

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES SPECIAL MEETING
August 11, 2020
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390**

Due to Governor Whitmer's Executive Order to "Stay Home, Stay Safe", this meeting was held via Zoom, video conferencing technology.

CALL TO ORDER: Supervisor David Scott called the meeting to order at 7.00 p.m. and introduced the members of the Board.

ROLL CALL: Present: David E. Scott, Supervisor
Melissa Creech, Clerk
Molly Phillips, Treasurer
Robert Berkheiser, Trustee
Vanessa Magner, Trustee
Rick Sovel, Trustee
George Weber, Trustee

Also Present: Hans Rentrop, Township Attorney
Jim Dundas, Fire Chief
Mark Schoder, Maintenance Director

ITEM 1: PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Wilding, 4200 Addington Court, asked if it was appropriate to comment here on the Police and Fire SAD's?

Supervisor Scott said the appropriate time to comment is during the public hearings for the Police and Fire SAD's which were next on the agenda.

Seeing no other "hands" raised, Supervisor Scott closed Public Comments.

ITEM 2: PUBLIC HEARING – RESOLUTION DETERMINING TO ESTABLISH AN ELEVEN-YEAR SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT TO FUND POLICE PROTECTION OPERATIONS AND SUPPORTING STRUCTURES, EQUIPMENT, AND RELATED COSTS AND APPROVING ESTIMATES OF COSTS THEREFOR

Supervisor Scott opened the public hearing.

Mary Wilding, 4200 Addinton Court, asked if the SAD is a lien on her property that must be paid off upon the sale of the home?

ITEM 2: PUBLIC HEARING – RESOLUTION DETERMINING TO ESTABLISH AN ELEVEN-YEAR SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT TO FUND POLICE PROTECTION OPERATIONS AND SUPPORTING STRUCTURES, EQUIPMENT, AND RELATED COSTS AND APPROVING ESTIMATES OF COSTS THEREFOR continued

Attorney Hans Rentrop explained that the SAD is not a tax and a lien is placed on the property in the event the owner doesn't pay the special assessment. This SAD is not required to be paid off upon the sale of the property to new owners.

Brett McDonald, 9135 Commerce Road, is interested to see the statistics before and after increased patrols in the Township. He said the police presence seems excessive now and he would like the Board to keep the COVID-19 and money situation in mind.

Nancy Forbis, 3336 Tiquewood, says she does not want her taxes to go up and if the police is defunded do taxpayers get their money back?

Trustee Berkheiser said the Board has never entertained the idea of defunding the police.

Nancy Forbis asked what is the projection?

Supervisor Scott answered the citizens approved 2.9 mils and we will take that amount for the next year or two.

A general discussion followed regarding costs and projections.

MOTION by Scott, supported by Berkheiser, to adjourn the Public Hearing for the Resolution Determining to Establish an Eleven-Year Special Assessment District to Fund Police Protection Operations and Supporting Structures, Equipment, and Related Costs and Approving Estimates and Costs Therefor, until the regularly scheduled Township Board of Trustees meeting on August 18, 2020.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Scott, Berkheiser, Magner, Sovel, Creech, Phillips, Weber

NAYS:

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 3: PUBLIC HEARING – RESOLUTION DETERMINING TO ESTABLISH A NINE-YEAR SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT TO FUND FIRE AND RESCUE PROTECTION OPERATIONS AND SUPPORTING STRUCTURES, EQUIPMENT, AND RELATED COSTS AND APPROVING ESTIMATES OF COSTS THEREFOR

Supervisor Scott opened the public hearing.

Mary Wilding, 4200 Addington Court, asked what is the public hearing for on 9-8-2020.

ITEM 3: PUBLIC HEARING – RESOLUTION DETERMINING TO ESTABLISH A NINE-YEAR SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT TO FUND FIRE AND RESCUE PROTECTION OPERATIONS AND SUPPORTING STRUCTURES, EQUIPMENT, AND RELATED COSTS AND APPROVING ESTIMATES OF COSTS THEREFOR continued

Attorney Rentrop answered the Township is required to hold 2 public hearings and the second public hearing is to review and confirm the roll.

Seeing no other raised “hands”, Supervisor Scott closed the public hearing.

Trustee Weber spoke about the information looked at to determine the mill rate for this SAD. The sub-committee looked at census data, master plans, SEMCOG data, traffic patterns, vehicle replacement projections, staffing levels, fire station replacement costs, and at other comparable jurisdictions.

Fire Chief Dundas said that there are 3 types of costs: people, operating, and equipment.

A discussion followed regarding the projected costs for each category, fund balances, and the mill rate needed to cover projected costs now and in the future.

Trustee Magner asked if the Board needed to raise the millage rate from 2.0 to 2.8 for a few years before lowering it again. Does it make more sense to raise it in a smaller increment for a longer period of time?

Fire Chief Dundas said the higher rate is needed to fund career positions and the new fire station 3.

Trustee Sovel said he is not thrilled with taking the maximum rate.

Treasurer Phillips said that the general fund is not bottomless and the Township has debt service issues.

Trustee Magner asked if the Board can approve the maximum of 2.8 now and lower it at a later budget discussion meeting and, if so, when the rate would need to be set for sure.

Attorney Rentrop said the rate must be set by the September 8, 2020 Board meeting.

MOTION by Magner, supported by Creech, to approve the Resolution Determining to Establish and Nine-Year Special Assessment District to Fund Fire Protection and Rescue Protection Operations and Supporting Structures, Equipment, and Related Costs and Approving Estimates of Costs Therefor, at a rate of 2.8 mills.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Magner, Creech, Phillips, Weber, Sovel, Scott

NAYS: Berkheiser

MOTION CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Magner, supported by Sovel, to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Magner, Sovel, Creech, Phillips, Weber, Berkheiser, Scott

NAYS:

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Melissa Creech, Clerk
Charter Township of Commerce