

State of Illinois

County of Will

Town of Crete

CRETE TOWNSHIP SPECIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

May 2, 2022

The special Board of Trustees meeting of the Crete Township Board of Trustees was called to order by Supervisor Liccar at 6:30 PM.

Board members present were Trustee Elton, Trustee Hodge, Trustee Piacentini, Trustee Albrecht and Supervisor Liccar. Clerk Buiter was also present.

Pledge of Allegiance was given to the flag.

Supervisor Liccar stated the meeting's purpose isn't what the owner should do with the Balmoral Park. It is private property and has nothing to do with the property. The Crete Township does not have no authority granting special use permits or zoning variances. That is the responsibility of Will County. The Crete Township can file legal objections as well some comments to the county people. The owner of the property is Balmoral Park 21, which is owned by an individual who has trucking industry experience. He also mentioned that Tony Recupito, Road Commissioner, Sherry Newquist, Will County Board member, Judy Ogalla, Will County Board member, and Mary Tames, Crete Township Assessor were present at this meeting.

In the fall of 2021, it was noticed that the parking lot was being used as a trailer storage facility. No cars were there at that time. The Road Commissioner Tong Recupito voiced complaint with Will County Land use about the trucks were using Elms Court Lane was being used and that road can't handle the truck load. The Land Use called a zoom meeting on January 18, 2022, with the attorney of the owner of the trucking company. Supervisor Liccar, Road Commission Tony Recupito, Mayor Einhorn, Judy Ogalla, Jeff Paniaga, Crete Township Fire Prevention Center Chief. At the meeting, the owner has already been cited for violations of breaking the zoning ordinance since that property is classified as entertainment center use only. The zoning is C-6. Due to COVID restrictions, the owner started to park trailers there at Balmoral Park since he could not find enough drivers. The Land Use committee cited for zoning violations but were never fined. Fire Chief Paniga had cited 200 semi-trailers and approximately 50 truck tractors. He believes this could be a fire hazard. County Board member Judy Ogalla stated that the residents want the property to be used as equestrian park and not a truck terminal. The owner even after being cited by Land Use did not move the trailers or trucks, in fact he started storing Ford Explorers on the property. Chief Paniaga offered to the Committee to discuss the safety issues not only gasoline issues and there are no ways to fight a fire since their sprinkler system was not properly functioning there are several fire hydrants were not working on the property. In the meantime, the owner has filed for an application for a temporary use permit. There will a formal meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission on May 17, 2022, in Joliet, IL. Crete Township has been invited to send a statement of the concerns and issues by Friday, May 6, 2022. On the application, the owner stated that the racetrack building is not in use since 2016 and the parking lot on the south end of the property is being used for temporary storage, including temporary storage of automobiles. Also stated in application, the only use

of the building is for bathroom use. They state the noise level will be far than when the track was being operated. The applicant closed in 2016 and the operator received several permits to operate temporary storage permits. When Balmoral 2021, LLC purchased the property in 2021, they continued to use portion of the parking lots for outdoor storage. They do want to reopen the equestrian use of the property when the pandemic ends. In addition, Road Commissioner Recupito mentioned that there is two applications, one for trailers and one for vehicles. He also mentioned after the January Zoom meeting, the attorney and owner stated they will stop using Elms Court Lane three days. By the following Friday they were using the Elms Court Lane again. This is damaging our roads that can't handle these loads. The owners did close the entrance on Elms Court Lane to tried stopping the truck traffic, but the truck traffic continues using this lane. Will county sheriff tells the truck drivers to use the professional MapQuest/ Waze so they don't get directed to use Elms Court Lane.

Supervisor Liccar opened the floor for discussion. Will County Board member Newquist's concern is the temporary request become a permanent. Citizen Gary Duncan mentioned that he was out in the nearby subdivision, and he called Land use and he talked to some one there about a neighbor house which was not being maintained. Then he asked about the Ford Explorers at the Balmoral Park and Tim Mack of Land Use stated that is another matter and will keep him posted. Resident Judy asked the Fire Chief what he was check at Balmoral Park entity. Chief Pariga said he was checking for fuel in the tanks, security at night, lighting, and lanes between the trucks. The resident was concerned about the barns that are falling apart. He assured them that they inspect and will get proper people to get involved. The concerned citizen mentioned that the previous owner put cars on both end of Elms Court Lane to stop the trucks from using. She also claims the gate was closed in 2021. As for the licenses to start up the racetrack, he won't be able to start up till at least 2026 since all the licenses have been to Arlington Racetrack. Also, she mentioned that a truck jackknifed in front of her house and tied up traffic for at least an hour. The next resident was Pat Now who lives about 1000 feet from the park and says they have a 10-year probation period that won't be completed till 1026. The jackknifed trucker was able to get out of the situation quickly. She is confused about the issues. Are people upset about the use of Elms Court Lane or storing the trailers and vehicles? Supervisor Liccar that is why we are having this meeting to get clarification on the issue. Will County Land Use Commission stated that the previous owner was allowed to temporary use permit to store dealership overflow till December 31, 2020. The general discussion was how the racetrack is being maintained or how the grass is not being mowed and the fences and buildings are becoming deliberated. The previous owners kept the property decent looking. Resident Nancy Pastor, who lives by the Gate number 1, has two issues. First, he did not ask for permission at firast and he just started doing it this business. The second issue was that the current owner can't control the truckers who driving down the roads like crazy people. The problem is we can't have our own police force and Will County has two police officers to cover all of Will County. Road Commissioner Recupito mentioned that the company has been cited but no enforcement has been done to this company. Will County Board Member Judy Oglala mentioned that a complaint must be submitted and please call her office and she can follow through and see the get disciplined. She recommended that the temporary use permit goes only for limited time. A zoning variance would be permanent. She sits on that board committee, and she could get her caucus to vote her way. With the other items like grass mowing and buildings falling apart those are complaint driven so start calling the Land Use committee. Gary Duncan is getting frustrated about his personal situation, and he is getting the same results. The Land Use people appear they don't care about this situation, so these matters linger.

Resident Karen Tall is happy that they are requesting for temporary use permit so it will be gone in the future. She would like to request if they do approve the temporary use permit that they state it is for less than one year, preferably for 6 months and we will evaluate at time. She would also to see the fence be covered and maintained better. She mentioned the fact it is a parking lot. Someone else pointed that the permit is for 6 months. Another resident stated that the vehicles from Ford are coming and going out of the parking lot. They finally mowed the grass since they bought the place. Another resident was very concerned about the house values. Another resident stated the previous owner maintained the grass and the fence and buildings on the property much better. There was a suggestion made that Illinois Department of Transportation put up sign on Elms Court Lane stating no trucks allowed. Road Recupito said he has requested and to no avail. He also stated there is no enforcement with the violations. Supervisor Liccar suggested a red-light camera based on weight where they could catch the truckers who are breaking the weight limit laws. It was just a thought, and he believes there is no technology out there. Again, the enforcement is as problem and issue. Will County Board member Sherry Newquist asked if there is an alternative route and there is an intersection on I-394 road about 3 minutes ride down the road. Trustee Albrecht mentioned that Crete Police Department has a truck cop and he can write up almost \$12,000 tickets in a week. Supervisor Recupito was hampering on the company about the trucks, and he threatened to get the Will County Sheriff out there and the owner then hired a private security guard to sit at the end of side of Elms Court Lane. He recalls talking to the previous owner and he offered people \$50 to take pictures of drivers going down that lane. Another resident mentioned if the owner does not get the permit and he will sell the property and then we don't have any idea what we will get. Trustee Albrecht mentioned that the owner was going to charge the railroad \$70,000 a quarter so they could park their equipment. She was wondering if we could find out what he is charging to Ford and then try to collect some tax money from him.

Supervisor Liccar summed up the meeting by stating he is going to write a letter to the Land Use stating that they have to maintain the privacy fence, a request for IDOT to post signs on 394 and Dixie Highway that Elms Court Lane is closed to all truck traffic, a request for more enforcement by Will County Sheriff department, special instructions on all bill of lading stating the truckers cant use Elms Court Lane, and that the owner hire private security at their own expense. Chief Paliga stated that they keep the lanes open, and he was meeting with owner and his attorney tomorrow, May 3 about other fire issues and will keep Supervisor Liccar posted.

Motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Elton, seconded by Trustee Hodge. All were in favor. Meeting stands adjourned at 7:37 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Jim Buiter, Clerk

