

GREEN GARDEN TOWNSHIP

April 8, 2024, REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

1. Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Supervisor Murday.
2. Opening prayer by Pastor Dave Feddes
3. Roll Call by Clerk, Crissy Kraft: Present were Supervisor Murday, Trustees Dietz, Kovar, Newton, Wagner, Highway Commissioner Hilliard and Clerk Kraft. Assessor Bushong was absent.
4. Approval of Minutes from March 11, 2024 regular monthly meeting prepared by Clerk Kraft. Supervisor Murday entertained a motion to accept the minutes, motion made by Trustee Kovar and seconded by Trustee Dietz. All in favor with Aye, motion unanimously carried.
5. Approval of Township Financial report, as reviewed by the Trustees prior to the meeting start time. Supervisor Murday entertained a motion to approve the Township Financial report, motion made by Trustee Wagner and seconded by Trustee Newton. All in favor with Aye, motion unanimously carried.
6. *Public Comments* - Supervisor Murday explained that the public comments were not Q & A, and the planning commission meeting was the previous Monday with Turning Point Energy for the public's question and answer session.
 - * Resident Shelia McFarland questioned not being able to comment after Turning Point's presentation and that there could be people there not informed on what Turning Point is proposing. Supervisor Murday explained that the planning meeting was for the public's Q & A for Turning Point and this meeting is a presentation for the board, who will then vote. Shelia McFarland commented that while Turning Point is technically following the Green Garden comprehensive plan, they are just getting the deal done, then turning over to investors to run. She had concerns about not knowing who will ultimately be running it and that Turning Point has not been around 10 years, are privately held, and have no home office, they rent office space in Denver, Colorado.
 - * Resident Monroe Striggow had concerns over the original NRI plans that had his office building PIN as one of the properties listed and which PIN's are involved.
 - * Resident Belinda Olszewski has concerns over the open meetings act and read from the TOI handbook. She was concerned the agenda for the planning commission was not posted on the website. She said there were big questions asked last Monday by Dan Butler and wanted on record that the planning commission voted two no's and one yes. She noted that some people could not attend the planning meeting to ask questions and it was a shame they could not at this meeting.
7. *Planning Commission* - Planning Chair Mark Sarkisian reported on the Monday planning meeting; about 30 residents there; spoke on the agenda; one agenda item to heard, SUP for 3.4 megawatt solar farm NE of Manhattan Monee and Route 45(leased land), applicant Turning Point, project developer Jordan Belknap reviewed their presentation, good Q & A lasting about an hour and a half, three committee members were present with final vote two to one denying the SUP; two pros, good fit with comprehensive plan within industrial corridor and 1500 feet to nearest residents; con's, unable to have score value for prime land rating and that applicant is developer and not actual owner/operator, who we wouldn't know. Supervisor Murday thanked Mark and the committee members and let the residents know their positions are strictly voluntary, all the work they do for the township and on the County level. Before turning the meeting over, Supervisor Murday made note that other solar farms bypassed Green Garden whereas Jordan has been in communications with the township.
 - *Jordan Belknap addressed some issues presented; land evaluation score was 83.69, total Lesa/NRI's was 243.69; apologized to Mr. Striggow that the original NRI had one of his parcels included and that it was a mistake that is getting fixed and nothing would affect his parcel, with access off LaGrange Road; He started his presentation saying they are a solar energy developer who works with investor operators, they do permit projects and work with companies who specialize in owning and operating projects; He went through his presentation and let residents know he would be there

after the meeting for any questions; He explained they are a community solar energy project that allows customers of the utility to sign up and get credit on their electric bill; increases tax revenue to the township and county, 13 fold tax revenue increase for the area; clean renewable electricity generation replaces more carbon intensive generation; plant pollinator habitat underneath solar panels for bird/bee's/small animals; mowing and sheep grazing for agricultural maintenance; community value by donating to local charities; has created six projects in Will County; net saving on electric bill; opens up solar economy for those that don't have solar panels; anyone who has electric bill can sign up for savings; showed proposed area on the slide explaining the location to residential dwelling and access road, an area flagged for commercial development; single axis trackers that follow the sun; benefits, local jobs, building, maintaining, electricians, building roads, sire contractors, engineers; done numerous evaluations; entered agreement with Department of Agriculture that at end of project's lifecycle will return the land to it's original state; summarized the presentation.

*Trustee Newton asked about the NRI's revision, Belknap said it was revised as the original included one of Striggow's parcels, Soil and Water is amending, Newton asks for Lesa scores, which Belknap did, Newton asked if Turning Point did the solar farm on Route 50 between Peotone and Monee, its looks like a dump and went up quickly, Belknap is not aware of that one and understands the concerns and said how the pollinators grow and make robust area, the county has regulations and Soil and Water approves a conservation plan making sure the site is maintained; Newton asked what they have done in Will County, Belknap said they had permitted six projects, not built any, not at that stage yet, it can take 2/3 years from initial permitting to construction.

* Trustee Dietz asked about the five year grazing plan and how long Turning Point would be around before they turned it over to owner/operator, Belknap said they turnover prior to construction with permits and conditions going with the project; Trustee Kovar asked about the flammability, having seen a video of one smoking, concerned about toxic fumes/environmental problems, Belknap said they use silicone based solar modules, same as put on rooftop, they are not classified as toxic waste, Kovar was also concerned over lost agriculture, Belknap said they are only taking about 15% of the two parcels with the land returning to agriculture , it is a 25 to 40 year project, Kovar commented on the look/ugliness and that people come to Green Garden to get away from city life, Belknap said putting screening around could be done, Trustee Dietz asked if a silicone panel went bad could they put in cadmium, Belknap said no and that a condition could be put in to assure that.

*Trustee Wagner said that a condition needs to be put in saying it must be silicone panels; Supervisor Murday likes there is no timetable, has concerns not knowing who will be running the project/operator and wants to know who is gong to be running it, Belknap respectfully disagreed stating SUP's go with the land/applicant and all conditions of approval do not change, Supervisor Murday again said not knowing who will be operating the facility is a concern, things change and he needs to know who it will be; Trustee Kovar questioned the benefits and what the benefits are for the township/county financially, Belknap explained the tax rate goes up so instead of \$1000 it would be \$24,000, Kovar questioned the tax benefits and helping community concerns; Belknap asked Supervisor Murday if a developer requiring a SUP sold would they have to come back and permit the SUP again, Murday said residential is different and the solar farm is far more impactful.

*Supervisor Murday suggested Belknap go back to and discuss with his principals to see if they can share with us who the person will be running the farm; Trustee Kovar said there is not enough research to roll out projects yet, people don't have enough knowledge on it; Trustee Dietz asked if there were any owner/operators on the other six projects they have, Belknap said no; Trustee Wagner commented on Nuclear Energy and how dangerous they said it would be and now most are powered by it, nuclear energy is considered 100% green, more green than solar panels; Supervisor Murday said he cannot support until he knows who will be there, asked Belknap to go back and see if the principals of Turning Point would disclose that to the board to help with supporting the

project, table the vote, instead of getting a negative vote, talk to principals with all the concerns that were heard tonight and come back to the board; Trustee Kovar suggested a public meeting in a bigger place to have residents questions answered individually; Trustee Wagner said they would need time to look into who would be the owner/operator; Conversations continued with final outcome being tabling the vote.

8. *Road Commissioner's Report* - presented by Commissioner Hilliard; *Past* - 10inch drain tile in repaired easement, new supports/shields fabricated, 24" cross culvert installed, PT Ferro awarded resurfacing contract in Tuscan Hills/Erinwood/80th Ave from Tuscan Hills entrance to Manhattan Monee Road, phase two of salt shed project, between March 26 to April 8 had 5.18 inches of rain causing issues for road district, April 1st a call from Will County on bridge on 88th Ave. South of Manhattan Monee Road, high water/road flooded closed road, cleared debris/corn stalks on Sheer Road bridge North of Offner Road, small amount of water, took six loads to remove the debris to get water flowing better, removed a debris on Dralle Road bridge, bids sent out for additional road work/chip and seal; *Present* - cleaning/jetting drain tiles, cleanup canopies, metal on salt shed, building up Sheer Road; *Future* - 2025 Sheer Road bridge, box culvert on Dralle Road, seeking out engineers, cross-culvert on 88th Ave., North of Dralle.

9. *Assessor's Report* - Supervisor Murday noted Assessor Bushong was at a conference in Southern Illinois.

10. *Trustee's Report* - Trustee Dietz reported a business parking 19 trailers, its an A-1 property using as I-1, code enforcement was notified; applicant from April 2023 for SUP for 25400 South LaGrange Road, owner failed to complete application; another applicant asking for A-1 to Industrial, dividing 10 acres to make industrial condo; homeowner from Palomino Trace reporting traffic driving by a lot, the property was bought cheap, taxes \$500, the lot is a detention pond, cannot build on, has a realtor saying otherwise, assessor changed property tax from \$500 to \$1, questioning the assessor and was told there is no benefit being a detention pond; Eastern ends of Green Garden, pallet company wants to put in mulching business, truck in pallets and shred up to sell, its in the middle of rural estate, its in Monee; Another solar farm North of Bruns, East of Harlem, 52 acres, 32 of solar farm, Eco Solar, Colin Walker, Investigated lawn maintenance contract for town hall and road district, Bills landscape new contract went from \$2560 to \$3840 a year(\$80 a cut to \$120), called Green Garden Arbor estimate was \$7412(\$269 to \$309 a cut - 28 cuts a year between April 15 to November 15), Johns Lawn Care called Dietz with \$100 a cut as needed, canceled Bill's and went with John's.

Trustee Kovar reported one new Will Ride application approved, Supervisor Murday said the county has proposed a date for the counties to discuss the program/requirements, etc.

Trustee Wagner working on the budget.

Trustee Newton commented on the Lesa score and concerns over using prime farmland and not knowing.

11. *Supervisor's Report* - Supervisor Murday reported meeting with residents on the water issues on their properties, working on educating himself on handling the water issues residents are having; expressed Green Garden not having funds to hire civil engineers and would need assistance from County, State, or Federal levels, working towards resolutions, finding natural water flows, he is working diligently to get help with the flooding; Money put aside in budget for flooding; Try and get engineers to drive around and figure out the flooding issues of the township; Will County Executive and team are coming out to look at town hall facilities.

12. NO *New Business*

13. NO *Old business*

14. Meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m. with a motion by Trustee Kovar and seconded by Trustee Dietz. All in favor with Aye, motion unanimously carried. The next Board meeting to be held on Monday, May 13, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Crissy Kraft, Clerk for Green Garden Township