

Wexford Joint Planning Commission
Executive Committee Meeting
November 14, 2016 2:00 pm
At the Wexford County Road Commission

Members present: Chair, Dave Schroeder; Vice Chair, Paul Osborne; Secretary, Bev Monroe; Treasurer, Donna Taylor. Also present is Kurt Schindler, MSU Extension.

Chairman Schroeder called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. He explained the purpose of the meeting was to interview two applicants for the Zoning Administrator position. Each member of the committee will be asking questions of the applicants.

The first candidate was Robert Hall.

First questioner is Paul Osborne.

Q: Will you be able to work more than one day a week in the future?

A: I now serve several counties, but a change in the amount of counties presently served may be in order so I will be available.

Q: What is your education for this work?

A: (Documented on application). And attended the last two applicable conferences for continuing education.

Schroeder.

Q: Why are you the best candidate to serve in this job for this organization?

A: I am interested in the uniqueness of the setup, the challenge. I am used to working with several boards and this would be serving a bigger group. My experience and time management skills would help WJPC get going.

Q: There are varied issues among Board and public (land owners). How would you manage divergent issues?

A: Through education and communication on a personal and public level. Typically I now entertain individuals' various concerns. Must remind people that they need to get buy-in from others. Must have a balance between priorities and consistency.

Monroe.

Q: What is your background that led you to this type of work?

A: I answered an ad in Montcalm County for Zoning Administrator, researched the work and took it on as a second job. Now with several counties it has become a full time job.

Q: How do you handle angry customers.

A: With a focus on customer service. People want to be listened to.

Donna.

Q: Describe a time when you compromised.

A: Enforcement takes the most time. There has to be a balance between detail enforcement versus enforcement consistency. Location of a problem property can lead to some leniency. I have learned how to recognize and prioritize where resources can be used best.

Q: What do you see that would have to be done during the first few days of this job?

A: I think talking to the Planning Commission, designing the forms that will be needed, working on public relations with the fiduciary (Cherry Grove). I would need to be more mobile and need to make things happen fast.

Q: Can you describe a situation where you were criticized.

A: A situation in Onekema with Blarney Castle. The area had not had any development then Blarney Castle wanted to develop a site. The Planning Commission had to handle the growth. I helped them follow the ordinances and policies with a risk management approach and documented everything. Some thought I had too much input in the decision.

Schroeder.

Q: My experience calls for a lot of documentation and documentation is a major part of this job.

A: Documentation is key in all phases of planning and zoning. I usually put parts of the ordinance used in the decision together with issues that go before the Planning Commission in the file. Minutes must be accurate.

Monroe.

Q: How would you maintain files so consistency in decisions or repeat issues with a property are available?

A: I usually file by parcel number. I have been thinking of how it would work with a group of this size. I may set it up by township.

Osborne.

Q: Are you computer literate?

A: Yes, about a 5 on a scale of 1 to 10. I do Word and Excel and others, still learning.

Q: Are you a team player?

A: I want team consensus and buy-in but some leeway allowed for the Zoning Administrator.

Q: Explain what your package would look like for the Planning Commission.

A: I would use the land activity report, include any comments on compliance issues and where and what type they are. I would keep the PC abreast of training for them and myself.

Schroeder.

Q: What steps would you take on an enforcement/compliance issue?

A: I receive the notice of concern and have learned that a lot of public relations does not work. Now I am more direct and efficient doing things in writing. I issue a "Violation Notice" after inspection and personal contact delivered and/or mailed. Second follow up is within 21 days or less. The third contact is a letter from the attorney which usually gets their attention, then court. Going to court is not taken lightly but is necessary sometimes.

Chair Schroeder asked Mr. Hall if he had questions. He said one day a week will not be enough time to do this job by spring. 90% of his job is enforcement which takes time. He hopes that the Planning Commission recognizes that. Monroe asked what permit fees he uses and he said they go from \$25 to \$500. Some have escrow fees in their zoning ordinances. Osborne asked if he would take this job if we offered it today. Mr. Hall responded that he would think about it. He wants to hear more about the job and the legalities. He needs 2 to 3 weeks' notice. He recognized that AICP is a preferred certification but he does not have it. His letter of recommendation from Moore shows this competence in planning and need for more professional input.

Mr. Hall left. Discussion included that this candidate is competent and interested in the WJPC. Kurt said Mr. Hall needs to realize that we are creating a department including supervision, budgeting, buying computers and files.

Next candidate was Larry Thompson.

Chair Schroeder thanked Larry for coming and explained the WJCP and our process.

Osborne.

Q: Looking at your resume and your current job, will you be able to do this too?

A: Yes, there is not much going on in Stornach Township. I would like to add more days of work to my schedule.

Schroeder.

Q: Why would be the best applicant for this job?

A: I am interested in this process of eleven townships. I have a background of working with people and it is interesting work.

Q: What is your greatest achievement and your biggest disappointment?

A: Stornach Township had a lot of problems initially. I treated all the same to eliminate preferential treatment and went strictly by the book. My disappointment involved an inherited problem with a court case that lasted 8 or 10 years on a junk ordinance.

Monroe.

Q: How do you handle an angry customer?

A: I notify them of the noncompliance and send them copies of the appropriate parts of the zoning ordinance. I tell them these are the rules and this is what needs to be done. I find that you have to stand your ground.

Q: How would you proceed during the first few days of this position?

A: I would study the ordinances. I would inform in writing of what is going on.

Q: How would you track cases and organize the files?

A: I use the parcel number and maintain much of the information on the computer. I do the groundwork for the legal case and then turn it over to the planning commission.

Donna.

Q: Describe a situation where you had to compromise.

A: Compromises are usually made by the judge. Up to that point I have been very careful to avoid any favoritism.

Q: Describe a situation where you were criticized.

A: I was criticized after the court case was over.

Osborne.

Q: What would your staff report to the planning commission look like?

A: I make monthly reports of concerns and calls, permits and special use permits.

Q: Are you a team player?

A: Yes.

Q: Are you computer literate?

A: Yes.

Schroeder.

Q: What steps do you take on a violation?

A: I receive the complaint in writing, attach all parts of the ordinance that applies. I hand deliver information, give them time and return for follow up.

Q: How many of your compliance issues have been settled locally?

A: We have had 4 or 5 court cases in the last ten years. We try to avoid court as much as possible.

Q: Are you an advocate of documentation?

A: Yes, correspondence, complaints, calls –everything is documented.

Monroe.

Q: What do you do for continuing education?

A: I attend all classes that I can. I helped write the ordinances that are in place.

Taylor

Q: What is your background that led you to this work?

A: I was asked to take the position and I was looking for another interest.

Q: What would you do the first few days of the job?

A: Learn the ordinances

Schroeder asked if he were offered the job, would he take it. He is interested in the position. He is very interested in the challenge and can start immediately.

Mr. Thompson left and discussion followed. Osborne stated that compared to Mr. Hall, Mr. Thompson has had only one township to work with. Monroe mentioned that both had good processes for handling complaints. Both had the credentials and seemed competent.

Based on the more extensive experience of Mr. Hall and his more thorough answers to the questions Osborne made the motion to recommend to the Wexford Joint Planning Commission that they offer the contract position of

planning and zoning administrator to Robert Hall at an annual pay of \$6240 based on one day a week of work. Monroe seconded. There was no more discussion. All members said "aye".

Contact with all applicants will be made after the Board approval and acceptance of the offer. Mr. Schroeder asked if Mr. Wilson, the attorney, would be present at the Public Hearing (November 17). Kurt said yes. Schroeder asked who would be the person to answer questions and Kurt replied that the person most qualified for the particular question would answer.

Permit fees need to be set by January 1. Kurt said the new zoning administrator needs to determine the true cost on which to base the permit fee. You cannot charge more than the costs. Kurt said all Executive Committee minutes must be approved by the full board.

Osborne made the motion to adjourn and Taylor seconded. All approved. Meeting adjourned at 3:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted:



Beverly Monroe, [elected] Secretary