

## BALDWIN TOWNSHIP SPECIAL MEETING

February 10, 2020

**Present** – Supervisors Jay Swanson, Tom Rush, Bryan Lawrence, Larry Handshoe and Patrick Hudson.

**Call to Order** – The February 10, 2020 special meeting of Baldwin Township was called to order by Chairman Jay Swanson at 7:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance** – All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approve Agenda** – Lawrence/Swanson unanimous to approve agenda as submitted.

**Review Northeast Sherburne Fire & Rescue Department Handbook** – Chief Case stated that the changes are noted in blue and red. The Town Board and members of the fire department reviewed the proposed changes. The Town Board requested changes on page 3, 20, and 21. Discussion was held on "light duty" as noted on page 22. Hudson, Swanson, Handshoe and Rush agree with page 22 as it is written. Changes on page 23 were requested as there was duplicate items listed.

Supervisor Lawrence left the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

The Town Board requested changes on page 28, 29, 31 and 32.

The Town Board reviewed Appendix A, Payroll. Rush asked what the justifications for the increases were. Chief Case stated that the department is currently the lowest paid department in the area per hour. We did more calls than a department south of us. With the budget meeting it was his understanding to increase wages across the board. His justification is the time commitment. The Assistant Chief and Captains are in charge of the department from Friday night at 6:00 p.m. until Monday at 8:00 a.m. They are in charge of apparatus, committees and equipment committees. They are not paid and that is what the monthly stipend is for. Rush stated that he is fielding justification for the residents. Hudson offered to work with the Chief and Rus to put together a face sheet to justify. Hudson stated that he sees a need. Chad Miller stated that the City of Zimmerman's chiefs' wages is almost at \$90,000/year and The City of Princeton pays their chief \$40,000 for a part time chief. Case stated that if the taxpayers don't want to pay for it then the department can be dissolved. It is hard to recruit firefighters when others have higher wages around us. Swanson stated that the increase was to cover the costs. Hudson stated that he would be interested in a fact sheet that showed what insurance would be if the fire department was not here. Case stated that the insurance rate for this area before the department as a 9 or 10 and now it is a 6. To maintain an adequately trained fire department we have to do something.

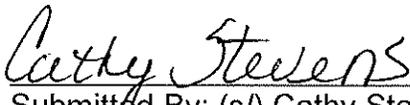
Rush stated that the more information that is out there the more it can be justified.

Swanson stated that he would like a revised copy to come back to the Town Board with no review by the township attorney. Case stated that he would like to have this revised

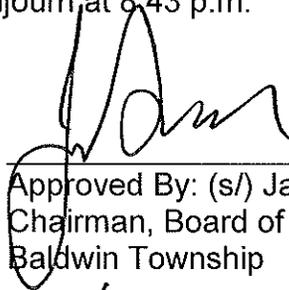
every 5 years other than the Appendix. The Town Board thanked the committee. Case stated that the committee and Danielle (Artmann) did a great job.

**Discuss 2021 Retirement Fund Levy Request** – Swanson stated that this was a done deal as far as he was concerned by putting in on as a line item at the Annual Meeting. However, there was no official vote. When the item came back for a vote, he and Hudson voted it in, but it was voted down by Lawrence, Handshoe and Rush. Rush stated that does not think it should be part of the budget and suggested looking at other options. Case stated that the fire department budget is an operational budget. The \$15,000 is a retirement through PERA. Zimmerman pays \$30,000 for their pension. The City of Princeton pays \$20,000-\$21,000. We are trying to make sure we are solvent. The current balance is \$689,000 and we pay \$3,000/year. Rush questioned if Case was proposing \$15,000 every year. Case responded 'yes'. It was originally \$25,000/year and then nothing for a while. Then it was brought up to \$15,000 which was not known before the Annual Meeting. It is gesture of good will to the firefighters. Swanson stated that is why he wanted to add as its own line item. Case stated that he won't be surprised if it is brought up at the Annual Meeting. Swanson stated that it shows unity with the fire department and brings up a discussion point and there are no surprises. Case stated that his goal is that we are on par with neighbors to the north and south, but he understands qualms. Elk River is currently at \$7,120 and is going to \$8,000/year. Investment income last year for the department was \$108,000. Discussion on adding as a separate line item at the Annual Meeting. Hudson stated he would prefer \$25,000 for firefighter pension. The item will be added to the August 18<sup>th</sup> regular meeting agenda.

**Adjourn** – Handshoe/Hudson unanimous to adjourn at 8:43 p.m.



Submitted By: (s/) Cathy Stevens  
Clerk/Treasurer  
Baldwin Township



Approved By: (s/) Jay Swanson  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors  
Baldwin Township

4-6-2020

Date

Attendees: Scott Case, Chad Miller, Phil Holland, Brian Torborg