

VILLAGE OF GERMANTOWN
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 30, 2015

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by President Wolter at the Village Hall Boardroom.

ROLL CALL: President Wolter, Trustees Daniels, Kaminski, Miller, Vanderheiden, Warren and Zabel. Trustee Baum was absent. Also present were Finance Director Rath, Fire Chief Weiss, Deputy Chiefs Maury & Stark, Fire Dept. Staff: Karpinski, and three others, Administrator Schornack, Attorney Sajdak and Clerk Goeckner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 22, 2014

MOTION (Kaminski/Hughes) to approve the minutes as presented, carried.

Fire Department Request to proceed with preparations for a 2015 Referendum to Increase the 2016 Village of Germantown Levy Limit for the Purpose of Funding Full Time Staffing in the Fire Department and Discussion of Alternatives:

President Wolter started the discussion regarding the preparations for a 2015 Referendum to increase the levy limit for the purpose of funding full time staffing in the Fire Department. Discussion of prior minutes where this began.

Attorney Sajdak stated the question is defined by state statute as to what it should say. The increase to the Village's levy limit is limited to a certain percent. Shall the Village be allowed to exceed this levy in the next fiscal year? Do we want to identify more specifically what the referendum would cover and how do we want to phrase that – what the actual goal was in terms of the referendum.

Discussion of what the funding would be for, consideration of 'not to exceed'. The issue being tied to the levy limit percentage you have to go over. Discussion of increases in levy from new developments having ability to cover need without a levy limit increase vs. guessing wrong number and guessing less than what is needed. Clerk Goeckner would like the details of the question and explanation ironed out now so just the blanks can be filled in when the final numbers come from the state and we can proceed with publication requirements etc. timely. Discussion of explanation of question and how much clarity for the public's understanding of what their vote means.

Trustee Baum arrived at 6:20 p.m.

Discussion of Village being limited and cannot take a position on it. Can state this is what it is being used for, such as creating a full time department. Discussion of how much detail to state and what can be discussed, as well as explanation on ballot but not to be too specific or limiting. Is it an full explanation or just an explanation of what a yes vote means and what a no vote means? Can't indicate here what it means to a resident. Fire Dept. can't go out and tell the public all kinds of things that are happening or not happening, can't go out and try to sell it. Village Board needs to consider what will be put out by others so there is no misinformation out there. Has to be documented facts. Can't state home values and this is what the tax burden would be on ballot, because it changes for everyone. Discussion of how to state and where, how it will affect someone on their tax bill. Information has to be factual. Could in some way affect their taxes. Discussion of funding, other issues that will affect the Village Budget,

recent bond issue with aggressive payments on debt service. The need to still vote for whether or not to go to referendum and the need to put the question to the people.

MOTION (Hughes/Kaminski) to put this on the May Village Board agenda to vote on going to referendum. Discussion on need for Fire Chief Weiss to come up with some alternatives through December 2015, which was stated at the December 1, 2014 meeting for him to do. Further discussion to allow the Fire Chief to work with the Attorney to word the question for the Board to consider for modification. Prefer not to use the terminology for a full time department – using other staff to augment the department. Allow Fire Chief to work with Administrator and present question to the Attorney to bring before the first meeting in May for Village Board. Discussion of official talking points to be considered for Firefighters etc. Attorney Sajdak stated as a government official, not allowed to respond when asked what your opinion is, but you can say ‘you respectfully cannot answer your question, but these are the facts’ and then restate the factual information. President Wolter stated the time line is to bring this back to the first meeting in May which was the purpose of this meeting. Clerk re-iterated this needs to be final by July 15th for Finance Director Rath to place in numbers received on August 1st from the State. **8 in favor, 1 opposed (Zabel), carried.**

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Barbara K. D. Goeckner, WCPC/MMC
Village Clerk