

PLEASANT HILL VILLAGE COUNCIL COMBINED SPECIAL WITH THE
NEWTON TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES AND THE NEWTON LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD

July 29, 2008

Stan Fessler, serving as moderator, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Tony Fessler, Newton Township Clerk Treasurer, called the roll for the Newton Local School Board: Brian Miller – present; Lolita Schultz – absent; Brenda Stephens – arrived at 7:35 p.m.; Nate Oburn – present; Dave Welbaum – absent. Debbie Cress, Pleasant Hill Fiscal Officer, called the roll for the Pleasant Hill Village Council: Melinda Clark – present; Donna Favorite – present; John Schultz – absent; Robert “Bob” Sollmann – present; Rick Baker – present; Ronald “Bud” Perry – present. Tony Fessler called the roll for the Newton Township Trustees: Terry Wackler – arrived at 7:37 p.m.; Paul Laughman – present; Gene Laughman – present. Others present were Gary Johnston, Pleasant Hill Mayor; Pat McBride, Newton Local Schools Superintendent; Newton Local Schools’ -- Construction Manager representatives – Phil Hartman and Rochel Wolfe from Wolgast Corporation and Julie Taggart from Bovis Lend Lease, Vonda Alberson, Fanning/Howey, and legal counsel Rebecca Princehorn from Bricker & Eckler; other unidentified community members. It was agreed that the meeting would last between 1 ½ and 2 hours.

Pat McBride introduced the new High School/Junior High School Principal, Steve Moeckel, and expressed his and the school’s desire to work with all concerned on the park project and the new school project.

Stan stated the purpose of the meeting: to discuss ideas for use of the recently acquired park land (Newton Township received two state grants (NatureWorks and the Department of Natural Resources) which allowed them to purchase (along with matching funds) 33.4 acres east of the school (the Shoup property) for establishment of a park); master layout; funding sources; advisory park board structure; agreement between the governmental bodies.

Terry Wackler stated that the trustees’ goal is to eliminate duplication, and try to work with everybody to have a nice area.

A proposed master layout was presented. Discussion: the need for input from the public; proposed activities; access to and use by the school; access to and use by the Rec leagues; locations of entrance(s) and exit(s) and traffic concerns (increased volume and safety), utilities, fences, and parking; short-term and long range development plans; agreement structure and ownership options to maximize ability to obtain grants and other funding. Also discussed: focus on development and administration, as opposed to conveyance of ownership; representative group.

Rebecca Princehorn, Bricker and Eckler discussed in general terms some of the legal options: that the groups might want to consider maintenance arrangements; she cited legislative authorities (e.g. RC 755.16) that allow for several governmental bodies to come together for joint arrangements to operate recreational activities, and noted that these authorities are broad in nature, which allows the entities to craft something to fit their needs, and are generally living, breathing arrangements to allow for changes; she recommended not creating a new political subdivision with the power to tax. Ms. Princehorn stated that she has experience with this type of situation and with the kinds of agreements that have been most successful – e.g. agreement on who contributes what, delineation of the working relationship, provision for a regular review process. When asked if she could prepare a recommendation, she stated that since Bricker and Eckler serves as the School’s legal counsel, she will need to get a waiver that allows her to do so, and she will submit a fee quote. She further stated that the scope for her work is the agreement, not a master layout plan. She stated that the State Auditor will not raise any concerns about an agreement based on legislative authority. Gary agreed to check to see how the agreement needs to be structured to allow the Village Council to spend the \$60,000 funds from the Neighborhood Revitalization CDBG.

The Newton Township Trustees noted that they do not intend to seek annexation to the Village for this property because they cannot determine any advantage for doing

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so. Pat McBride stated that the school does intend to seek annexation for any of its property not already in the Village.

Concern about use of Village streets in general, and specifically Locust Street, for the new school construction project was discussed: who will be responsible for repairs. Pat McBride stated that a \$500,000 number was mentioned, and it is a legitimate concern about who is going to pay for it and how it is going to get done, but it is his understanding that if the street is torn up, it will be put back the way it was before the new school construction project. Julie Taggart informed the group that the basic core team needs to get together and discuss the access to the site in more detail. The closure of E Monument St (E SR718), and its possible impact on construction access was also mentioned.

It was recognized that there have been meetings by an interested ad hoc group: Stan Fessler - soccer; Matt Rutledge - baseball; Brenda Stephens – school board member; Paul Laughman – township trustee; Melinda Clark – Village Council member and Council representative on the Community Recreation Board. This group agreed to serve as a committee to work on the master plan.

The need for future combined meetings was discussed; it was decided to let the advisory group determine if they want to present something to the entire group, and request a combined meeting at that time. It was agreed that each advisory group member would take drafts back to his group.

Brenda made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Melinda. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m. by the group voting “yeas”.

Mayor / Gary Johnston

Fiscal Officer / Debbie Cress