

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Jerome Township Board of Trustees

Minutes of

Meeting

GOVERNMENT FORMS & SUPPLIES 844-224-3338 FORM NO. 10148

Held

May 30, 2023

20

The Jerome Township Board of Trustees met in special session on May 30, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. for the purpose of executive session pursuant to the provisions of ORC 121.22(G)(1), (3), (8) and to discuss tax increment financing. Board Chairman Wezlynn Davis called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Megan Sloat, Barry Adler and Wezlynn Davis answered the roll call. Also in attendance were Brandon Standley (Township Administrator), Julie Donnan (Brosius, Johnson & Griggs) and Chris Connelly (Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP).

Executive Session

At 10:01 a.m. it was moved by Wezlynn Davis and seconded by Megan Sloat that the Jerome Township Board of Trustees adopt the following motion:

The Jerome Township Board of Trustees adjourn into executive session pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(G)(1) to consider the compensation of a public employee; Section 121.22(G)(3) with legal counsel to discuss pending or imminent court action; and Section 121.22(G)(8) for the purpose of considering confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, and trade secrets of an applicant for economic development assistance that is to be provided or administered pursuant to Sections 3735.65 to 3735.70, and Section 5709.73 of the Ohio Revised Code, and involves public infrastructure improvements directly related to an economic development project. The executive session is necessary to protect the interests of the applicant or the possible investment or expenditure of public funds to be made in connection with the proposed economic development project.

The vote resulted as follows:

Megan Sloat, yes
Barry Adler, yes
Wezlynn Davis, yes

The motion carried.

At 11:08 a.m. it was moved by Wezlynn Davis and seconded by Barry Adler that the Jerome Township Board of Trustees adopt the following motion:

The Jerome Township Board of Trustees adjourn from executive session.

The vote resulted as follows:

Megan Sloat, yes
Barry Adler, yes
Wezlynn Davis, yes

The motion carried.

Julie Donnan addressed the Board stating before them are three resolutions creating TIFs (tax incremental financing) agreements. One within Fairbanks Local School District and two within the Dublin City School District. She noted the Board is working with the schools to provide for thirty-year TIFs.

The First resolution relates to properties in the Dublin City School District. It was moved by Megan Sloat and seconded by Wezlynn Davis that the Jerome Township Board of Trustees adopt the following motion:

The Jerome Township Board of Trustees approve A Resolution Exempting Improvement to Certain Real Property from Real Property Taxes; Identifying Certain Public Infrastructure Improvements that are a Public Purpose and, Once Made, Will Directly Benefit the Real Property; Requiring the Owners of the Real Property to Make Service Payments in Lieu of Taxes; Establishing a Township Public Improvement Tax Increment Equivalent Fund; and related Authorizations.

The vote resulted as follows:

Megan Sloat, yes
Barry Adler, yes
Wezlynn Davis, yes

The motion carried. (Res. 23-056)

The second resolution relates to a property known as Hall's Corner TIF also located in the Dublin City School District. It was moved by Wezlynn Davis and seconded by Barry Adler that the Jerome Township Board of Trustees adopt the following motion:

The Jerome Township Board of Trustees approve A Resolution Exempting Improvement to Certain Real Property from Real Property Taxes; Identifying Certain Public Infrastructure Improvements that are a Public Purpose and, Once Made, Will Directly Benefit the Real Property; Requiring the Owners of the Real Property to Make Service Payments in Lieu of Taxes; Establishing a Township Public Improvement Tax Increment Equivalent Fund; and related Authorizations.

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The vote resulted as follows:

Megan Sloat, yes
Barry Adler, yes
Wezlynn Davis, yes

The motion carried. (Res. 23-057)

The third resolution relates to properties in Fairbanks Local School District. It was moved by Megan Sloat and seconded by Barry Adler that the Jerome Township Board of Trustees adopt the following motion:

The Jerome Township Board of Trustees approve A Resolution Exempting Improvement to Certain Real Property from Real Property Taxes; Identifying Certain Public Infrastructure Improvements that are a Public Purpose and, Once Made, Will Directly Benefit the Real Property; Requiring the Owners of the Real Property to Make Service Payments in Lieu of Taxes; Establishing a Township Public Improvement Tax Increment Equivalent Fund; and related Authorizations.

The vote resulted as follows:

Megan Sloat, yes
Barry Adler, yes
Wezlynn Davis, yes

The motion carried. (Res. 23-058)

Brandon Standley asked the Board to approve a week of unpaid leave for a Township employee. It was moved by Barry Adler and seconded by Megan Sloat that the Jerome Township Board of Trustees adopt the following motion:

The Jerome Township Board of Trustees approve one week of unpaid leave to Shelby Christian.

The vote resulted as follows:

Megan Sloat, yes
Barry Adler, yes
Wezlynn Davis, yes

The motion carried.

Megan Sloat asked to read the following statement into the records.

Jerome Township is taking the opportunity to respond to the May 25, 2023, article in the Marysville Journal Tribune titled "Commissioners Hold 9 p.m. Meeting to Approve TIF." Commissioner Burke's quotes need to be addressed from the article. Additionally, facts are lacking in the article that will help clear up inaccurate information.

Townships all over Ohio commonly and independently enact and manage TIFs. The Ohio Legislature has passed legislation allowing townships this authority. Commissioner Burke was a co-sponsor on this legislation during his tenure at the Statehouse.

Commissioner Burke stated in the article that the County TIF "was the only legal way to avoid Jerome Township capturing future revenue growth the County would have used to fund basic services for the public good." However, Ohio law states that TIF funds cannot legally be used by the County to fund basic services.

Commissioner Burke provides numerous negative, misleading, and sometimes false statements relating to a Jerome Township TIF. However, a county TIF will function in the same way. The difference is that the County will have control over the TIF that they placed over our Township. This will also jeopardize potential revenue that can be created through township TIFs.

Commissioner Burke is incorrect when he stated that a Jerome Township TIF would be to the detriment of the thirteen other townships in the County. In actuality, the Jerome Township TIF proposal does the exact opposite, it diverts funds from within Jerome Township for infrastructure. This would free up County resources to be used for other purposes.

Jerome Township has been working diligently on expanding our existing TIF area and then converting our ten-year seventy-five percent TIFs to a thirty-year one hundred percent TIF that would make our school districts financially whole. This has always been our intent and has also been included in documented drafts of the CEDA. For many years, the Trustees have been taking a proactive approach to the needs of the area, including the safety of our roadways. The previous Board laid the groundwork for building a successful township TIF by creating the Jerome Township Innovation District (JTID) in the southeast portion of the Township that includes a zoning overlay. Contrary to Commissioner Burke's statement, a TIF is not for the "gain of the few." It is a tool that can create funds to improve infrastructure to our area far into the future.

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Moreover, we would like to respond to Commissioner Burke's quote "Worse, Jerome TIFs have a limited life of thirty years under law. Upon the end of these TIFs, the Township will be forced to levy new taxes upon its residents to sustain itself or simply collapse under its own self-inflicted cost obligations." This is patently alarmist, false and misleading by suggesting that Jerome Township is not capable of managing a TIF fund appropriately. As previously stated, TIFs are a commonly and frequently used economic tool. Additionally, to clarify, the County TIF is also a thirty-year TIF under law. The statement by Commissioner Burke suggests that the Township is not financially sound, which is false. Contrary to the tone of Mr. Burke's statement, a TIF is not a windfall to the Township's general fund; those funds are restricted for uses that the General Assembly has deemed to be for public infrastructure purposes. Once a TIF expires, the Township will continue to use its voted and unvoted millage for purposes authorized by law that benefits its citizens. There is currently no, and will be no, concerns with having sufficient funds for that purpose.

For over two years, Jerome Township has been working to come to an agreement with Union County on a Cooperative Economic Development Agreement (CEDA). This has included extensive workgroup meetings and countless conversations that included County representation. Both County and Township legal representatives have been involved every step of the way. Included in the CEDA was the formation of a Jerome Township Infrastructure Economic Development Board which would give the County input on where a portion of the TIF funds would be spent. The negotiations came to an impasse for two main reasons:

- (1) The County removed a previously agreed upon super majority board vote that would have provided a more fair and balanced approach to all future decisions of the board.
- (2) Without the Township's knowledge and amid final negotiations, the County initiated notice to the school districts to enact their own ten-year seventy-five percent TIF over the Township. This County action occurred after a joint meeting with the County Commissioners and the Township Trustees regarding finalizing the CEDA. This led us to believe that negotiations were not in good faith.

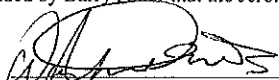
The Trustees determined that entering into the County's revised CEDA would effectively result in the Board of Trustees relinquishing our statutory authority to govern the infrastructure funds created by the Township TIF. Therefore, in the spirit of future collaboration we recently offered a fifty/fifty sharing of Township TIF funds up to fifty million dollars to be designated to the County for public infrastructure improvements in the TIF area. This was rejected outright.

The Township will never concede our legal rights to protect and make independent decisions for the best interest of our community. Jerome Township is proud of its initiative towards economic development. To insinuate that our Township TIF would be harmful to the County is factually incorrect. Townships routinely enact TIFs without county interference. Our local government should function as it is intended to and without inappropriate County control.

Wezlynn Davis added the following comments. We are dedicated in our efforts to work with school districts to make districts whole and honor our commitment to work with the County. It is unfortunate we are in the place we are today, but it is not by the hand of this Board of Trustees. The Board is moving forward with its most recent actions. The Board remains committed to working with the County, but the fifty/fifty split has been rejected by the County.

Megan Sloat stated this Board and the pervious Board have listened to residents' concerns with roads and have pursued various economic development options to provide for various infrastructure improvements.

At 11:26 a.m. it was moved by Wezlynn Davis and seconded by Barry Adler that the Jerome Township Board of Trustees adjourn. The motion carried.


Wezlynn Davis, Chairman


Robert Caldwell, Fiscal Officer