

MINUTES

PALESTINE VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES SPECIAL MEETING

AUGUST 17, 2006

The Palestine Board of Trustees met in special session at 6:00 PM, on August 17, 2006. Trustees answering the roll call were Gene Purcell, Larry Miller, Greta Dennison, Walter Fritchie and Larry Miller. David Branson was absent.

Margaret Littlejohn, Assistant Village Clerk, was present and took the minutes of the meeting. Chief Jim Clark was also present.

Visitors numbered eighty (80) plus, and included our State Representative Roger Eddy; States Attorney Jay Holtzhouser; Indiana Railroad Representative John Cummings, the Manager of Communications and Signals; Palestine Grade School Principal Shiela Mikeworth; LaMotte Township Road Commissioner George Fulling, LaMotte Township Trustees Rick Stork and Scott Campbell; many Village residents; Business Owners, many farmers & other concerned parties who are affected by the operation of the Indiana Railroad (INDR).

The meeting began with all in attendance reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

The purpose of the special meeting was the closing of some of our Village street crossings, and the discussion of why INDR believes this is necessary for the pursuit of their business.

Mayor Schofield introduced Mr. John Cummings, who proceeded to present the INDR proposal for closing any Village crossings. He stated the Indiana Railroad's position for requesting the closing of one (1) crossing, Lincoln St., included economical, environmental and safety issues.

The Board of Trustees then made statements regarding their position concerning the closing of any crossings:

Gene Purcell cited the safety standpoint from the Fire Department point of view, and emphasized that there must be the capability of any emergency vehicle to reach the north side of tracks in case of any fire, health or rescue situation.

Larry Miller asked the pertinent question of how the closing of any closing would impact the Village of Palestine. He also raised the question of how much assessed valuation that INDR had on the property they owned in Palestine, and how much real estate taxes were paid, based on that EAV; and why were the taxes being paid by CSX Transportation. Mr. Cummings

admitted that he was not privy to the EAV or taxes, but did state that CSX Transportation owned a majority of the stock for INDR.

Next to comment was Greta Dennison who said she was skeptical of the railroad management and even though INDR was asking for only one crossing now, how could we be assured that they would come back at a later time and ask for more? She stated that she could not support any crossing closings at all.

Walt Fritchie, who had worked for the railroad for 20 years questioned why the railroad operations could not make up their trains on the East (or North) side as they had done in the past. He was of the opinion (as were many) that if they could confine their making-up of the trains on the east that it would eliminate many of the problems that they are faced with daily, such as switching on the west, whistling at every crossing, etc. Cummings advised that it was not feasible at this time because of environmental issues.

Larry Surrells stated that most of his questions had already been addressed, except for the fact that he wondered if the railroad was making money at the expense of the Village. For instance, how many of the tracks, that could be used to make up the trains on the east side, being leased to Marathon? He was also quick to point out that the Board of Trustees and the Mayor took the stand that information should be made available to the public regarding the possible closing and re-emphasized why the letters were sent out as well as the letter to the Illinois Commerce Commission.

Statements were made by the business community, as well as by many other concerned citizens. Cummings buffeted many questions regarding safety, economical, environmental & extended crossing blockages. Over twenty-five (25) objections were made to the closing of any crossings at this time. Safety, economics & environmental issues were the main concerns of everyone.

By concensus the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m..

President

Clerk