

YES: (4)

NO: (0)

ABSENT (1)

Motion Carried 4/0/1

ROAD FUND / \$37,815.44

Motion to approve expenditures by Trustee Studer. Second by Trustee Mitchell.

YES: (4)

NO: (0)

ABSENT: (1)

Motion Carried 4/0/1

COMMITTEE AND OFFICER REPORTS

SUPERVISOR / Supervisor Hocking provided a brief report of General Assistance activities during the past month including seven applications taken out and two applications returned.

CLERK / Clerk Weberski reported he recently attended a TOI presentation in Springfield focusing on the Township Election coming up in April of 2017. Mr. Weberski reported the seminar was geared toward educating township election officials on their duties and responsibilities.

ASSESSOR / Assessor Biederstedt informed the board the Senior Fare sponsored by Sen. Sue Rezin is scheduled for August 23rd. Mr. Biederstedt reported he had contacted several township assessors in order to inquire about their respective salaries as the board had requested and he will present the results of his survey during Old Business when salary discussion takes place.

HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER / Highway Commissioner Debo had no report.

OLD BUSINESS

Discuss & Vote on Direction of Peru Township / Supervisor Hocking initiated discussion of the direction of Peru Township in respect to the efforts by the city of Peru to dissolve Peru Township. Clerk Weberski stated he had attended the Peru council meeting and based on the wording of the ballot question approved by the city council he has no doubt the city intends to attempt to dissolve Peru Township. Trustee Bernabei stated the referendum will be advisory in nature and will only be asking voters if they want the city to investigate the situation. Trustee Mitchell stated he wants the public to be informed of all the facts and not just the information that the city of Peru presents on the issue of dissolving the township. Trustee Rigby sees the question as misleading by virtue of suggesting to voters there will be tax savings when there has been no demonstration of reduced taxes. Trustee Studer stated he does not think the city of Peru can do much without some level of cooperation between the township and the city.

Discuss & Vote on Salary Ordinance for 2017-2021 / Discussion continued on establishing salaries for elected officials for the next term of office which will be 2017 to 2021. Clerk Weberski reminded the board of previous discussion on the issue from last month's meeting which included a consensus of \$1200/year for Trustees. Mr. Weberski had recommended previously reducing the Clerk's salary to \$8,860. Trustee Studer suggested the board should consider increasing the number of hours of service for elected officials and employees in order to qualify for pension benefits. Trustee Bernabei suggested the board be cautious about reducing salaries to a level that may result in no interest from prospective candidates to run for public office. Highway Commissioner Debo stated he is convinced that it will be difficult to find a good candidate interested in seeking office as Highway Commissioner for \$25,000. Further discussion resulted in a consensus among the board to set the Clerk's salary at \$12,000/year. The board moved on to consider salaries for Supervisor and Highway Commissioner. Trustee Studer suggested the Supervisor's salary should be set at \$12,000/year. Other Trustees see that amount as being too low with a majority of the board in favor of \$25,000 annually for Supervisor and Highway Commissioner. Supervisor Hocking reminded the board that he is fine with reducing Supervisor's salary and reminded the board that he maintains regular office hours and believes his office will continue to

require clerical support staff in order to provide service to the public. Further discussion focused on the Assessor's salary. Assessor Biederstedt informed the board of the statutory qualifications required for the position and the importance of having qualified candidates. Mr. Biederstedt suggested qualified candidates will only seek the position of Township Assessor if that position offers fair compensation. After considerable discussion a consensus was reached to set the Assessor's salary at \$42,000 per year. A majority of the board was also in agreement there should be no medical benefits or medical reimbursement programs offered to elected officials. Clerk Weberski stated he would create the Salary Ordinance and provide it to board members prior to the next regular meeting when the ordinance will be on the agenda for consideration and approval.

Discuss & Vote on Legal Representation for Possible Township Consolidation / Clerk Weberski provided the board with the resume of a local attorney for their consideration of engaging legal representation regarding the dissolution/consolidation. Trustees Studer and Bernabei suggested it is premature to engage legal representation at this time. Trustees Rigby and Mitchell suggested there will be a need for legal counsel on the issue in the near future. Supervisor Hocking stated he believes there will be a need for expert advice going forward. Clerk Weberski suggested legal counsel is advisable for protecting the interests of Peru Township as a whole. Several board members asked Attorney Brandt his opinion on the matter. Mr. Brandt suggested he would advise engaging legal counsel and the board would be well advised to have an initial face to face meeting with the attorney in question. Trustee Bernabei asked who would determine how to proceed with determining how many billable hours the attorney should be approved for per month. Mr. Hocking stated the board and the Supervisor will provide direction to the attorney. After discussion the board was in agreement that the Supervisor has the authority to engage legal counsel on behalf of Peru Township if he so chooses and that an official vote by the board is not necessary at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Township Attorney Brandt reported on a 4.66 acre parcel of property supposedly owned by Peru Township located near the YMCA in Peru. Mr. Brandt recommended Peru Township pay for a Title Search to verify ownership and if ownership is confirmed an appraisal be conducted. Attorney Brandt suggested the property may have value to adjacent property owners if Peru Township wishes to sell it or keep it for the purpose of a tax exemption. Mr. Brandt explained that for tax purposes the property is currently valued at \$16,000 with an annual property tax bill of \$402.40. Mr. Brandt also suggested Peru Township should determine if the property in question would be covered for liability under the umbrella of the Peru Township insurance policy. The board authorized Township Attorney Jonathan Brandt to proceed with arranging for a Title Search and Appraisal of the property in question.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Trustee Rigby. Second by Trustee Studer.

Yes: (5)

No: (0)

Absent (0)

Motion Carried 5/0/0

The Regular Meeting of the Peru Town Board was adjourned at 5:54 pm.

Steve Weberski / Township Clerk

Michael Hocking / Township Supervisor

Eddie Mitchell / Township Trustee

Douglas Bernabei / Township Trustee

Chuck Studer / Township Trustee

Art Rigby / Township Trustee

