

Executive Session St. Clair Township

DATE: November 8, 2011
TIME: 7:15 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 7:15 p.m. at the Regular Board Meeting, Trustee Bridgman made a motion to go into closed Executive Session for purposes 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. It was seconded by Trustee Barnes. Roll call vote. Trentman-NO, Bridgman-YES, Schobert-YES, Barnes-YES, Buchanan-YES. Motion Carries

1) Supervisor Buchanan introduced Mr. Michael Lowenbaum, an attorney who specializes in labor law specifically. Supervisor Buchanan said he was recommended to him by someone from the city of O'Fallon. After attending a seminar conducted by Mr. Lowenbaum, Supervisor Buchanan said he was very impressed with the firm. He met with Mr. Lowenbaum again to get more information. At the Board meeting, Mr. Lowenbaum provided information about his firm, the type of work they specialize in, the companies and municipalities they work for and the rates. The Board was then permitted to ask questions to Mr. Lowenbaum.

After the question and answer session, Supervisor Buchanan said he would like to work with Mr. Lowenbaum on labor and employment issues and wanted to get the Board's approval to do so. Trustee Schobert said he doesn't like the idea of switching professionals every time that Supervisor Buchanan finds someone he thinks would be better. Trustee Schobert stated that switching professional service providers was wasting money. Supervisor Buchanan replied that he would continue to look for the best people to assist the Township and the most efficient way to get things done.

2) Supervisor Buchanan said that Sue Gruberman filed another grievance stating that Supervisor Buchanan was trying to intimidate Sue to not attend Board Meetings and that he was creating a hostile work environment. Everyone received a copy of the grievance and Clerk Carroll read the claim out loud. In addition, Supervisor Buchanan provided his written response to Sue's charges, and those were also read out loud. Supervisor Buchanan said he was surprised about the grievance, and that he feels Sue and him work well together.

Trustee Barnes said he was surprised the grievance was filed so long after the alleged incident. Trustee Bridgman said he felt it was her right for her to talk at a Board meeting, but her behavior at the Board meeting was unprofessional and would be classified as insubordination. Supervisor Buchanan said he was stunned regarding the statement that she claimed he was yelling at Sue.

Trustee Bridgman said it was hard for him to believe that because he had never heard Tim raise his voice before. However, Trustee Trentman said the work environment is hostile. He said he talks to the girls, and they are not happy. Supervisor Buchanan asked him if he knew what the problem was, but Trustee Trentman said he did not know. Trustee Barnes said from day one we have had problems, and it is not anything Supervisor Buchanan, Road Commissioner Burk or the Board has done. It seems to him that they have never trusted the new administration. Trustee Trentman said he agrees with Dave. Supervisor Buchanan said he does his best to treat them right. He is kind to them, speaks nicely, thanks them, and he said he does not create a hostile environment. He said he will be working with the attorneys to resolve the grievance.

3) Supervisor Buchanan provided an update on the Swansea sewer negotiations. He said that he had talked to Dave Thacker and Dave has talked to some Board members individually to see if we can settle this, but nothing came of it.

Supervisor Buchanan said that he had a meeting with the Swansea Mayor today, and asked to talk about the article that the Mayor had published in the most recent Swansea newsletter. However, Mayor Rauckman was unwilling to discuss the contents of the article. He said that after some discussion, the Mayor said he thought that he could talk the Swansea Board into approving an amount of \$850,000 as a flat yearly payment with increase for electricity, labor, and increasing users.

Supervisor Buchanan said that Dave Thacker called him after the meeting to see how things went with Mayor Rauckman.. Dave was surprised when Supervisor Buchanan told him about the \$850,000 figure that the Mayor provided and he said he was not sure where the Mayor came up with that number. He also said that Swansea Trustee, Brian Wells, is now willing to settle or compromise which was something he was not willing to do before.

Supervisor Buchanan said after the meeting and the call with Dave Thacker, it makes it hard to determine who the Township is really negotiating with.

Trustee Trentman asked what happened to the arbitration that was voted on by the Board. Supervisor Buchanan said it was rejected by Swansea.

Trustee Schobert said he could live with the \$850,000 but wanted to know what it was based on.

Supervisor Buchanan said he thought \$818,374 was reasonable. This number was arrived by taking the Township's lowest proposal (\$728,949) subtracted from the highest proposal (\$907,800) and then dividing the difference by two and adding that to our lowest proposal as outlined on the spreadsheet that was provided.

It was agreed that we would propose \$800,000 to Swansea, but the contract language would need to be outlined. It also needs to be clear that the debt is a fixed amount and could not be part of any increase due to an increase in sewer users. The Supervisor was instructed to request a proposal in writing from Swansea.

At 8:19 the Board returned to Regular Session.

Respectfully submitted:



Mary Carroll
Township Clerk

