

Regular meeting of the City of Downs Planning Commission was held December 30, 2013, 5:30 p.m. at city hall. Members present: Bill Cushing, Don Heiland, Linda Miller, Randy Koops, Tim Parker, Doug Brush. Jen Cooper was absent. Others present: John Riggs, Mayor Jennifer Brush, Bruce Berkley, Teri Cordill, Dave Draayer, Dave Hardy, Jerry Knouf, Ray DeBey, Kathy Miller, Duane Miller, Don Harzman, John Cary, Evan Joy, Kathy Shellito, Kevin Shellito, John Shellito, Josh Shellito, Edgar Reinert.

Bill called the meeting to order and noted that the city is in the early stages in the process of the possibility of annexation. He pointed out that John Riggs, Planner, was in attendance for assistance to the procedures.

Bill asked if anyone had any thoughts or changes to the proposed boundary line decided on at the last meeting. John Riggs explained that if you receive a benefit, you owe for it. If the annexation is forced, it should be explained at the public hearing that they should agree to it, taxes and services go hand in hand. And if you will not service it, do not annex it. However, if sewer is readily available, you must hook into it. Don Heiland noted that his property would not be more valuable with extra tax. John Cary asked Don if he has water at this storage units and he replied that he did. John Cary asked Don if he had customers in the city of Downs and he said yes, some.

Bill asked what more did the Planning Commission need to do besides draw the line. John Riggs said that the Planning Commission is a recommending body. Bruce asked for clarification regarding Ag land. John noted that you cannot force in more than 21 acres at a time, but if volunteered it can be a lot more than 21 acres. Linda said that it just needs to be fair. Bill asked what is fair. Bruce pointed out that the map was obtained from the county appraiser's office but was not accurate as to the current city limits. Don Harzman ask why not take the boundary all the way to the drainage ditch. Don Harzman noted that he was here also for Ross Township as it would take 1/3 off of their valuation. John Cary asked if Harzman would provide these figures.

There was further discussion. John Riggs said that if you are getting a tax paid benefit, you must pay taxes. It was noted that the benefits received are not just water or sewer, it is library, swimming pool, streets, fire protection, etc. John said that it is the same as stealing, if you are using tax paid benefits and not paying tax. Mayor Brush noted that the city just wants those who are benefiting to share the cost. There was further discussion.

Bill moved to table the decision on the proposed annexation boundary line to recommend to the city council and request accurate maps showing current city limits. Randy seconded the motion. Carried.

There was further discussion.

Bill moved, seconded by Linda, to adjourn the meeting. Carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

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Vickie Oviatt – DPC Secretary

