SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

PUBLIC HEARING

JUNE 14, 2011

Paul Stoelting, President, called the Special Meeting of the Syracuse Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Other council members present were Bill Musser, Larry Siegel, and Brian Woody. Also present were Town Manager Henry DeJulia, Town Attorney Mike Reed, and Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Paul announced we are here for a Public Hearing tonight; he asked Mike Reed to explain more. Mike advised in March of this year an annexation petition was filed by owners of the Oakwood area; there are approximately 100 individual residences in the Oakwood area as well as the foundation properties. According to Indiana Code, the town scheduled a Public Hearing. Sixty days notice was sent to all property owners and also to people adjacent to Oakwood. Hearing information was sent out, as well as a fiscal plan and a map. Tonight is the Public Hearing; anyone who wants to comment is allowed to speak. The Town Council, Henry, and a representative from London Witte, as well as Mike Reed are available to answer questions. Mike went on to state there will be no decision tonight; according to Indiana Code, the council will consider the petition at a later meeting and if it is adopted, it will be within 30-60 days of today's date. The council anticipates looking at this again at the July meeting; the fiscal plan will be adopted tonight or at the July meeting, if they want to go ahead with that.

Paul noted we are here to discuss the fiscal plan and any concerns about the future; we are not in a position to discuss court rulings or the receivership. The town's consultant, Jim Higgins, of London Witte Group, is here and available for questions regarding the fiscal plan.

Mike Reed added the petition required that over 50% of the property owners sign the petition, or more than 50% of the assessed value of that area sign the petition. Well over 50% of the property owners signed; also well over 50% of the assessed value signed.

Paul opened the floor to public comment.

Richard Williams, of 1019 S Lake St, asked questions about the fiscal plan. He asked about the zoning; Mike Reed informed him all of it is zoned residential now. There may be nonconforming uses. Mr. Williams asked about inspection services that were listed in the fiscal plan. Jim Higgins advised the inspection would be for improvements and new construction; there is not mandatory inspection. He asked about street and road maintenance; the fiscal plan states it will be done as money becomes available. Brian answered that is what we anticipate for the cost for things like snow removal, leaf pickup, and potholes per year. Larry explained we need to maintain Oakwood like we do the rest of the town. Signs were discussed. Mr. Williams asked if we would be able to read water meters. Jeremy Sponseller, Public Works Superintendent, answered we would need to upgrade the meters so they are the same type as the rest of the town. Currently they write down the meter readings in Oakwood by hand; we use a touchread system in town. Mr. Williams asked if the meters for the foundation properties would also have to be converted; he was advised they would.

Mr. Williams asked about revenue in the plan. It was noted the estimated property taxes of $127,072 would be annual, not one time revenue. The estimated costs of improvements are $581,000.00; the sanitary sewer portion of that amount is $381,000.00. He asked if it has been

determined yet who will pay for street lighting; he was told that has not been determined yet. Mike Reed advised it is in the current fiscal plan, however, the plan has not been adopted yet. Mr. Williams asked if the $1,000.00 fuel cost shown for police patrol would mean that Syracuse Police would patrol Oakwood; he advised there would be patrols.

Brian explained the fiscal plan is to show the cost impact to the town, as required by law. Once Oakwood is annexed, there will be the zoned utility rates and an increase in property taxes. Oakwood residents will not be given an additional bill to pay for services, such as street sweeping.

Paul asked if there were any other comments; there were none. Paul closed the Public Hearing section of the meeting.

Mr. Williams asked about the additional annual property tax revenue of $127,000; he said the plan shows estimated annual costs of $99,000.00. Larry noted we receive property taxes in arrears; the town will be providing services before the additional property tax revenue is received. Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline asked Jim Higgins to explain why the additional property tax revenue is not guaranteed. Jim Higgins explained the property taxes are controlled by a system of levy controls. The town believes there are enough additional costs that we could appeal for an additional tax levy so the town could keep the additional tax revenue in order to pay for the improvements. It is up to the Department of Local Government Finance to determine during the budget process if the town has made a case for keeping the additional taxes to pay for the services. Mr. Higgins added it is remote that we would get to keep 100% of new taxes.

Tom Niezer, of Barrett McNagny Law Group, representing the receiver, Ian Rolland, explained the receiver regrets not being able to be here. The receiver supports the fiscal plan that has been presented, and he has been working strenuously to make other efforts to ready the foundation properties for redevelopment, including securing a favorable order from Judge Huffer to remove the restrictive covenants. Mr. Rolland looks forward to working with the town for the next 30 to 60 days as we work to finalize the plan.

Mike Reed advised we do not need to adopt the fiscal plan tonight; we must adopt it before the annexation ordinance.

Paul asked if there was any other council business; there was none.

Larry moved to adjourn the meeting; Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

The Syracuse Town council adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Paul Stoelting, President   Julie Kline, Clerk Treasurer