

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

Meeting Date: Tuesday, December 1, 2015

Time Called to Order: 6:01 P.M.

Time Adjourned: 6:55 P.M.

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

TRUSTEE: Steve Talley

OTHER ELECTED TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS PRESENT: Judge Kim Bacon

Meeting Called to Order:

Ms. Hines called the Lawrence Township Board meeting to order on Tuesday, December 1, 2015, at 6:01 P.M. and asked Mr. Dotson to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda:

1. Approval of minutes from October 20, 2015 meeting of the Lawrence Township Advisory Board

Ms. Hines had a change to the minutes where a question was attributed to a Mrs. Freeman when it should have been Ms. Hines. Ms. Hines also reviewed the entirety of the minutes for the board. When discussing the minutes from the previous meeting the topic of parking at the Township offices was discussed. Mr. Batalis said that the parking spots at the fire station were all in use and the vacant lot that is behind the fire station is city property. Deputy Trustee Tomcsi said that there hopes to be discussions in the new year with the new administration about the lifting of parking restriction on 45th St. and the use of the vacant lot. He said the issues with the vacant lot are that it isn't paved or covered in gravel so parking would be an issue there in the winter. Mr. Batalis said that gravel at least would probably be necessary. Ms. Hines said the reason she read that portion of the minutes was because there were issues that needed to be addressed in regards to parking

Mr. Batalis made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 20, 2015 meeting of the Lawrence Township Advisory Board. Mr. Freeman seconded. Motion agreed to 7-0.

2. Resolution 2015-15 Transfers Between Appropriations

Trustee Talley asked board member to reference charts that were dispersed to the board showing the large increase in requests for assistance. It's a 480% increase over last year. Trustee Talley said that looking at where the Township is from a funding standpoint and by finding underspending in other areas, the Township is asking the transfers in the resolution. Trustee Talley said that he would rather go this route then asking for an additional appropriation. Mr. Batalis asked about the dramatic spike in requests for assistance. Deputy Trustee Tomcsi said the reason that reason for the increase is due to changes in the intake procedures. He said that with more requests are more opportunities to help people. Trustee Talley also said that our office take walk-ins as well now. The numbers are actual requests for assistance. Mr. Healy asked about the approval rates for the requests for assistance. Trustee Talley also said that with the community outreach also gives people more interactions with our office which has also helped lead to more requests. Mr. Batalis said he appreciated the charts in helping to really paint the picture about where the Township is. Trustee Talley said he wants to give the board as much information as possible and that Deputy Trustee Tomcsi is working on breaking down assistance numbers further. Mr. Widgery said the drastic increases means that at some point more funding is going to be necessary. Mr. Healy said he wanted to see a chart that compares the approvals rates. Trustee

Talley said that the office is trying to get to a point where revenue projections can be made and trends identified in order to make adjustments. Mr. Batalis asked if more individuals were receiving assistance. Deputy Trustee Tomcsi said that more people are receiving assistance and that as the office moves forward ways that spending can be controlled is being identified. The vision is that money budgeted for emergency assistance should only go towards paying for the employees working directly with clients or to the clients in the form of assistance.

Mr. Widgery moved to adopt the resolution. Mr. Batalis seconded the motion. Resolution was adopted 7-0.

3. Resolution 2015-16 Holiday Schedule for 2016

Deputy Trustee Tomcsi explained that in previous years there were separate calendars for the Trustee's Office and the Small Claims Court, but this resolution unifies both calendars for all Township employees.

Ms. Hines asked for a motion to approve the calendar by consent, Mr. Widgery made the motion, Mr. Healy seconded. The resolution was adopted by consent.

4. Resolution 2015-17 Transfer Between Appropriations – Small Claims Court

Mr. Freeman made a motion to amend 2015-17 to change the amount in the resolution from a total of \$8,000 to \$9,000. Ms. Harrison seconded the motion. The resolution was adopted 7-0.

5. Acknowledgment of the cancelled warrants

The list of cancelled warrants was given to the members of the finance committee. Mr. Widgery said that the finance committee acknowledges the receipt of the cancelled warrants. Ms. Hones wanted to know why it take so long to cancel these outstanding warrants. If the Township pays for assistance there needs to be a follow up with those properties as to why the check was not cashed. Trustee Talley said there are some internal discussions going on about possibly cancelling checks after 90 days, much like is done with many businesses. Judge Bacon asked if these were checks being issued to apartment complexes to avoid eviction and said that many won't accept it. She said what she has done is if the Trustee's Office was willing to issue a check she was ordering the apartment complex to take it. Becky Lightle said that there are no outstanding checks for 2013 and 2014 had two, but one has already been resolved. Judge Bacon and Trustee Talley said that the Trustee's Office and the Court will continue to work together on the issue. Trustee Talley said that in the past the Trustee's office didn't have a relationship with a lot of the apartment communities, but he has worked to establish those relationships. The key is getting people to come in and request the assistance before the eviction has been filed.

6. Future meeting dates

Ms. Hines wished everyone a Merry Christmas. Mr. Batalis discussed the Lawrence Fire Department's Family Assistance program is taking place on the weekend of the 18th. Richard Hunter discussed his church's efforts to assist families during the upcoming holiday. Deputy Trustee Tomcsi discussed some developments with The Cupboard and its relationship with the Trustee's Office. Community Health Network is interested in taking over the operation of The Cupboard and making the Hunger Coalition an advisory board to the charitable and community outreach division. He said that there are a lot of positives to this development. It would free up funding to go towards direct assistance. It would be a more sustainable model for The Cupboard and Community is looking to expand it across the city. He said that he viewed it as a successful startup being acquired by a larger organization that can put more resources behind it. Hoping to have a deal to present to the board soon. Ms. Hines said she would like to Mr. Healy and Mr. Batalis to join the trustee in reviewing the proposal from Community when it is presented.

The next meeting will be January 5th as required and January 19th for the annual report.

Meeting Adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 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.