

Office of the Supervisor
LIMESTONE TOWNSHIP

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LIMESTONE TOWNSHIP SPECIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
January 22, 2024
7:00 pm

Supervisor Roemer called the January 22, 2024 special public meeting to order at 7:00 pm with a Roll Call of Officers.

Trustees Present: Getz, Johnson, O'Neill, and Supervisor Roemer.

Trustees Absent: Neal (entered meeting at 7:14pm) Quorum: Present

Visitors: Michelle Johnson, William Connor, Randy Neal

Supervisor Roemer reviewed with the Board a letter that the Township received last week addressed to the Township Supervisor, Road Commissioner, and Trustees from Teamsters Union No. 627. This letter states that the Union has been approached by employees of the Township's Road Crew requesting representation. The letter was requesting that the Township give Voluntary Recognition. If this is not given, then the Labor Board will establish a secret ballot election.

William Connor, Township Lawyer, was present to discuss options for the Township Board in regards to the Road employees unionizing. It was acknowledged that the justification for holding the special meeting is to keep total transparency between all parties involved. He went on to say that the letter should have been addressed to solely the Road Commissioner since the Supervisor nor the Trustees have any say as the Road Commissioner has the sole authority over the Roads District and its employees.

He went on to say that since Randy Neal's wife works in the Roads District, he wanted to find a way for Randy to abstain from the process. He continued by informing the Board and Mr. Neal that he found a law that would make it so that the Township Board can appoint a temporary Road District Highway Commissioner to act as a deputy signer for Mr. Neal. He stated that he believes that this would be the best option to keep things transparent and to protect everyone involved.

Supervisor Roemer inquired about setting up a Committee to negotiate as previously discussed with William Connor. Mr. Connor expressed that the Board could set up a Committee

to negotiate, but since there is no pay rate change expected for the four year contract term, he wasn't sure how useful it would be. Supervisor Roemer suggested that there is nothing saying that the Union will not try to negotiate for a salary increase once negotiations started.

Supervisor Roemer then went on to clarify that if the Board appoints a Deputy Highway Commissioner, they would then have the sole power. Mr. Connor confirmed this and said that the Board can vote, but the vote would hold no power. The Board has no final say.

Trustee Getz raised a concern that after the election, without a union contract, everyone could get fired. Trustee Johnson questioned if that scenario is what happened last time. Randy Neal stated that this is not what happened. Two (2) employees remain that were hired under his successor.

Randy Neal, stated that he is on board for the Union. Michelle Johnson questioned why the Roads District had not unionized prior to this. Mr. Neal stated that the Road District started the process of unionizing ten (10) years ago, but it fell through. He went on to state that both himself and the Road Crew think that this will provide job security as the Union four-year contract would stagger with the four year election cycle. He continued by stating that the employees are not mad about their supervisor, salary, or vacation.

Trustee Johnson expressed that it would make absolute sense that someone negotiates on Randy Neal's behalf since he has at least two (2) employees that he is family affiliated with. Trustee Neal corrected with an amendment to the minutes that Randy Neal has one (1) family affiliation and that is Rose Neal. Trustee Johnson accepted the amendment to the minutes.

Trustee Neal entered the meeting at 7:14 pm.

Mr. Connor said that the Board can appoint someone at the next Township Board Meeting to fill a temporary vacancy. He stated that Mr. Neal can give his input on who represents him, however, he does not have authority. The Township Board has the authority to appoint someone to fill a vacancy in an elected official position. Since this is filling an elected position, the Board will ultimately have the final vote on who is appointed.

Trustee Johnson stated that it is standard to have the Union hold an election.

Mr. Connor informed the Board that he is not sure what the proposed timeline on the Union is. However, if it falls before the next meeting, the Township can hold another special meeting to vote to appoint someone.

Supervisor Roemer thanked Mr. Connor for finding the law. He thinks that this is the most transparent way to go about this.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Trustees, the Board adjourned at 7:24pm.

Heather Robinson, Limestone Township Clerk