

Summary Notes
Meeting of the Pewaukee Merger Advisory Committee
Thursday, February 4, 2010
6:00 p.m., Pewaukee City Hall

Roll Call

In attendance at the seventeenth meeting of the Pewaukee Merger Advisory Committee were, representing the Village of Pewaukee, President Jeff Knutson, Trustee Paul Evert, citizen member Mark Muehl, and citizen member Tom Houck. Representing the City of Pewaukee were Mayor Scott Klein, Alderperson Roger Hathaway, citizen member Dave Swan, citizen member Dan Sanford, and City Administrator Tammy LaBorde. Philip Evenson and Village Administrator Scott Gosse were excused. Citizen member Sanford chaired the meeting. Also in attendance at the meeting were William J. Mielke and Christine Cramer from Ruckert & Mielke, Inc., representing the consultant team assisting the Committee, as well as John Gardner of Zeppos & Associates.

Summary Notes of Prior Meeting

Mr. Sanford referred to the summary notes of the Advisory Committee's meeting of January 27, 2010. On a motion by Mr. Houck, seconded by Mr. Evert, and carried unanimously, the summary notes of the meeting of January 27, 2010, were approved.

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Consolidation Plan and Ordinance

Ms. Cramer reviewed the three items that were raised at the last meeting related to how property assessments were to be handled, how to handle municipal court, and bond ratings. All members of the committee received a memorandum from Lawrie Kobza on those three issues. The consultants are scheduling a meeting between the two municipal judges and the Director of State Courts. Ms. Cramer mentioned that Ms. Kobza met with the League of Wisconsin Municipalities regarding the proposed legislation. Mr. Mielke noted that no one has seen the draft of the language as of yet. The intent is to bring the final language to the Merger Advisory Committee for their approval prior to moving it forward. Mr. Sanford requested that as soon as the language is in proper form, a copy should be sent to the committee and to the City Council and Village Board before it goes to the sponsors of the bill. Further discussion took place on these issues. Mr. Sanford suggested that for the next agenda we place all three previous items as well as an update on the legislation. Ms. Cramer noted that the current legislation has two versions of payment – one as a special assessment and the second as two separate tax rates. Mr. Mielke noted that the direction from the committee was to look at the two tax rates for property tax deductibility versus special assessment, which could not be deducted on property taxes.

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Comments Received from Common Council and Village Board

Mayor Klein stated that the Common Council did not have many comments regarding the ordinance. The Mayor stated that he has a problem with the \$5.5 million from the utility to be used to lower the debt. Mr. Hathaway noted that the Council wanted the Village to move forward on the Street Utility District prior to bringing the consolidation ordinance back to the Common Council. President Knutson stated that some of the members of the Village Board were uncomfortable with two tax rates. He noted that back in 2000, the people in the communities didn't get to vote on this issue. One of the Village Trustees suggested having a non-binding referendum on the April 6th ballot asking whether they should go ahead as a joint community and a second question if merger does not go through, would they support consolidation of utilities or other departments between the communities. He also stated that there is so much misinformation out there. As far as the current ordinance goes, he is not certain that the Village Board would pass it without including wording to protect certain things in the Village. Mr. Evert stated that somehow the information needs to get to the electorate. When the newsletter does go out it has to have specific information and the savings have to be spelled out. Mr. Muehl attended both meetings and stated that each group thinks they are getting a bad deal. The Village Board mentioned reducing the number of aldermanic positions to six, that eight was too many. It also appeared that there wasn't enough support for a street utility district. Mr. Houck noted that one of the Trustees mentioned that the pay for the aldermen should be at the Village's current rate, which is lower than what was proposed in the budget. Further discussion took place.

President Knutson stated that he would like to see the Board and Council meet and discuss this further. The Mayor agreed that there needed to be more meetings as a group as they received very little input from the Board and Council. Mr. Sanford suggested for the next meeting to review the proposed legislation once it is available; work out the outstanding issues that remain related to the courts and property assessment; and to put together the package deal on what the committee has agreed to and then present that to both governmental bodies. There was discussion as to a binding or non-binding referendum and the timeline that had been proposed.

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Public Education Newsletter

Mr. Sanford confirmed that all members of the committee had reviewed the proposed newsletter to the community. Mr. Gardner stated that the newsletter included common questions that have been asked on the website. He also noted that there has been a great deal of misinformation out there and that was evident in some of the news media articles over the past weeks. This is the first step in a multi-step

process and it is important to get the word out to the public as soon as possible. The key is that they are not trying to convince anyone as to what to do – this is merely a tool to provide facts to the residents.

Mr. Knutson noted that the Village Board did approve the allocation of \$2,000 at their meeting. He has read the newsletter and believes this is just what needs to be sent out. Mr. Houck asked if someone would be monitoring the website to see what affect the newsletter had on number of viewers. Mr. Gardner stated that SEWRPC monitors the website and he would check with them. Mr. Hathaway suggested the removal of two sentences in number nine related to the city's tax rate. He also mentioned that the DPW Director did not agree with some of the study figures. Further discussion took place on the information provided. Mr. Sanford reminded the members of the committee that if there is conflicting information in the studies, that those issues need to be brought to the entire committee for discussion. The consultants provided the studies months ago, and that is what the committee has accepted. If the City's DPW Director disagrees with some of the information, the committee needs to review those concerns. Individuals have every right to challenge the information but this is not the place to get in the middle of a political debate. Mr. Sanford suggested that if the City's DPW Director wanted to come to the next meeting, than he should do so. It was agreed that the two sentences in number 9 that begin "Between..." and "The City's..." would be removed from the newsletter. Mr. Muehl suggested that in number 10 we add language as to where people can pick up copies of reports. Mr. Houck suggested adding a savings calculator to the website if possible so that residents could calculate what their savings would be with a merged community. Mr. Gardner stated that he would check with SEWRPC but didn't believe that they would be able to add that.

Mr. Evert moved and Mr. Houck seconded to recommend approval of the newsletter with the edits that were made to it this evening. There was discussion as to what happens if the city would not approve the funding for the printing and distribution of the newsletter. The motion carried unanimously.

Set Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date was set for Wednesday, February 17th at City Hall at 6PM for the purpose of reviewing the outstanding issues related to municipal court, outstanding issues related to property assessment, update on legislation, revisit zoning for alderman districts for 3 districts instead of the proposed 4 districts (SEWRPC will do new maps), and pay for the aldermen in the new community. Mr. Swan suggested that at some point the committee begin preparing the "playbook" that will be provided to the new council.

Public Comments

Comments were provided regarding debt service, the election of the municipal judge, review of proposed budget by auditor, and the proposed newsletter.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Houck and seconded by Mr. Hathaway, the meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Submitted by Tammy A. LaBorde