

## **Fairness In Taxes**

### **Meeting Minutes 11-7-14**

**Board Attendance:** Leo Burke, Bill & Sheila Hartranft, Michael Hinchman, Don Kerns, Dale Nicholas, & Jim Tweed

Meeting opened by Michael Hinchman with Pledge Allegiance at 3:00 P.M.

#### **Items for Review – Michael Hinchman**

- Capital Funds Workshop – scheduled for early November.
- Skateboard Park – moving the park from its original location was a good idea; but the plans in the works seem to be a fiasco. The site chosen seems to be the best of a bad lot and projected cost of \$750,000 seems too high. Still not sure if the parking has been worked out. It appears as if the Ecumenical Council is okay with the parking plan, but not the residents. The work is scheduled to begin in the spring.
- Concerns – a) what happens if they build a new Public Safety building? Michael felt the existing building can be fixed, and if it was it would be okay and less costly; b) lack of supervision for the skateboard park; c) will the Comcast trailer move? If so, where to?
- Artificial Turf – The studies indicate that “grass” is the better option and more cost efficient option. Michael plans to take pictures of the grass and then prepare an ad for the media. What happens in a storm; will the pellets of the artificial turf end up on the beach?
- The City seems to deviate from its plans such as “roads and drainage”. There should be a “cost analysis” done for planned projects, and they don’t have qualified people to do that. House builders know in advance approximately what their costs will be. Capital planning should be the same.
- Downtown – looks great, but isn’t putting up Christmas decorations by November 3<sup>rd</sup> a bit early. If they want the avenue to look really good all the time, maybe they should look into other ideas for the soft months.

#### **Update on Non-resident Voting Privileges – Jim Tweed**

- Jim began by stating that the original resolution was tabled in order to survey the FIT members and investigate communities where non-resident taxpayers do vote.
- Two surveys were conducted; 1 prong by Ken Adams through e-mail and 1 through the FIT Newsletter. From both surveys, of those who responded, 85% were in favor. Of the 93 returns so far, 79 voted in favor of non-resident, property owners being able to vote in municipal elections.
- Jim will invite Mayor Cooper to speak at a meeting to give background on how this works in Rehoboth Beach. Michael Hinchman moved to offer lodging and meals as an incentive for the Rehoboth Mayor’s attendance; the motion was voted on and approved unanimously.
- Jim spoke with Seth Sloan of Point Pleasant, NJ who heads an organization similar to FIT. They have a City sponsored committee working on this same issue. Seth also provided some documentation on their efforts so far, and would be open to coming to Ocean City to speak on the issue if and when we move further along.
- One non-resident member commented that FIT seems to be disjointed. She is in favor of non-residents voting, and we should perhaps put together a committee and invite City Council members to be part of it, invite any and all interested parties, and be sure to advertise. She also offered to help with this effort and was advised by Michael to put together a plan and contact FIT board members and FIT organization members to help; that he was sure they would be willing. Several members voiced their willingness to help.
- Bill Hartranft commented that we should look for consensus, a plan should be made, a time line established and then move forward.

**Secretary – Sheila Hartranft**

- Requested that the board approve Pay-Pal be offered on our web site for the payment of membership dues. This was approved.
- Also requested that any articles/Op-Eds pertinent to FIT sent to the media also be forwarded to the Secretary for inclusion on our web site. This was also approved.

**Miscellaneous**

- Michael asked if everyone would be interested in a Christmas gathering again this year. All agreed. Barring unforeseen circumstances, it was agreed it would be held on December 16, 2014, 7:00 P.M. at 704 Asbury Avenue, Ocean City. The notice of this gathering will also appear on our web site. All are welcome.

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 P.M.

Next meeting scheduled for Friday, December 5, 2014.

Respectively submitted by:  
Sheila Hartranft, Secretary