

Benton Township Board Meeting

May 13th, 2020
7616 E State Road 45, Bloomington, IN, 47468

Attendance

- Joe Husk, Chair
- Hans Kelson, Secretary (Via Conference Call)
- Lynn Stevens, Board Member (Via Conference Call)
- Michelle Bright, Township Trustee
- Pam Mitchell (Via Conference Call)
- Ernie Frazo

Meeting called to order at 6:34 PM

Updates

Executive Order 20-09

- This executive order modifies some provisions of the Open Door Law, and instructs local government bodies to limit meetings to only those things essential for operation. Therefore, we are postponing all reports, approval of minutes, and other non-essential items until we return to having meetings in person.

Fire Station Remodel

- We will be remodeling the fire station to suit the changing needs of the department, as we move into having District staff at the station full-time. We spent most of this meeting reviewing architectural drawings before we send them out to bid. This project will be done in two phases, with phase one starting this year. We hope to start phase two next year.
 - Phase One:
 - * Living Quarters, East side of building
 - * Architect's cost estimate: \$205,000.00
 - Phase Two:
 - * West side of building
 - * Architect's Cost Estimate: \$195,561.87

Discussion of plans

- Positives:
 - We have been saving money for 6-7 years, so we can afford to do this project without going into debt.
 - * If we join the district, we will have to spend down our Fire Fund and Cumulative Fire Fund anyway, over the next 18 months. Rather than holding on to this money and passing it on to the District, we could do a direct service to our Township fire service by remodeling the building.
 - The Fire District would like the station to be as up-to-date as possible for people to move in.
 - It is much easier to do this kind of work when people aren't actively living in the building.
 - We can take pride in knowing we contributed a nice facility to the District, rather than giving them something that they will have to remodel themselves.
 - Contractors may bid lower than normal to get the work during the health crisis, so we could get a good deal by doing this now.
 - This project would provide work for (hopefully) a local company during the health crisis.
- Negatives:
 - We are still in the process of joining the district. It is very likely to happen, but, were something to go wrong with that, this could be an unnecessary expense.
 - The timeline isn't great. The first phase of construction may overlap with people being at the station.
 - If the contract amount with the district is higher than we predict, we may not be able to fund the second phase of construction next year.
- The board agrees that this is the time to do this project. We should try to modernize the fire station while we can, and in advance of the probable merger with the Monroe Fire District.
- We would like to put the project out to bid with three different options (phase one, phase two, and a combined option for both) in order to try to get a better price. The combined option would be done with the understanding that phase two of construction won't be funded until next fiscal year.

Approval

- Motion to allow the Trustee to put this project out to bid: Kelson
Second: Stevens
- Roll Call Vote:
 - Stevens: Aye
 - Husk: Aye
 - Kelson: Aye

Public Comment

- Ernie Frazo agrees with our plan for putting the remodel project out to bid with three options. He says that it would offer better continuity if we had the same contractor locked in for phase two next year. He also agrees that the project needs to happen, and supports keeping our township tax dollars in the township.

Adjournment

- Motion to Adjourn: Stevens
Second: Kelson
Meeting adjourned at 7:04