

**WESTFIELD TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES**  
**Special Meeting/Fire Levy and Gen. Bus.**  
**July 7, 2010**  
**8:30 am.**

Chairman Oiler opened the meeting at 8:35 am by asking for roll call.

Trustees present: James Likley and Ronald Oiler. (Gary Harris unable to attend due to work schedule)

Fiscal Officer, Martha Evans and Assistant Prosecutor Wm. L. Thorne also present.

LANGUAGE FOR FIRE LEVY

- ✓ Motion at last meeting – replacement of present 1.5 mill with an increase of .5 mill; make the formation of a fire district contingent on the levy passing with the name to be decided.
- ✓ The township or fire district’s certificate of estimated resources will be the determining factor for a fire department budget.
- ✓ Several suggestions last meeting for the name of the district. South Central Fire District, Leroy Fire District and Crossroads Fire District. Took straw pull of the audience and South Central was the winner by 1. A request from the department that WFR be incorporated into the name due to the labeling of equipment. Bill Thorne stated even if you form a district (a vehicle to collect the levy as a separate entity) you are still intending to contract with the village to operate a joint fire department. That joint fire department can be the Westfield Fire & Rescue which is operating on behalf of the South Central Fire District and the Village of Westfield Center. I assume we are still contracting as a district or are we talking about the district running the fire department and contracting with the village to participate- makes a difference. If the district and the village are going to jointly agree to operate the department, they can name it anything they want because that is a separate thing. If the district is going to be the operating entity and they will contract with Gloria Glens and contract with Westfield Center, then we have a problem. You suppose you could leave the “W” in there as long as you do not refer to it as “Westfield”. If in fact we are going to simply continue our joint contract it doesn’t make any difference. **For the levy language you use the statutory language by simply adding independently or by contract at the end as part of the purpose.** Therefore we will have all the purposes that are available statutorily. This gives flexibility to both entities. The language will state:  
For the purpose of providing and maintaining fire apparatus, appliances, buildings, or sites therefor, or sources of water supply and materials therefor, or the establishment and maintenance of lines of fire alarm telegraph, or the payment of permanent, part-time, or volunteer firefighters or firefighting companies to operate the same, including the payment of the firefighter employers’ contribution required under section 742.34 of the Revised Code, or the purchase of ambulance equipment, or the provision of ambulance, paramedic, or other emergency medical services operated by a fire department or firefighting company, independently or by contract.
- ✓ This 2 mill levy will be a new continuous levy to operate the fire district. The residents will get the kind of service they are willing to pay for.
- ✓ In the resolution to create a fire district, it must state the district will be formed on the contingency that the fire district levy passes. If the levy passes the township by resolution informs the auditor

not to collect the township fire levy of 1.5 mills. The residents must understand the township cannot continue to supplement the fire department from general fund as it has in the past or in 2-3 years the general fund will be broke.

- ✓ Bill Thorne will be meeting with Bill Hutson Friday, July 9, 2010 at 3:00 pm. The first and ultimate issue is the budget for the fire department MUST be based upon the certificate of estimated resources for the township levy fund or the fire district or we have a problem.
- ✓ Karen Fisher offered several suggestions for the name of the fire district. **Trustee Oiler made a motion to name the unincorporated fire district SOUTH CENTRAL FIRE DISTRICT, seconded by Trustee Likley. Roll call: Likley, aye; Oiler, aye.** As noted in the July 5, 2010 minutes Trustee Harris left the decision up to Trustee Likley and Oiler.
- ✓ The hiring of a fire chief still looms on a contract. The old contract with the Village of Westfield Center states the fire chief is a township employee and the township will pay 65% Village 35%. Trustee Likley feels the he cannot hire a chief if there is not an agreement because the township's budget cannot support paying 65% of a chief salary and benefits. Bill also stated that we need a new contract or rip the old one apart and amend many aspects of the old contract before we can hire a chief. The final interview of 2 candidates will be July 19, 2010 @ 6:00 pm. Both candidates will have to move here. Heather stated she hoped to have a chief in place by August 1, 2010.
- ✓ Question asked: Would the fire district be able to initiate an impact fee for development within the township? Answer by Bill: Not that I am aware of, no. Trustee Likley: Impact fee can be implemented for infrastructure and partially into school districts as an impact fee. But the infrastructure has to be established as to where it is at prior to the impact fees. Bill: We have required sub-divisions to extend the services which they pay for. Many communities which you were referring to water, sewer, etc. Other states have a more boarder impact fee, which Ohio does not. During the planning process there may be variances etc. Chippewa Properties gave a lot for a future fire department to Lafayette Township during their planning process. These are impact fees but not enacted per se, it is part of negotiations to get a planned unit development.
- ✓ Trustee Likley mentioned he can meet in a special meeting any morning Monday- Thursday as needed to get the contract in place. He also stated after asking the fiscal officer that a 3 year window is all the township can stand by supplementing the fire department from general fund or it will have a direct impact on ALL services of the township. The trustees realize asking for a levy will be difficult in the hard economic times. We have been operating on 1997 money and we have done a good job in trying to keep those costs down. It must be conveyed to the Village that if a district is formed the township cannot go to the general fund. We have gone to the general fund in the past but we can only do it for 2-3 years and then general fund will be in a financial strait that will affect all services within the township. Fire Services are not a mandatory service that the township must provide. The general fund and road fund will also be affected with the decrease in property values. The trustees, road supervisor & fiscal officer knew this would impact the road fund; therefore the purchase of a new vehicle was tabled until the roads were upgraded and the funds were available without putting the township in debt.

- ✓ Trustee Oiler had a question for Bill. Is there a problem with the trustees going door to door promoting the fire levy? Bill answered, no. You can post signs as long as the township did not pay to have them printed. The only problem would be if you posted signs at the township hall and if someone wanted to post anti-levy signs you have to allow them post there sign as well. Any literature must have a disclosure as to who paid for the literature. There could be a group called friends of the fire department or as simple as the fire association. They must file with the election board.
- ✓ Trustee Oiler had a question for fiscal officer. What salary can we offer a fire chief before we go to the table and offer a fire chief's position?
- ✓ Martha will get the information prior to your meeting.
- ✓ Trustee Likley suggested that the board of trustees sit down with Tom Karris, Assistant Prosecutor independently to discuss the concerns and direction that the board would like to see. Trustee Oiler will schedule a meeting with Mr. Karris as soon as possible concerning the IRS issue and former clerk. IRS wants us to pay it and go away but it is the principal of the thing.

**Trustee Likley moved to adjourn this special meeting, seconded by Trustee Oiler.**

**Roll call: Likley, aye and Oiler, aye.**

Approved August 2, 2010