

New Carlisle Town Council
124 E. Michigan Street, New Carlisle, Indiana
Public Hearing, March 19, 2019, 7:00 PM

President Carter called the Public Hearing to order at 7:09 PM with Vice President Vermillion, Council Member Budreau, Council Member Kauffman, Council Member Rush and Clerk-Treasurer Susan Moffitt present. Also in attendance were Attorney Andrea Halpin and approximately 150 members of the public, firefighters and EMS employees.

Paige Sansone of Baker Tilly presented a prepared powerpoint presentation on the proposed fire territory, including tax implications and circuit breaker impacts to the territory, Town, Olive Township, New Carlisle Library and New Prairie United School Corporation.

The floor was opened to public comment following the power point presentation.
Olive Township Residents:

Sharon Cooper: Curious as to why is a fire truck is dispatched with an ambulance to Hamilton Grove and Miller's Merry Manor with every call and are they the bulk of the calls and it is necessary to spend gas, time and manpower doing this? And why doesn't Hamilton Grove ever contribute to this and why don't they have a private service. Chief Schweizer: Can address this. Every time you have a call to Hamilton Grove you do not get a fire truck. We had two calls last night that just the ambulance went to so it's not every call. We have a set of protocols.

Bob ?: During the last meeting someone indicated they would try to find a way for the TIF to help with costs as they have 10 percent of the calls and they pay nothing. If the TIF expands they still pay zero. If you live in the township with a home valued at less than 150K you will be affected and the poor will bear the burden. Does not object to paying taxes for services but it must be fair. It appears that the territory will begin operating at a deficit. How will that be made up? Chief Schweizer responded: We've had numbers for awhile. We've adjusted salaries, etc.

Lisa Crawford : My husband is on a fire call right now. Do what you must, but it is a fact we need to support these volunteers more. We don't encourage volunteers here but these people show up every time.

Nancy Carr: Spoke with the Department of Homeland Security and found that each meeting for the territory should have been set up as tonight and the first two meetings were not correct. Attorney Andrea Halpin stated that this is a voting meeting so it is set up differently.

Mrs. Carr questioned why we are not joining with Warren. Chief Schweizer stated it was his decision following his conversation with Warren. Mrs. Carr stated that if we were to join with Warren we could go through St. Joseph County for our ambulance service and get training as well as a lead paramedic in place of what we will get going through a Crown Point hospital for our paramedic service. Many on the Olive Township Board have expressed having unanswered questions and asked that they please postpone this to look at other options.

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Corey Carr: Asked the Town Council about giving control to Olive Township with them operating at a deficit. President Carter responded that they are not giving total control and that there will be a five member board with the town council and township 3/2 members alternating every other year.

Sue Thompson: Thank you to the volunteer fire department for dedication, sacrifice and courage. She loves this town but feels going A-Z is too much too soon. She stated that what we have heard tonight, (asked everyone to stand up who is in opposition to the territory and the majority of the room stood) affects the school and library and is an important decision. We have an awesome fire department of volunteers at a fraction of the proposed territory and we have to incentivize volunteers and not go A-Z.

Mark Jones: I'm a Hudson Township resident. There must be different revenues to make up the deficit. If Hudson Township signs on does that help and what is the impact and are there other townships that might help. Paige Sansone stated that there are not a lot of revenue streams; the county could raise income tax, fees could be raised. There was a preliminary study done last year that included Hudson Township with those numbers available.

There were no additional Olive Township residents that wished to speak and the floor was closed.

Olive Township Trustee Will Miller then read their resolution to adopt the fire territory.

The floor was opened for comments and questions for residents of the Town of New Carlisle at this time.

Dan Caruso: There is a requirement for three public meetings but can there be more? Paige Sansone answered yes, there can be more public meetings but the territory must be adopted by March 31st. Understanding is that Warren Township won't join the territory because we are using Crown Point which has different field training and it is in the best interest of citizens of New Carlisle to provide service through St. Joseph County. Josh informed him this is not related to the proposed IEC but Ken said that they are looking for ways to apply fees to them so that leads him to believe it is relevant to the IEC.

Shane Fischer: Moved here three years ago. Loves the fire department, the library, the schools. The fire department may be overburdened but what will it be with industry? Who will pay for the additional cost of the station out on SR2? Not against additional support but is against the misconception that it isn't about the proposed IEC.

Theresa Serry: Owns property in Olive Township and is worried about why we are doing this. Cited Bill Schalliol's statement in Ted Booker's article. Industry is not looking out for us they are leaching off of us. It is a cancerous area and not giving. And starting with deficits? What the heck is everyone thinking? Warren has 8,000 residents with 12 full time firefighters and 20 part time. We are asking for double. South West Central Fire Territory has two stations and is 2.5 times larger by population and by that standard.....(out of time)

Jerry Colanese: Teacher for many years, loves the town, supports the fire department. His father-in-law was Harold Roesner, the legendary chief for the fire department. A vote tonight is not against the fire department. We will never let there be insufficiency. The money people tell us there are a lot of concerns. This is too complicated for most to understand but is a big, big deal for our future. Our business community is starving and we are going to take even more. Farmers are taxed. Maybe a territory is a good idea but this looks extravagant. We can't do this to our town. Mr. White at the school is scrambling. We were around when New Carlisle and Rolling Prairie first came together. They hated each other. When Rolling Prairie residents find out services are being cut.....(out of time)

Dave Doll: Asked Paige if the county reassesses property and it goes up, will taxes go up. Paige responded she can't answer with knowing specifics. He asked the Town Council if anyone can stand up and explain the line items of the budget. Gas is listed as \$20K but fire and ambulance used 12K last year. Same with radio line item.

Lindsay Hora: Put a stack of applications on the table so people can sign up to volunteer.

Council Member Vermillion: How many of you were here for all three meetings? How many were here when Bob told us the status of volunteers? I am on the town council and my responsibility is to all of you. When Bob says we have a problem then we have to deal with it. Dr. White and Stephanie Murphy will survive. There was a call when only one person from the fire department answered.

Council Member Kauffman: Look around this station, everything you see is the result of dedication, blood, sweat and tears of our stellar volunteer fire department and the community that has faithfully supported it for well over 100 years. There is no greater source of pride than our volunteer fire department and emergency volunteers. We are at a pivotal time that dictates changes. New Carlisle and Olive Township need to go to a fire territory. I understand we are experiencing a dwindling volunteer force and coupled with increased costs to maintain and replace equipment and facilities. However, I don't feel that this fire territory proposal accurately and fiscally addresses the needs of our community. Even before I was elected I attended meetings in an effort to understand all of the considerations and effects of the proposed fire territory. And as much time as I have spent researching and talking with community, I still have many questions and even more concerns. Three of those concerns are: 1 – one goal of going to a fire territory is to provide much needed manpower relief and back up our volunteers by hiring paid firefighters. We currently have two part-time paid firefighters on duty; it is evident that more should be hired. However, going to 15 full-time paid firefighters plus a chief, assistant chief and three captains seems excessive. Another goal should be to make every effort to maintain, revitalize and hopefully grow our volunteer base because volunteers are still the backbone of an effective rural territory. I feel the volunteer component of the current territory proposal has almost been completely neglected. The volunteer line item in the proposed budget is actually half of the money in the current expenditures for the volunteers. This means there will be no increase in monies to initiate new recruitment programs, provide additional incentives for volunteers or provide additional

perks. Another serious concern is the excessive and ever-changing budget. It simply has not reflected the needs of our community. The budget that you see here tonight still has areas where monies could be saved. And, it is important to note that only last week did the committee cut the number of paid firefighter positions from 15 full-time to 9 full time and 6 part-time positions. This change was only because of a revenue reporting error that had to be corrected even though for weeks this type of revision had been suggested by others who felt that 15 full-time paid firefighters was excessive for our needs. There are many other concerns about the current proposed budget. Simply put I know we can come up with a better fire territory proposal without sacrificing the safety of our citizens.

A third major concern is the loss of revenue for our school system and library, both of which are incredible sources of pride for our community. While I know that they have both been preparing for the hit they will take with circuit breaker, additional monies lost due to the fire territory will be detrimental to all of us. I understand the school and library will work in the most fiscally responsible way to lessen the impact, but it is clear that undesirable cuts in staff, programming and services will be made. I don't feel that the fire territory planning committee has exhibited the same measure of fiscal responsibility. Our school system and library cannot be a casualty of an inflated fire territory budget. If the territory budget reflected a reasonable increase in personnel and a good faith effort to address the needs of all concerned and affected then it would be better supported by the community. The whole process for the territory has been shrouded in confusing statistics, costs, intentions and poor communication. With the aforementioned concerns and others not stated, I will be voting no on the territory proposal. Whether voted in or not, there are two things that will happen. I have suggested to the Town Council and the Olive Twp. secretary that we find a way to provide some much-needed relief to our volunteers by hiring additional part-time firefighters to work the night shift asap. The continual burden of increased medical calls falls on the same volunteers night and day and has to be addressed now. I will continue to work hard to influence changes in the focus and budget of the fire territory whether a current or future one because I know that we can do better for our community.

Council Member Budreau: Very well said, Marcy, and I agree. I am a hard no to this proposal. I took all emotions out and looked at it. You keep scratching when something doesn't seem right. If you stood your ground because of need, that is one thing. But that is not the case here. I have zero trust in this budget. I asked for information and received none. Meetings for the territory were at 3 pm and 10 am. Empty buildings are bad. I'm not from here but love it. I love the library and the community. Wish Jerry had been his teacher. A no vote tonight is not a no for the volunteer fire department.

Adam Murray: Gonna pick up an application to volunteer? Council Member Budreau responded: Lieutenant, US Army Reserve. I am a New Carlisle Town Council Member, full-time student and employed full time.

Olive Township Board Member Carol Hesch: Seen passion and growth. Super huge toxic things said on Facebook, starting rumors of programs closing. I'm also on the Library Board and also very

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interested in the area. Anyone who didn't see Bob's speech should. Volunteer training is now 18 months. If you want to do it, that's great.

Olive Township Board Member Tom Keen: I've been on the panel since the beginning and attended every meeting. I also did a lot of digging and talked to a lot of fire chiefs. Listened to my best friend, Bob Middlebrook. Things are not the same anymore. People won't volunteer. Talking about the need for revenue generating. We need equipment and manpower.

There were no further comments or questions and the floor was closed.

The Olive Township Trustee read an ordinance establishing the Olive Township New Carlisle Fire Territory.

The Olive Township Trustee read a resolution establishing the equipment replacement fund. There was some confusion regarding the voting process and Attorney Andrea Halpin requested that the Township Board vote by roll call as one member of the Township Board had not voted.

Regarding the Ordinance to Establish the Olive Township New Carlisle Fire Territory, Board Members Keen and Hesch voted Aye. Board Member Buford voted Nay. Regarding the Resolution to Establish the Equipment Replacement Fund, Board Members Keen and Hesch voted Aye. Board Member Buford voted nay.

New Carlisle Town Council President Carter read Ordinance #1377, An Ordinance to Establish the Olive Township New Carlisle Fire Territory, in entirety.

Vice President Vermillion moved to adopt Ordinance #1377 as written. The motion was seconded by Council Member Rush and a Roll Call Vote was taken:

Vice President Vermillion	Aye	Council Member Kauffman	Nay
Council Member Budreau	Nay	Council Member Rush	Aye
President Carter	Aye		

The motion to adopt Ordinance #1377 establishing the Olive Township New Carlisle Fire Territory passed 3-2.

President Carter read Ordinance #1378, An Ordinance to Establish the Equipment Replacement Fund, in entirety.


Vice President Vermillion moved to adopt Ordinance #1378 as written. The motion was seconded by Council Member Rush and a Roll Call Vote was taken:

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Vice President Vermillion	Aye	Council Member Kauffman	Nay
Council Member Budreau	Nay	Council Member Rush	Aye
President Carter	Aye		

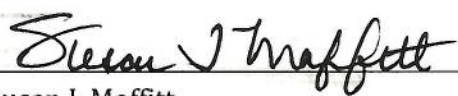
The motion to adopt Ordinance #1378 establishing the Equipment Replacement Fund passed 3-2.

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 PM.



Ken Carter, President

Attest:



Susan I. Moffitt