

Bridgewater Township
Town Meeting on Incorporation
County of Rice, State of Minnesota
February 2, 2019
Official Minutes

Call to order at 9:00 am

Roll Call: John Holden, Glen Castore, Gary Ebling, Frances Boehning, Larry Alderks, and approximately 70 residents.

- Call to Order
 - The meeting was called to order by the moderator, Larry Alderks.
- Incorporation Study Presentation.
 - The Township slide show was presented by Glen Castore.
- Questions following first half of presentation
 - Question – If the township proceeds with the incorporation, how does this change the existing annexation agreements? – Answer – It would void the agreement, but this is still an open question that we will need to look into further.
 - Question – How would this effect existing zoning? Answer – If we were to incorporate, we would have the authority to change the zoning.
 - Question – How would this preserve Ag land? You said that the zoning laws would be relaxed. This seems to be a contradiction.
 - Question – A resident originally from Lakeville reviewed how that city grew. They followed smart development that was managed. They allowed some land to be developed to increase the tax base while allowing family farms to continue to operate within the city. This promoted a rural character in the city.
 - Question – If some interest was shown in developing industry, what industry was it?
 - Question – The Township needs to divulge which industry is trying to start in the township.
 - Question – If the process goes forward, how much land can the Judge hand over to Northfield and Dundas.
 - John Klockeman addressed the previous questions in the broad sense by explaining the industrial areas that are in the township and how they could be developed.
 - Question – Mrs. Foley -Would the residents get a say if they were in the area that may be moved into a neighboring city? She would like input in determining if they become part of Dundas or stay in the township.
 - Question – John Tuma – How should residents on the boarder address their concern about staying in the township versus being transferred to a city. Answer – Glen Castore advised the residents write letters to the township expressing their preference. In addition to this, residents can testify in front of the judge.
 - Question – You mentioned a petition, how many residents do you need to sign it?
 - Question – How much of the land will be developed? They are worried that everything will be developed. Answer – Glen Castore reviewed City of Grant – they incorporated to stay rural.
 - Question – There is concern that the County Road 9 interchange is no longer a priority for Rice County. Since Rice County took Baseline to improve the Cty Rd 1 intersection, will they not abandon the interchange at 9?
 - Question – Please have people identify themselves when asking questions.

- Question – Rory Groves – Which is a greater threat; incorporation or annexation? He would like the area to stay rural.
- Question – Joe Hollinger – Concerned that the judge will arbitrarily give land to the cities. This is a concern as the cities have substantially high storm water taxes and fees.
- Five Minute Break
- Glen Castore reviewed the second half of the presentation.
 - Question - Ray Larson – Ray Larson – Would incorporating bring more revenue without raising taxes?
 - Question - Ann Blanchard – Industrial areas need sewer, water, and utilities. These are very expensive. How would these be supplied?
 - Question – Jamie Stanley – Would this change any financial relationships with the county?
 - Question – Mrs. Foley – If we start as a statutory city, how large do we need to be to be a charter city? Does the state set our taxes, if not, who does? So, we need more houses and industry to keep the taxes down. Does not want to see acres of houses.
 - Question – Joe Hollinger – Would we be liable for the clean up of the old Hoover Dump. Could we get help if we incorporate?
 - Question – Michael Daly – Would it be possible to protect some of the land? I.e. keep some land as a park or natural preserve. How would we protect land?
 - Question – Casey Betzel – How do we expand without offering water and sewer?
 - Glen Castore noted that if an industry could only operate on city water and sewer, we would try and help them relocate into one of the neighboring cities.
 - Question – Jason Math – Would incorporation change the Rice County Wilderness Park? Would it become city property?
 - Question – Deb Salaba – Concern regarding Rice County not currently taking care of the Wilderness Park and we could possibly have the authority as a city to help.
 - Question – What does Telemark currently do for water and sewer?
 - Lower Oak Hills Resident – comment regarding problems with the shared well and not being able to charge for individual usage.
 - Question- What has the feedback been from Northfield and Dundas so far? How much say will they have before the Judge?
 - Question – John Kelly – Will there be any impact on the school system?
 - Question – How much land have the cities annexed but not developed? Could the Judge look at unused land in the neighboring cities before making any decisions?
 - Question – Which areas are the gravel and industrial areas going to be?
 - Question – Maureen Vosepka – Which areas are you looking at for cluster homes and how many acres?
 - Question – What are the current Rice County rules regarding cluster houses?
 - Question – Rory Groves – What is meant by “land not suitable for farming”? Can we protect forested areas and water ways? Will preserving the land be left to the town board to decide?
 - Question – Susan Quinnell – How long will it take to move from Statutory to Charter city?
 - Comment – Citizen engagement is important.
 - Question – will the same presentation be given at future meetings?

Adjourn