

Fairness In Taxes

Meeting Minutes 3-6-15

Board Attendance: Bill & Sheila Hartranft, Michael Hinchman, Don Kerns, Joe Somerville, Vic Staniec & Jim Tweed

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

Education – Vic Staniec

- Last day of school for the 2014/15 year was originally June 18th; is now June 19th due to snow day.
- The PARCC test will be administered to all students. The test results will be compared nationally and will be used to evaluate both students and teachers. Not everyone agrees this is a good way to evaluate teachers. PARCC has replaced the State test.
- It is a computerized test given in stages and is approximately 5 hours long. 95% of students must take the test in order for the schools to be eligible for funding.
- It is possible, with parental permission for a student to opt out of the test.
- Michael Hinchman observed that students should learn and teachers should be accountable. What should they do?
- Cost per student in OC is \$17,000.00 per year; in AC it is \$24,000.00. A contributing factor for AC is that so many of their students are eligible for remedial studies at a higher cost for the teachers who provide the program (s).
- They do not yet have a full time business administrator. Mark Ritter is the acting part-time administrator. He did provide a breakdown of the proposed budget. Vic noted that utilities are down, but the budget in this area is up. Mark Ritter did reduce the budgeted salaries due to the planned retirement of teachers who are at the top of their grade.
- The proposed budget is \$40 million plus; \$31 million plus is for salaries. Ocean City teachers have the 3rd highest salary in the state. He noted, this is a preliminary budget and it will be about 3 months till they have the actual budget ready for approval.
- Reserves last year were \$2.5 million a large portion of which they are using for construction and to pay off bonds, leaving a reserve fund of \$1.6 million.

Flood Committee – Eric Sauder

- Michael Hinchman will be contacting council members to arrange a meeting with the committee on an agreeable Tuesday or Wednesday night to discuss the city's plan on roads and drainage. Bill and Sheila will look at the city's road plan as compared to the engineering study that was done in 2012. The committee will be meeting prior to the meeting with council members to discuss this analysis.
- Both Roger McLarnon and Art Chew were asked to speak on this at a FIT meeting. Michael was informed they will not be available to speak to our group until after the budget is passed.
- Michael suggested to Eric that he submit an OPRA request for scheduled installation, repair and/or maintenance of any flood mitigating apparatus such as check valves, drainage pipes, etc.
- Michael will put together an AD to be approved by the FIT board after all the facts have been gathered in support of the Flood Committee efforts.
- The "No Wake" signs were discussed to be used in areas affected by flooding. Jim Tweed made a motion for FIT to provide \$300.00 for the signs to be made up and offered to all residents affected by flooding if they wish to place them on their property. Michael seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried. Eric Sauder and Suzanne Hornick will check on the ordinance for signs with the city before any purchase is made.

City's Capital Plan – Michael Hinchman

- Michael stated that the administration believes they are good stewards of our tax dollars. Are they? He stated that the City is in good shape but not necessarily well run.
- He also noted that the 2% cap on capital funding was a FIT victory, but perhaps not touted enough.
- Pete Guinasso reminded Michael that contracts are also coming up.

Meeting adjourned 4:40 P.M.

Next meeting will be April 10, 2015. Sheila & Bill Hartranft and Vic Staniec will be out of town and will not be attending.

Respectively submitted by:

Sheila Hartranft, Secretary