

**Town of Oakland, Douglas County  
Annual Town Meeting  
Tuesday, April 16, 2013, at 7 p.m.  
Country Peace Presbyterian Church**

Present: 32 Citizens, including all members of the current board

The meeting was called to order by Town Chair Bob Warner at 7:01 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and the meeting was properly posted due to the change in location from last year (published 2 times in the legal section and also an ad in the Superior Telegram; on postcards sent to electors, posted on the website, and posted in three places and on the town garage door). Each board member introduced themselves (Bob Warner, Jack Byrd, Mary Brill, Laurie Dolsen, and Pat Asbury). BW reviewed who can vote at town meetings and what can be voted on by qualified electors at town meetings per the state statutes. BW then called for agenda items from the electors. The following agenda was set by the town electors:

- Oaths of Office
- Approve Town Meeting Minutes
- Approve Financial Report
- Discuss Garbage Rates
- Town Facilities

Oaths of Office – Town Chair Bob Warner issued the Oath of Office to Clerk Laurie Dolsen. Clerk Laurie Dolsen then issued the Oaths of Office to the rest of the board members. All newly elected officers are officially sworn in until April 21, 2015.

Approve Town Meeting Minutes – All present reviewed the meeting minutes from last year's annual town meeting, the budget hearing, and a special town meeting held in February. Millie Tuura motioned to approve the minutes from the April 10, 2012, Annual Town Meeting; the December 4, 2012, Budget Hearing; and the February 18, 2013, Special Town Meeting; Lois Dolsen seconded; 32 Yea's, 0 Nays, 0 Abstain. Motion carried.

Approve 2012 Financial Report – The 2012 Financial Report was reviewed by all those present and the question was asked about the State transportation aids (have they changed)—they have stayed approximately the same or close to it. ATC funds were a little lower this year. Mary Brill noted that we received one-time payments from FEMA and the DOT for flood damage reimbursement. Bob explained that our income comes basically from state aids, the tax levy, managed forest land funds, and the ATC funds and is approximately \$650,000 (a majority of the taxes collected are paid out to the school district, WITC, the state, and the county)—money comes in through tax collections but then goes directly out. Laurie Dolsen explained that the income coming in from tax collections will be different next year—more funds will appear collected in December versus January as the County now contracts with an escrow firm and instead of entering escrow payments received individually, the County now receives a data dump and a single direct deposit. Lu Avery asked about the phone bill and Bob explained that the bill also includes our internet fees, etc., and that there were a lot in the package that we did not need that was eliminated during the year last year—next year's total should be less. In addition, Bob shared that our computers are now networked, which will also reduce costs. Arvid Stromquist motioned to approve the 2012 Financial Report; Roy Peterson seconded; 32 Yea's, 0 Nays, 0 Abstain. Motion carried.

Garbage Rates – During the budget process last year, it was determined that garbage rates had not been raised since 1989/90 and we were no longer covering our costs for collection of garbage and recycling (and also clean-up day). Upon investigation and review, it was found that the board sets the garbage rates and after complete and careful review of our expenses, it was decided to increase the garbage rates from \$186 per year to \$196 per year for year-round residents and from \$93 to \$98 per year for seasonal residents. The increase was reflected on the 2012 tax bills. The question was asked if we had good participation in recycling in our town and because we have the separate recycling bins it was felt we do have a high recycling participation in our township.

Town Buildings/Facilities Update and Discussion – Bob reviewed why we are no longer holding town meetings in the town hall or garage anymore. Since construction of new town facilities was voted down at the February 18 town meeting, utilizing the town garage for voting and town meetings needed to be evaluated and addressed as it is now no longer a temporary situation. The town hall is too unhealthy to be in and experts have advised us they would not work in that environment. In addition, we have contacted our insurance company and WTA on this issue and they both have stated that if the board is aware of a health hazard in the hall, the board should use good and prudent judgment and not utilize the building (for office use and renting it out). The garage is too cold and very challenging to be in as it requires the equipment to be stored outside and exposed to the elements while it is being used for meetings. This causes undue distress to the hydraulics and engines, etc., and our key equipment needs to continue to be stored inside. Voting was moved to Country Peace Presbyterian Church for the April 2 Spring Election and the election workers were very grateful as they spent about 16 hours working in a very cold and uncomfortable environment for the February 19 primary. The board has purchased an office trailer for \$10,000 (plus moving costs) from a church in Minnesota. Weather permitting, it is hoped to have the town office moved soon and to hold the May board meeting in the office trailer.

We recently closed on the purchase of the property on CTH K and the deed has been registered. The board has also hired Jon Lintula to prepare a long-range site plan for that location that would include items such as the septic, well, garage, fire garage, town hall, etc. The question has been asked if we could hold another vote on the buildings at tonight's meeting and the answer is yes, it would be legal as this is a meeting of the electors and that is something the town has the right to vote on at a meeting of the electors; however, the board feels that while it may be legal, it would not be ethical (they feel another vote should be noticed to the voters). The board also feels addressing the garage needs is the top priority right now due to the rust and corrosion that is occurring and the roof has begun to leak. We have approached Northland Buildings to get a quote on pricing to fix the building but they would not give us a quote. The garage was appraised at \$78,000. Ed Jossund suggested we put \$25 plastic on the windows to save on heating costs—it is a more cost effective fix than \$1.3 million.

When doing research on the proposed costs for new facilities, it was generally found that approximately \$100 per square foot was reasonable (figures from the standard book were used to gather the figures for the February 18 meeting and the figures from the book are also what Jon Lintula is using). Troy Amorde brought up the cost of the Port Wing project (which does not include all three structures that we were looking to build) and asked that the board look at their project and be more transparent. The board indicated all documents have been shared openly and all meetings have been open to the public when we are discussing this issue; however, the public usually does not attend any extra meetings discussing this project. Bob stated he would contact Port Wing and get the information on their project.

Lu Avery stated she works for a contractor and explained the process that contractors use to submit bids. She indicated she has asked her work to look at our project and they need more information in

order to put together bid prices. It was suggested that we should get complete plans and specs drawn up for a project and put it out to bid so more realistic prices could be determined in order for the townspeople to make a decision on constructing a building. The plans and specs need to go to the state for approval prior to being put out to bid and it would cost money to get that done as we do not have an engineer who is volunteering his time like Amnicon or Hawthorne do/did and a motion would be needed to spend money on getting the plans/specs drawn up and sent to the State for review/approval.

The question was then asked about the salt shed—would it stay or go. At this point, the shed would stay where it is. Mr. Amorde shared the newspaper with the information from the Port Wing project and asked that the board contact them about their project and share the information in a similar manner on our project. Mr. Jossund asked about downsizing portions of the project to make it more affordable and members of the board explained that has always been the case (i.e., eliminating doors/stalls from 5 down to 4 if the cost was too high in order to stay within budget). The comment was made that while our taxes would go up if we chose to build, that we are investing in the future of our town for many years to come.

Dana Dolsen motioned to get blueprints (plans) and specs drawn up and prepared for the previously proposed building (1 facility including the garage/fire garage/town hall at 12,500 square feet) in order to get state approval so they can go out for bids in order to get more specific figures; Millie Tuura seconded the motion. Discussion followed: Kay Warner asked if we could get bid proposals for 3 separate buildings and if so, she feels having a town hall is important to our community. The motion would have to be amended or another motion would need to be made. Comments were made about building a new garage/fire garage and adding the town hall later; possibly bidding in phases or building a complete facility in parts. Arvid Stromquist stated if we build a facility in parts, it would only cost us more in the long run. Mr. Amorde again asked the town to take a look at the Port Wing project. A call for a vote was then requested. A standing vote was taken and the clerk physically counted all votes—people sat after their vote was counted. Vote was 26 Yea's, 7 Nays, 0 Abstain. Motion carried.

Diane Potter then motioned to get blueprints (plans) and specs drawn up and prepared for state approval to get bids for one facility/building (garage/fire garage/town hall) but to be built in 3 separate phases as funds allow and if the figures come in low enough we could build all three at one time; Ed Jossund seconded the motion. Discussion followed: Jim Waletzko stated he could not support that motion because it would cost too much and take too long. He stated we need to figure out a way to get this project done as all three buildings are needed. The question was asked if we would need three separate heating systems, electrical, etc. if the facility was built in phases. The answer was no, we would not need three separate systems as the system could be set up so that it would simply need to be connected as each phase was built. Randy Martin reminded everyone to take the current low interest rates into account and that would not be the case if we built the facilities in phases. Sandy Waletzko asked if we were increasing the cost of the plans by asking for the buildings to be built in phases (whether standalone or all as one facility) and Bob Warner explained that yes, it would increase the complexity of the plans and would cost more to have them drawn up. Sandy Pease asked for a clarification of the second motion—would it be 2 sets of plans/specs to go out to bidders. The answer was yes, it would be two separate sets of plans. A call for a vote was requested. A standing vote was taken and the clerk physically counted all votes and people sat after their vote was counted. Vote was 7 Yea's, 24 Nays, 2 Abstain. Motion does not carry.

Sandy Waletzko asked about what would happen to the existing site if we were able to build a new facility on our new land—can we salvage a portion of it to bring down costs or use the garage on our

current site for cold storage? Mr. Jossund stated we should hang onto the buildings to use for storage. Bob indicated a proper town meeting would need to be held to vote on that issue. Bob stated the plan right now is to keep the office trailer on our current site until fall and then possibly move it to the new site before winter. Lois Dolsen asked what would be done with the current town hall since it will no longer be used. She then motioned to have the current town hall come down when feasible and when no longer needed at the discretion of the town board; Shelby Barnard seconded the motion. Discussion followed: Lu Avery asked if we would be pulling out pieces that could be used or donated to charity such as Habitat for Humanity and the answer was most likely yes that would be done. Greg Dolsen cautioned about the dangers of possibly transferring mold on what could be donated and indicated a waiver should be signed if anything donated was accepted by another party. A call for a vote was taken. Vote was 28 Yea's, 0 Nays, 2 Abstain. Motion carried.

Bob called for any additional business or public comment. Ed Jossund stated he would like to see us make no large financial decisions until after the reassessment. Kay Warner asked how long it would take before we would find out about our taxes and the reassessment. Mary Brill shared the Board of Review would take place in October and any adjustment would appear on 2013 taxes. Arvid Stromquist reminded everyone to keep in mind all of the great memories that took place in the old town hall—dances, parties, showers, etc., and ask that we take pictures and save the façade for a new hall. Laurie Dolsen publically recognized Linda Ross for all of her dedicated years of service serving as our chief election inspector since she retired from that role last year and she apologized for not recognizing Linda at last year's meeting. A round of applause was given to Linda in recognition of her service.

Chair Bob Warner stated next year's annual meeting would again be held on the third Tuesday of April per state statute and would be held at County Peace Presbyterian Church again.

Sandy Waletzko motioned to adjourn; Greg Dolsen seconded the motion; 30 Yea's, 0 Nays, 0 Abstain. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Laurie K. Dolsen, Town Clerk