

New Carlisle Town Council
124 E. Michigan Street, New Carlisle, Indiana
Work Session – February 12, 2011

Present: President Higgins, Vice President Colpitts, Council Member Groves, Council Member Gelow, Council Member Vojtko and Clerk-Treasurer Sue Moffitt. Also in attendance were Paige Gregory, Roger Nawrot, Ken Davis, Joyce Forbes, John Michalski, Melissa Ryder, Josh Schweizer, Jamie Middlebrook, Tony Bellegante, Mike McClaran, Mike VanLue, Augie Mauer and Chris Antonucci.

President Higgins introduced Paige Gregory of Umbaugh.

Council Member Vojtko stated that this is an informational meeting to receive info on fire territories. The deadline to file to establish a fire territory is March 31st. Much depends upon what happens in this session of the Legislature.

Paige Gregory stated that there are currently several pieces of legislation and each addresses local government reform. This is the third time legislation of this nature has been brought to the General Assembly but it is unknown if it will pass.

We do know that if a fire territory is established with a provider unit they will stay intact. She recommends that the provider unit be one that will remain intact should local government reform take place.

Fire Territories:

- Are not to increase budgets or tax levy but to keep local control of volunteer fire departments.
- Unincorporated territory may see an increase and the Town could possibly see a decrease in taxes.
- The territory equalizes the amount paid for all citizens as the cost of fire protection is spread evenly.
- If the Town is the provider unit, they would set up a fire territory fund with a separate tax rate and fire protection would no longer be a part of the Town's levy. The Town would have the final say even if a Fire Territory Board is established. The Territory Board can be composed of whomever the Council appoints but would not include the fire chief.
- The Fire Territory would have an operational fund as well as an equipment replacement fund to accumulate money for capital expenses. This fund would have a separate levy.
- Participating Units can withdraw from a territory from Jan. 1 to Mar. 31 each year.
- Fire Territory is one unit and the Provider Unit is responsible for purchases and debt. Should the territory be dissolved, the Provider Unit would remain responsible for any debt incurred.

Joyce Forbes asked if the current contract could continue and Paige explained that it could. LaPorte County would become a participating unit should Township Trustees be removed. Someone from Hudson Twp. could be appointed to the Territory Board.

Umbaugh could prepare a study to determine the financial impact on tax payers of the Town and Olive and Hudson Townships.

We would be able to establish a Fire Territory by March 31st. Two public hearings are recommended but only one is required. Advertisement two times, ten days apart would be required.

Roger stated that territories are formed to preserve the organized structure.

John Michalski reports that at the Trustee Meeting he just attended the consensus was that the county will take over fire departments with one chief who would select a lieutenant from each township.

Paige would prepare a proposed timetable for establishing a territory. |John Michalski would be willing to split the cost of the financial analysis with the Town.

Additional meetings will be held when the financial impact study is completed by Umbaugh.

The work session was adjourned at 11:18 PM.

Carolyn Higgins, Council President

Attest:

Susan I. Moffitt, Clerk-Treasurer