

MINUTES OF ARBELA TOWNSHIP SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

July 21, 2010

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Joe White at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present – Joseph White, William Jacobi, Jody Hunt, Mary Warren, Kenneth Panek, Deputy Oliver, Tuscola Advertiser, approximately 8 Millington Township residents, and approximately 46 Arbela residents.

Absent - None

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss withdrawing from the Millington/Arbela Interlocal Park Agreement.

Joe set up a microphone for people to come to the front of the room and talk. This intimidated a lot of residents as they are too shy to talk on a microphone in front of 55 people.

Lana Martell says we should stay in the agreement. If we want a park in Arbela then we should let the park board be in charge of it. They try to do something new every year to improve it. She says it would be a hardship on the village and Millington Township if we back out.

Peggy Metro was a former park board member. People donated a lot of money and time for the soccer field. LeeRoy Clark worked hard for that park. Duane Weber donated time and tractor. If you pull out we lose a lot. We need to keep the park open for the community. She says if you took a poll a lot of people go to the park.

Pat McMullen said the park is too far away. We need a park here in our own community. The kids can't ride 13 miles on their bikes to go to the park in Millington. A lot of residents don't even know we pay money for a park in Millington.

Jim Bucy says Arbela works together with the fire and library, why not the park. If we had a millage it would only cost 2.17 per household according to his calculations. We are 1/3 owner and it is a valuable asset.

Rachel Bunton says she has gone to the park since 1969, why is it too far now. She thinks it would be terrible to take our money out of the Millington Park and spend it on a park here in Arbela.

Jeff Schubring, Scout Master (not a resident) said LeeRoy helped them get in the park and build a pole building for the scouts. We are jeopardizing that as they might have to sell the park. They can't do scouting at school.

Kathy Dallas says we should think about this and don't make a fast decision.

Dennis Mangold, lifelong resident and belongs to the Knights of Columbus. Too much expense of putting a park here. Don't see boy scouts out here. It seems to be working well, why change.

Pat McMullen says we are not living in the past and it is a long trip on a bike. She's sure Arbela pulling out will not throw the scouts out.

Alvord (non resident) said the scouts moved to the park so they can do actual scouting. If we pull out the park will fold.

Jim Bucy asked why this wasn't put at a regular meeting?

Mary Warren said because the supervisor wouldn't put it on the agenda.

Campbell from the AYSO spoke on how many kids are registered for soccer and how far they have to travel to play. It costs \$40.00 per child and the money goes for netting, balls, uniforms, insurance and maintenance of the soccer fields.

Wayne Schultz asked if there was a time line to get out of the park agreement.

Warren said we have to give the other two entities 90 days notice then not actually withdraw until the end of their fiscal year, March 31, 2011.

Lana Martell said Ken Panek put in the minutes that the park was going to ask for \$18,000.00 next year and Arbela got the wrong impression.

Jim Bucy said he is the one to come up with the \$18,000.00 figure and proportionally that is what he felt Arbela should pay.

Sharon Keinath (Millington resident) said Arbela decides how much to give.

Wayne Schultz asked will it be 7 or 10 or 18,000.00?

Joe White said things at the park broke down and they needed more money so the amounts from year to year differed.

Dave Simon asked why did we purchase this land if we were not going to use it?

Wayne Schultz said he would like to see a park budget.

Linda Smith said her neighbors didn't even know there was a park Arbela was paying money into. If there was a park here in Arbela they would find a back way to get to it. She said it is ironic we are pouring money into a park and she's never seen anyone coming to going to the park.

Ike Latham said he would be disappointed if we walk away and leave it. What can we do with 17 acres versus the acreage in the park in Millington.

Cheryl Richardson asked are we pulling out of the agreement to build a park here and are her taxes going to be raised.

The answer is no

Joe read a letter from Duane & Sandy Weber asking us not to pull out of the park.

Pat McMullen said we worked on the park in Millington for 41 years. We deserve to have our own park.

Wayne Schultz said with \$10,000.00 a year we can slowly build our own park.

Jim Bucy said there is not a flat piece of land back there. We couldn't have soccer and no good for trails or trail bikes.

Ruth Ann Ill said we definitely need a park here. She doesn't believe Arbela's lack of \$7,000.00 will close the park.

Gary Corleu said it is a lot of extra expense when we already have a park.

Wayne Schultz said our park doesn't need to have everything Millington's has, but at least we wouldn't be throwing our money away.

Jack Warren asked where is the money going? \$10,000.00 is a lot of money to pay to maintain the park grounds. Lana has been trying to censor Ken Panek's minutes so the townships don't know what is going on at park board meetings.

Rachel Bunton asked Ken Panek how come he didn't report everything?

Ken said according to Lana he reports too much in his minutes.

Township Board comments:

Jody Hunt said until she was appointed to the township board, she never knew Arbela paid money to the park in Millington. She never took her kids there as it was too secluded and she didn't feel safe. Why should we take money from our township and put it into a park in another township. It doesn't mean soccer won't be there if we pull out. We don't need soccer or baseball at our park. We should bring our kids there to play. Seniors can play horseshoes or have their meetings outside in the summer. We can't afford to do both parks and she feels as a board it is wrong to put our money in a park not in our township.

Mary Warren said the majority of residents don't use the park and don't even know we pay money into a park in Millington. She doesn't believe the park will close, it will just have to scale back its expenses. I told LeeRoy for years we need to pull out of that park and make our own. Arbela park board members have done the lion's share of work in that park over the years. The park board is talking about asking for a millage to fund the park. If the millage passes in Millington, but not in Arbela, then our residents are stuck paying a millage for a park they don't use. She feels it is a good time to withdraw from Millington and start building our own park.

Bill Jacobi has worked over at the park in the last few years and for the money we are giving, there haven't been any improvements. On Memorial Day his family rented a pavilion and not one person came in the park all day other than his family. The park is full only when the soccer is going on and when it is over everyone is gone. No kids stay to play in the park. There used to be flowers planted in the entranceway of the park but no more. They need to clear the front for

campers and it hasn't been done in five years. He feels we need to take those monies and start our own park in Arbela.

Ken Panek stated it is time to pull out of the interlocal park agreement with Millington and start our own park in Arbela. With property values plummeting and revenue sharing being reduced are we going to continue to funnel more and more money up in Millington. It is like when your kids grow up and move out, you think they will never make it on their own, but they do. The park will be the same. It would be nice to have a park to call our own. Millington's park is too secluded and you wouldn't want little kids back there by themselves.

Joe White said any time we can get kids together it is a good thing. We should do something here but can't get volunteers to help (like when we built the addition to the pole barn). Jim Kribs was the only one to volunteer. The community is busy trying to survive. The money we spent in Millington is miniscule. The first thing we need to do is move the old pole building and it might fall apart when we do. A plan needs to be developed. He feels we still need a footprint in Millington Park. The park helped to create change and a lot of workers from Arbela worked really hard for the park.

Jody said it is a big decision in one night. We need more of our own residents at a meeting and is in favor of tabling the decision.

MOTION: By Warren to have another special meeting Wednesday, August 18, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

SECONDED: By Hunt, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: By Panek to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

SECONDED: By Hunt, all ayes, motion carried.

Mary C. Warren, Township Clerk