

PERKINS TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES

INFORMATION MEETING

October 19, 2022

The Perkins Township Trustees met Tuesday, October 19, 2022, in the Township Services Facility located at 2610 Columbus Avenue. Trustees present were Jeffrey Ferrell, Timothy Coleman, and James Lang. Chairman Ferrell opened the meeting by introducing the other Trustees James Lang and Timothy Coleman, Fiscal Officer Diane Schaefer, Township Administrator Gary Boyle, Community Development Director Angela Byington and Executive Coordinator Ashley Ohlemacher.

Mr. Ferrell thanked everyone for coming to the informational meeting to discuss the Limited Home Rule issue that would be on the November ballot. In attendance were Norman Bilger, Kathryn Carter, Colleen Matthews, Norm Sherer, Jim and Linda Smith, Dee Conti, Mary Knerr, Brent Adams, Janice Obergefell, Lisa Crescimano, Jeff Musser, and David Keller.

Administrator Boyle gave a power point presentation for the reasons the Township was pursuing the ballot issue. A handout was also presented to those in attendance. As the second largest political subdivision in Erie County, we have a number of the services that the larger subdivisions have.

In 1991 the General Assembly decided under ORC Section 504 that larger townships could have similar powers that a chartered city has if they adopted Limited Home Rule. There are about 30 townships in Ohio that have adopted Limited Home Rule. Mr. Boyle outline the process to become a Limited Home Rule township based on population.

For a township with population between 5,000-15,000, it would take approval by the electorate to establish Limited Home Rule governance. Based on Mr. Boyle's understanding this has been discussed by several previous Boards. This Board after having a public meeting on May 21st decided that this was something they wanted to pursue. The idea of Limit Home Rule was also discussed during our sessions for developing the Township's Strategic Plan with citizens, business owners, and others. The whole issue of code compliance and nuisances was brought up numerous times. Another meeting was held on July 12th with no one in opposition to the issue. The Board then passed a resolution to proceed with putting the issue on the November 8th ballot.

Mr. Boyle reviewed some things that Limited Home Rule does not do. It does not increase property taxes without a vote of electorate just as it is now. It does not change the form of the government; there are still three trustees and a fiscal officer. There is no authority, whether a statutory or a limited home rule township, to enact an income tax.

Mr. Boyle then reviewed the various sources of income to the Township including property taxes, motel taxes, local government taxes, building/zoning permits and others.

It is not about control of hunting, fishing, firearms, or agriculture. It is not about imposing criminal penalties. What Limited Home Rule could do is provide a broader authority when it comes to zoning and dealing with complaints. The number one complaint that the Township received is regarding property maintenance – high weeds, noise, building and property maintenance. We have one Code Enforcement Officer who oversees the complaints along with doing residential inspections, so she is kept busy. There is a fulltime staff of four in the Community Development Department.

With Limited Home Rule, we can regulate parking and traffic on roads. It extends the financing limits.

Mr. Boyle then reviewed the various department, the services they provide, and the number of employees in each. We have learned to become more efficient with the workforce we have. The form of government will not change, only the ability to do it more efficiently.

Under Section 504, a Limited Home Rule township can do a number of things. However, we have no intention of duplicating any services that others are doing well. A requirement

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is to have a Law Director. We have had one for decades.

Mr. Boyle then listed many of the Erie County Departments and other organizations with whom we work.

Mr. Boyle reviewed the process for discontinuing the Limited Home Rule status after three year either by the Board or by the electorate.

Another reason for adopting this is because State General Assembly is looking at changes in the tax incentive financing regulations. This would be helpful in avoiding annexation attempts.

Mr. Coleman said that the purpose of this meeting is to provide our reasons for doing this and to hear what you think.

One gentleman from Schenk Road said that many people look at this as being a giant homeowners' association telling the people what to do with their property. Now that he has heard the comments, he knows that this is not the case. Mr. Boyle said that the Township has already adopted the Property Maintenance Code that governs some maintenance issues. But it not about telling people what color they can paint their house. This gentleman said that he had had an issue with his property and our Code Enforcement Officer come out. She was firm, but helpful.

Mr. Coleman said they are hearing a lot of things that people are saying that simply are not true. He does not know if it is because they don't know or because it is something else.

Mr. Boyle said that if anyone has questions after this meeting, please call to get the correct information.

One lady from Columbus Avenue asked how the Board can control growth when developers come in and put in houses on small lots. Mr. Boyle said that the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Resolution controls this with a minimum lot and house size.

Another lady from Ferry Lane asked how this would change their taxes. Mr. Boyle said that there would be no change because of this issue. Just as in all tax issues, if a person does not agree with the tax, then they have the right to vote it down. Mr. Coleman said that it was a slight change in the form of government. It should not cost anymore because of that change.

Ms. Byington said that any policies that were to be considered for change in land use would still need to come before the Trustees for their approval during a public meeting.

Another gentleman asked that the Strategic Plan be explained. Mr. Boyle said that it was an exercise to determine priorities and who was responsible for what activity. We discussed community identity and how to deal with issues with the community wants.

Someone asked if the Zoning Map was available. Ms. Byington said yes and that it was on our website – www.perkinstownship.com.

Mr. Boyle thanked everyone again for attending.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, Mr. Ferrell moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 pm.