

Executive Session St. Clair Township

DATE: May 19, 2011

TIME: 7:06 p.m.

LOCATION: St. Clair Township
107 Service Street
Swansea, IL 62226

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Buchanan, Supervisor
Mary Carroll, Clerk
Dave Barnes, Trustee
Richard Schobert, Trustee
Bob Trentman, Trustee
Greg Bridgman, Trustee

At the 7:06 p.m. at the Regular Board Meeting, Trustee Bridgman made a motion that the Board go into closed executive session for the purpose of considering the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of a Township employee and for the purpose of considering litigation, and the Board finds that an action involving the Township is probable or imminent. The motion was seconded by Trustee Barnes. Roll call vote. All in favor.

Part 1

Supervisor Buchanan said he would like to call laid off employee, Luke Potts, back to work to help with grass cutting. He said there would be plenty of work for him. He said that pursuant to the contract, he would need to give him a 14 day notice.

Supervisor Buchanan said he also wanted to discuss the Township's legal counsel. He said that the things he feels we need in a good attorney are experience in municipal law, strong negotiating skills, and familiarity with labor issues. He said that Bill Stiehl is lacking in some of the qualities he mentioned. Supervisor Buchanan said he feels the Township needs to change attorneys.

Trustee Schobert said he has confidence in Bill and he is concerned if we change, the new attorney will need to review everything going back. Supervisor Buchanan said a new attorney will only need to be briefed on the issues going forward, and they could get up to speed quickly. Trustee Schobert said he could see bringing them in for other negotiations, but not the Swansea sewer negotiations.

Supervisor Buchanan said he is recommending the firm Belsheim and Bruckert. He said that Terry Bruckert is a principal in the firm and would be our primary counsel. He said that Doug Gruenke would be speaking to us tonight on behalf of the firm because Terry had another commitment.

Doug Gruenke addressed the Board at that time and went over the firms qualifications. The Board members were allowed to ask questions.

At 7:34 p.m. the Board went back into open session.

Part 2

At 7:41 the Board went back to closed executive session.

Discussion regarding the legal counsel continued. Supervisor Buchanan reminded the Board that the Township is the only municipality that Bill works with on a regular basis. He also said he is not always confident with the advice that Bill provides. He continued to point out specific examples of situations to validate his concerns.

Trustee Trentman said that Bill is not at all the meetings anymore and understands the cost part of it. But, he thinks that the attorney should be at all the meeting. Supervisor Buchanan said the concerns he has with Bill really have nothing to do with whether he is at the meeting or not.

Trustee Bridgman asked why now? Supervisor Buchanan said he feels we need to make a change now because of the very important issues the Township is facing.

Trustee Barnes said even though the cost is a little higher, efficiency can be a cost savings.

The new firm's fees are \$15 more an hour and Supervisor Buchanan asked them to lower it, but they were not willing to do so. Their argument was that their firm is specialized in municipal law and that is the reason they warrant the fee they charge.

Supervisor Buchanan said he wanted to give an update on the sick leave grievance for Sue Gruberman. He said the Township received a letter to attend mediation on 6/7/11. He said he will need to sign off on that document and return it agreeing to the mediation.

Trustee Trentman said he is okay with the new counsel for the Swansea negotiations, but that maybe Bill should be the counsel for Sue's grievance because he helped with the contract the Township negotiated with the employees. Supervisor Buchanan said that the former Board of Trustees did not consult with an attorney during the negotiations for the union contract. So Bill is no more familiar with the contract than the rest of us.

At 8:21 p.m. the Board went out of closed session and returned to the Regular Board Meeting.

Respectfully submitted:



Mary Carroll
Township Clerk

