

Lawrence Township Advisory Board Meeting

Tuesday September 22, 2015 at 6:00 pm

Morris Settles Township Center

Elisha Reddick Community Room

4455 McCoy Street

Indianapolis, Indiana 46226

Republican Caucus at 5:30 p.m.

Democrat Caucus at 5:30 p.m.

Agenda:

- 1.** Approval of minutes from August 25, 2015 meeting of the Lawrence Township Advisory Board.
- 2.** Presentation of Township Budget
- 3.** Public Hearing regarding the 2016 Lawrence Township Budget

**LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
4455 McCoy Street Indianapolis, IN 46226**

Meeting Date: Tuesday, September 22, 2015

Time Called to Order: 6:00 P.M.

Time Adjourned: 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Healy, Emmajean Hines, Fred Freeman, Jesse Dotson, Dino Batalis, Mary Harrison, Tony Widgery

TRUSTEE: Steve Talley

OTHER ELECTED TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS PRESENT: Judge Kim Bacon, Constable Terry Burns

Meeting Called to Order:

Ms. Hines called the Lawrence Township Board meeting to order on Tuesday, September 22, 2015, at 6:00 P.M. and asked Mr. Batalis to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda:

1. Approval of minutes from August 25, 2015 meeting of the Lawrence Township Advisory Board

Mr. Widgery made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 25, 2015 meeting of the Lawrence Township Advisory Board. Mr. Healy seconded. Motion agreed to 7-0.

2. Presentation of Township Budget

Trustee Talley thanked the board and the Trustee staff for all they have done this year and the support that the board has given them. Trustee Talley then turned it over to Deputy Trustee Jason Tomcsi to present the Township 2016 Budget. Mr. Tomcsi conducted a PowerPoint presentation that recapped the changes that have been made to the Trustee's office this year. He started with the Trustee's mission statement and the organizational structure. He recapped the year thus far which included efforts to improve client experience when visiting the Trustee's office, community engagement, employee training and demonstrating fiscal responsibility. Mr. Tomcsi said that the additional office space that is being used as a resource room has helped the influx of walk-in clients with a more comfortable space to fill out their applications. Trustee Talley said that children's books donated by the Indianapolis Public Library are a part of the resource room and that children can take them with them. Mr. Tomcsi said that a pilot program has been started with the case managers taking laptops into the consultation room with clients and a copier/scanner has been added where a janitor's closet used to be speed up the process and help clients feel more comfortable about handing over their sensitive documents. Mr. Tomcsi read some client emails and letters and played a voicemail displaying how pleased clients have been with the service. Mr. Tomcsi talked about community outreach and the Trustee Office's attendance at many events across the Township. He said that with employees have received training to help the case managers adapt to all the changes that have been implemented. Mr. Tomcsi highlighted the increased requests for assistance and the increased number of students who received school clothes. He discussed partnerships that the Energy Assistance Program and smaller food pantries across the Township. Mr. Tomcsi discussed the partnership with the Indianapolis Public Library. He discussed The Cupboard which is assisting over 400 families a week and changes in the financial arrangement between the Lawrence Township Hunger Coalition and the Trustee's Office.

He said that for 2016 it will be a set dollar amount of \$80,000 to be disbursed on a quarterly basis rather than a reimbursement basis as it is currently. It will also be more of a landlord-tenant relationship. For the 2016 budget, Mr. Tomcsi said the Township would be doing more with only a small increase to the budget. It is a 6 percent increase on the Trustee said of the budget. The increase includes the costs of additional employees, 2 of which were former clients who sought assistance. Trustee Talley said he was especially proud of that. Mr. Tomcsi said that the estimated cash balance for 2016 would be strong and that the Township was committing to reducing spending by 3 percent. For 2016 Mr. Tomcsi said that the Trustee's office will be continuing to review technology to improve service, conduct district office hours throughout the township, create a revenue forecast/spending plan, create an evacuation plan in case anything were to happen at the Morris Settles Township Center, and install security cameras for the Morris Settles Township Center. Mr. Tomcsi discussed the challenges for 2016 which include an issue that can have an impact on property taxes throughout the state. Several big box stores have successfully appealed to have their property tax assessments lowered in a practice called dark sales. If upheld then local units across the county and state will see their property taxes and revenue impacted. It's something that needs to be monitored and it's why Trustee Talley is looking at a 3 percent spending reduction. Other challenges mentioned by Mr. Tomcsi include making the Morris Settles Township Center more accessible including power assist doors and the increased obligation towards the Small Claims Court.

Judge Kim Bacon discussed the Small Claims Court budget. She said that the court's caseload is growing and an additional court day has been added. About 20 years of additional files are currently being housed in the basement and it is hope that some of the documents will be able to be purged or scanned. The judge said the court budget remains the same with a slight increase for employee salaries which will ranged from 3-8 percent. In office supplies there isn't a dramatic increase at about 8 percent overall. In character three it is the same as last year. The Judge said that the court's budget overall is about an 8 percent increase from last year.

3. Public Hearing regarding the 2016 Lawrence Township Budget

Ms. Hines three times called for any comments from the public before closing comments

Meeting Adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 6:36 P.M.

I hereby certify that the forgoing minutes are accurate and true to the best of my knowledge and have been approved by a majority of the Lawrence Township Board.

Fred Freeman, Board Secretary

These minutes are not intended to be verbatim. They are a summary of discussions held, with the exception of the motions. An audiotape is made which provides a detailed record.