



## **Transcript: TownshipFuture Public Comments Regarding Incorporation on November 2020 Ballot**

*The Woodlands Township Board Special Virtual Meeting via ZOOM*

*August 17, 2020 at 9:00am*

*Made by Rob Johnson*

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**IN MARCH 2020, THE BOARD CONCLUDED THAT DUE TO THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE CORONAVIRUS IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITY IT WAS NOT APPROPRIATE TO INCLUDE INCORPORATION ON THE NOVEMBER BALLOT. THE BOARD WAS CORRECT AND SHOULD KEEP THAT PROMISE.**

The Board was right to decide to defer placement of incorporation on the November 2020 ballot due to the economic and community health impacts of the coronavirus. In public statements Directors noted that the Board and the Township needed to focus on the health and safety of residents and on addressing the economic fallout from the virus.

Director Ann Snyder said that: “The full board needs to focus our attention on the current situation. Any non-essential issues that do not directly affect the health and safety of our residents or the related economic issues that greatly impact our local businesses and our residents should be reserved for a later date. . . . It is irresponsible for this board to pursue monumental issues like incorporation when the public’s attention is so clearly not on anything but coronavirus.”

Vice Chair Reiser said: Given the high level of uncertainty about the short and long term impacts to our economy, I am not inclined to bring [incorporation] forward.”

When asked by [The Villager](#) in March if it was safe to assume that incorporation would not be on the ballot in November, Chairman Bunch answered “yes.” Chairman Bunch restated his intention not to put the issue of incorporation on the November ballot in answer to a direct question from the County Judge during the August 11, 2020, meeting of the Montgomery County Commissioners Court.

Finally, there was no suggestion of a change in plans regarding placing incorporation on the ballot in the six recent budget meetings.

The situation remains fluid and the negative impacts of the virus continue to be felt throughout our community. Residents of The Woodlands remain focused on dealing with the coronavirus. The impact of the virus continues on our personal lives– for example, as of August 16, 2020, CISD will not offer in person instruction until September 8, 2020, at the earliest, putting a significant burden on parents of school-aged children. Our residents are worried about jobs and child care, not incorporation. Now is not the time to place an issue such as incorporation, an issue which will have a significant impact on the daily lives of residents, on the November 2020 ballot. It is not fair to ask voters to focus on understanding the potential benefits and downsides of incorporation at this time. Their focus is, and should be, on their health, safety, and economic wellbeing. The Township Board should similarly focus on public health and safety and economic recovery.