

TOWN OF ARENA BOARD MEETING

January 10, 2022

Board Members Present: David Lucey, Bill Gauger, Andrea Joo, Minnie Gauger, Joni Johnson-Kropp

Others Present: Joe Hamilton, Jimmy Hamilton, Tim Larson, Brennan Brennecke, Corey Elrasson, Mary Lockman, David Andrews, Theresa Andrews, Carol Cady-Severson, Mary Uselman, Joe Uselman, Cody Dummer

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Chairman Lucey
2. Roll call was made, all board members present
3. Gauger made motion to approve current agenda, Joo seconded. Agenda approved.
4. Verification of proper public notice: TOA Website, TOA Facebook, Town Hall, Arena Post Office,
5. Vote on Previous Month's Meeting Minutes Joo made motion to approve, Gauger seconded. Motion carried
6. Jimmy Hamilton, Joe Hamilton, Vortex Optics, Rezone 6871 Coon Rock Rd from Ag to Commercial.

Jimmy Hamilton, head of Range Operations and Vortex Edge spoke with the board about rezoning the 357 acres on Coon Rock Rd to Commercial from Ag. To RB1 Recreational business via what Scott Godfrey suggested. Vortex Edge would host in house firearm safety and training, not a public range, focused on small intimate settings with experienced trainers. Commercial zoning there would be community events that would be a possibility for Hunter's Safety, archery, law enforcement training. The Hamilton's brought up the fact that our community has limited resources and it would be a unique opportunity for them to train. Not all classes will be held at the Coon Rock Rd property, they will also be held at their Barneveld business/range.

In reference to the future plans at the Coon Rock Property: Safety is paramount: the main valley is surrounded by steep bluffs which far exceed what the DOT require for berm. Plus, the property has woods, secure gated access, the driveway is 38 feet at the road. Instructors would always be present. Vortex do not plan to add man-made berms, keep it natural. Sound: Vortex has currently put in 128,000 invested in sound proofing thus far. They are still going through ongoing testing to find any way to make the sounds coming from the range quieter. The prairie also soaks up some sound.

Public Comments:

Carol Cady-Severson spoke up about the challenges she's faced from the gun noise coming from the Vortex property. She lives across the road, works from home and has a special-needs child that reacts negatively whenever there is gunfire coming from the property. The sounds are too loud. Cady-Severson stated that her dream retirement home has turned into a nightmare.

Dave Andrews, owns the home adjacent to the property, he asked if the board would be voting on it tonight. Andrews stated that he should have been notification when something big is going to be on the agenda or property is changed. Lucey explained that by law the township do not need to notify townspeople of pending rezones. Any changes are stated in the agenda which is posted 4 days prior to the meeting.

Mr. Andrews addressed Jimmy Hamilton directly and asked him why the shooting stopped 6 months ago when they asked him to cease the noise, and why he would now want to open a commercial range. Hamilton did admit that other people aside from just family members has used the shooting range, such as customers and employees of Vortex. Stopped shooting 6 months. Don Uselman fell off his tractor when a loud noise. Employees go there, customers go there, it is personal property which means anyone can shoot guns on their land, as long as the company is not making money from it. Andrews went on to say, "I'm begging the board. Do not let this go through. This is a big issue. We need to talk to people in Waunakee that aren't happy about the shooting range in their neighborhoods." Which is where Mr. Andrews resides.

He then asked Jimmy if he came to his neighborhood, if he did the same thing right next to his house, how would that make him feel. Mr. Hamilton refrained from answering.

The complication of bow hunters in the area was also brought up. The ammunition is being shot toward Loy Rd and there are people that have tree stands in the general area.

Supervisor Joo attempted to quiet the public attendees down by explaining that the town board would not be voting at the meeting. The Planning and zoning board had tabled the decision because the board members were absent, so it wouldn't have been voted on by the board, which is why there was a public forum scheduled for the Wednesday evening after the board meeting for neighboring residents to hear what Vortex Range had in mind and to bring up any concerns.

7. Jill Hines, Coon Rock Rd. Building, Driveway permits and Land Rezone.

Would like electricity hooked up to her trailer that she is living in that currently has a generator. Absent. Dave will talk with the county and inspector.

8. Patrolman's Report, Eric Henning came for the meeting to report on culvert for Pine Rd. The quote received from Capital City Culverts was \$13,000. That was a

quote that may even go up when we are actually ready to put it in. Blue Ridge culvert was quoted at \$3000. We can do a 50/50 with the county for bridges. Receipts must be kept, etc. It would be prudent to get it ordered now since prices are rising. Eric will call into the company and ask if we pay for it now, will they hold it for us until we are ready. Dave will contact the county about paying their share for the bridge. 8463 Pinnacle Rd. residents worried about dead trees that are not on their property but could possibly fall on their house. The trees are extremely tall and dead, which poses a dangerous situation. It's possible the trees are on the right of way which would be in an easement and the town's responsibility. Joo is going to do some research on it.

Cody Dummers, a resident on Lexington St., asked why his road did not get plowed by the township. Gauger explained that the roads off of School Rd is considered private driveways. He also said we will have to do some checking to see if it was ever considered a town road. He believes it is from the original Helena plot and was never registered as a town road. Dave will talk with Scott Godfrey to get the information. Update: Information was obtained and sent to Mr. Dummer.

9. Public Comments: Dave Andrews: Loy Rd. to Oak Rd. has been a lot of traffic. Would it be alright to put a "Road Closed" sign up?. Also gave a kudos to the patrolmen for the good job they're doing this far.

Andrea Joo reported on an email we received - 7773 Knight Hollow Rd. Wondering about the driveway length and land division. 115 acres. She had let them know that they would need a driveway and building permit and that everyone would need to be up to code. Andrea will speak with the gentleman tomorrow and answer his basic questions.

10. Closed session to discuss Patrolman's wages/benefits**: Gauger made motion to go into closed session, Joo Seconded. Roll call was again done.

11. Gauger made motion to reopen meeting, and Joo seconded it. Roll call was made and meeting resumed.

12. Discuss land and permit fee updates. Fees will stay the same price. Strays will possibly be taken to a vet in Min Point instead of Iowa Co Humane because we are unable to take animals there anymore. Lucey will check back with the vet and make sure we have everything in writing. Will report at next board meeting.

13. Bills to be paid. Joo made motion to approve bills, Gauger made second and motion made and carried.

14. Adjournment motion made by Joo, seconded by Gauger. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Joni Johnson-Kropp, Clerk