

Bridgewater Township Incorporation Study Meeting
County of Rice, State of Minnesota
October 10, 2018
Official Minutes

Call to order at 6:00pm

Roll Call: Glen Castore, Gary Ebling, Jim Olds, Larry Alderks, Cheryl Buck, Bruce Morlan, Kurt Schrader, Brad Pfahning, Jim Braun, Nancy Johnson, John Klockeman, Jeff Johnson, Jessica Green, Rusty Fifield, and Frances Boehning.

- Glen Castore reviewed the attached slide show explaining the incorporation timeline, risks and benefits.
- Discussion following slide show:
 - Bruce Morlan stated that a good estimate of the tax base will be needed. The residents will need to know what the tax implication will be to be able to determine how they are impacted.
 - Rural character – how does the Township define rural character and how would we protect it? Are we looking at protecting the true farming character?
 - Nancy Johnson noted that if we do not incorporate, the cities can change the character of the area without any input from local residents.
 - Larry Alderks questioned what services would we need to provide as a city? Glen Castore noted that we currently have a contract for fire service and that would continue. The Township has spoken with the Rice County Sheriff and a contract for protection can be written. For the majority of residents, current private wells and septic will be used. For new housing developments, a package system for septic is possible (similar to Credit River).
 - Glen Castore said that funds for an expert on economic development would be needed in order to properly expand the Industrial/Commercial business.
 - Rusty Fifield reminded the group that when a city contracts for services such as police protection, the entity can guide the expectations versus getting whatever the County decides.
 - Mr. Fifield also noted that looking out 20-30 years is an unknown as no one can answer what will change in that amount of time.
 - Larry Alderks asked what the unintended consequences would be.
 - Rusty Fifield replied that this is an unknown as we can not foresee future developments.
 - Larry Alderks asked if the City would be required to provide water and sewer to all residents.
 - Jim Olds noted that the group should be review what the state statute says and directing discussion to those points.
 - Gary Ebling reviewed the limits placed on the township by local cities and the county.
 - A discussion was held regarding current annexation agreements with both Dundas and Northfield.

- Jim Olds stated that we need to address the fact that the ALJ can redo the boundaries if they feel it is necessary.
- Rusty Fifield reminded the group that this is a working draft and that we will need to frame the where and why annexation would happen and what would be achieved by it.
- Per Mr. Fifield, the Township does not want a lawyer to answer the 13 state statute questions; they should be answered by the residents. The lawyer should only help with making sure all points were covered and the language is good. The lawyer could advise on tactics and providing expert witness.
- Gary Ebling reviewed the industrial and commercial opportunities that were missed in the past due to current issues with annexation agreements and county zoning limitations.
- Cheryl Buck asked if there had been a conversation with residents regarding do we want to keep the area rural. The answer given was that there have been some limited conversations, and a larger meeting would be held in November for all township residents. She also noted that we need to identify what a city would look like.
- John Klockeman stated that a discussion will need to be held to discuss the future of land annexation by Dundas.

Adjourn

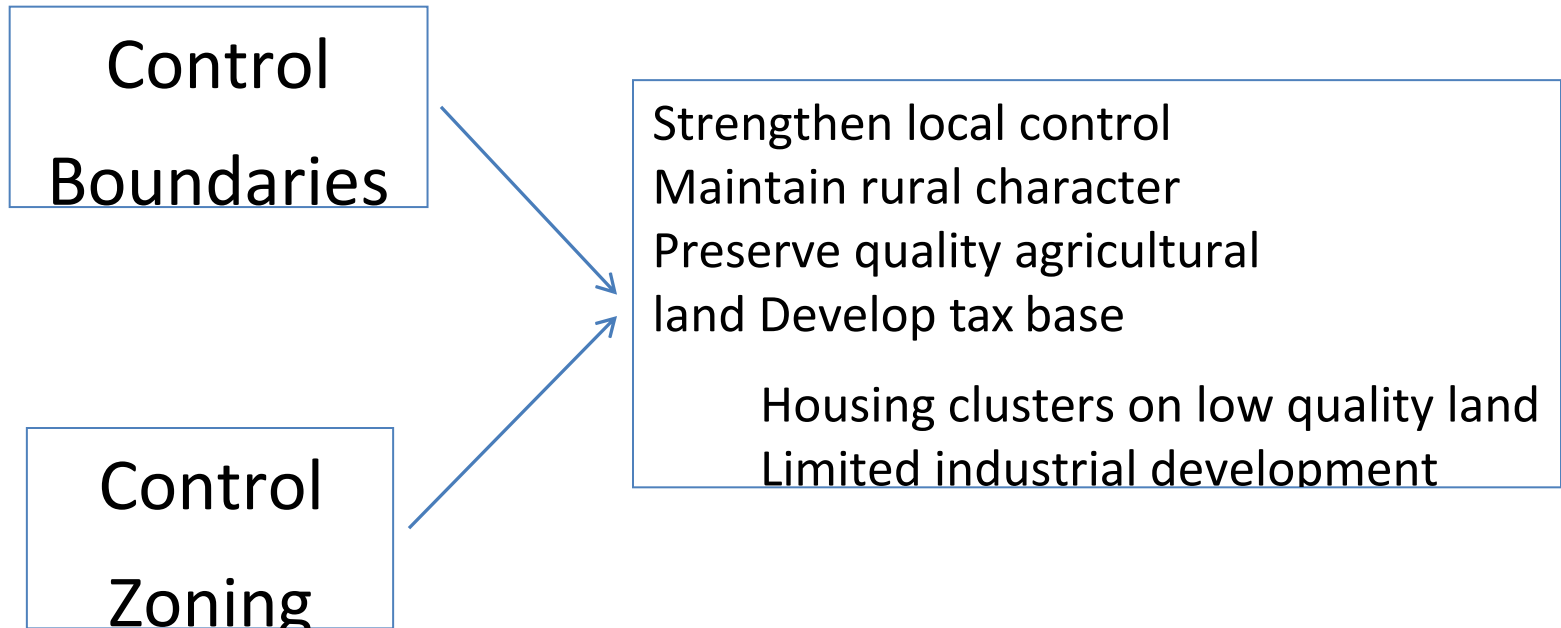
Bridgewater Incorporation

- Why consider it now?
- What are the benefits?
- What is the process?
- What are the risks?

Why Consider Incorporation Now?

- Northfield annexation agreement expires end of 2019
 - Formal request to negotiate new agreement made in July 2019 by Bridgewater; no response to date
- The limitations of Rice County zoning restrictions
 - Discussions with County Commissioners
 - Suggestions for updating County's comprehensive plan

The Benefits



The Process

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. Analyze benefits and risks of incorporation | 1. 1/2018 – 12/2018 |
| 2. Decide whether to proceed with incorporation | 2. 1/2019 – 3/2019 |
| 3. Develop application | 3. 3/2019 – 8/2019 |
| 4. Apply | 4. 9/2019 |
| 5. Become Statutory City | 5. 1/2020 |
| 6. Appoint Charter Commission | 6. 1/2020 |
| 7. Develop City Charter | 7. 1/2020 – 9/2020 |
| 8. Become Charter City | 8. 1/2021 |

The Process

- Application sent to Boundary Adjustment Unit
- Administrative Law Judge presides
 - Considers only the 13 factors in MN Statute 414.02
 - Holds public hearing for township residents
 - Renders decision
- Bridgewater becomes a statutory city
- Elect 5 member city council

The Process

Statutory City

- Council approves levy
- State sets bonding limits
- State sets referendum requirements
- No annual meeting

Charter City

- Voters approve levy
- Voters set bonding limits
- Voters set referendum requirements
- Annual meeting required

The Risks

- Judge changes boundaries
- Judge denies incorporation
- Once incorporated
 - Insufficient citizen participation
 - Expenses are higher than predicted