She said she was never convinced that was the better route. She does not know why the animosity exists with the residents and the city's government. No one of the Baldwin board has ever gone to school to become administrators. While we still have assets that are valuable to the city: 1) population; 2) buildings; and 3) fire and maintenance department that can be used as leverage. There are no real substantial facts on why we should become a city.

Perry stated that it goes back to the difference between Mille Lacs and Sherburne counties. He does not want to be part of Zimmerman or Princeton. Baldwin Township can be just as smart as or smarter than they are. The incorporation would be a big battle but that the only way to establish true boundaries lines.

Weeks gave no comment.

Patten said it reminds her of the Hayfields and McCoy's. It seems like every time they have a change of administration a new issue pops up. Baldwin Township needs to plan so that we know where the township is at.

Case said that these days handshake agreements are gone, and written plans are needed. Otherwise he said he didn't have a steadfast feeling about it, and that's what this planning commission is about.

Harris said this falls under a new challenge. His gut reaction is to find a defense against annexation of any kind. It comes from a little hostility against large government. There is a broad range of views in the township. People that live close to Princeton are mostly not in favor of it.

A lot of difference views have been shown, Atwood said, and as a planning commission member you will learn the real facts.

Getting back to being on the planning commission, Rittenour commented, is that she hopes all of the applicants are in agreement of how important the comprehensive plan is. She stated that is where the commission should start because the township desperately needs it.

Perry asked if the appointed committee was directed by the township board. Swanson answered affirmation, and said it would be in everyone's best interest to learn about the open meeting law.

Harris asked if the committee reports to the board or to the planner. Swanson said that ultimately the committee reports to the planner. He further stated that Atwood would be the board liaison with a non-voting status.

There are grants available for the comprehensive plan, and dollars are in place through the Initiative Foundation to pay Chard for her services and training. There was discussion involving the Baldwin Volunteer Corps and the Business Luncheon to be held on May 15th.

It is expected that the Planning Committee will have one to two meetings a month. The Baldwin Board would like the applicants to consider a commitment of a one to three year position. There is every intention to seat the members of the Planning Committee on May 7th.

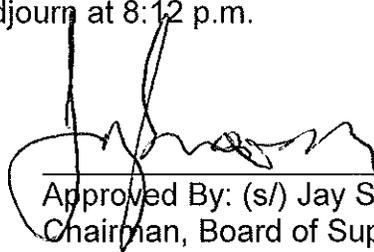
The board thanked everyone for attending.

Approve/Disapprove Newsletter – Good/Handshoe unanimous to approve the spring newsletter with addition of adding a new picture of Young Park and thanking West Branch Construction.

Adjourn – Handshoe/Good unanimous to adjourn at 8:12 p.m.



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



Approved By: (s/) Jay Swanson
Chairman, Board of Supervisors
Baldwin Township

Attendees: Ross Perry, Carol Swanson, Elaine Byker, Chuck Nagle, Elaine Philippi, Robert Weeks, Scott Case, Peggy Patten, Richard Harris, Terry Carlile, Eleanor Rittenour