

**GRAFTON TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
EXECUTIVE SESSION
MINUTES
April 12, 2006**

Re: Personnel Issues and Legal Issues

The meeting of the Grafton Township Board of Trustees Executive Session commenced following the regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting at 9:10 pm.

The record shall reflect that there was a motion to amend the April 12, 2006, Board of Trustees Agenda to include Executive Session (see minutes of 4-12-06).

Present at the Executive Session were as follows: Supervisor Rossi, Clerk Frigo, Trustees Brothers, LaPorta, Murphy and Zirk. Clerk Frigo recorded the Executive Session meeting.

Supervisor Rossi called for a motion to allow the attendance of Highway Commissioner Freund to the meeting.

Motion made: Trustee Brothers

Second to motion: Trustee Murphy

Roll vote

Supervisor Rossi:	No
Trustee Brothers:	No
Trustee LaPorta:	No
Trustee Murphy:	Yes
Trustee Zirk:	No

Motion defeated.

Highway Commissioner Freund will not be allowed to attend the Executive Session meeting of the Grafton Township Board.

At this time, Highway Commissioner Freund was excused from the meeting and disbursed two documents to all present entitled "Can the Township Board tell the Highway Commissioner What To Do"? Along with a sheet describing bills that were entered for the month in the Road District by his assistant/secretary.

At this time, Highway Commissioner Freund exited the Executive Session meeting.

Supervisor Rossi explained to all present that the conversations and discussions would directly affect the Highway Commissioner and that having him present may create hard feelings. Also, that the Board would be inhibited to speak freely about personnel issues relating to the Highway Department.

Trustee Murphy disagreed and felt that the Highway Commissioner could remain impartial regarding his daughter/assistant/secretary.

Supervisor Rossi disagreed with Trustee Murphy. He felt that Highway Commissioner Freund could not be impartial because the issues relate to his daughter/assistant/secretary. Trustees Brothers, LaPorta and Zirk concurred.

Supervisor Rossi also expressed his disapproval of hiring any relatives or family members within the Township. Trustee Brothers, LaPorta and Zirk concurred.

Trustee Brothers suggested having another meeting to address the issue of nepotism within the Township and possibly creating a policy related to the aforementioned.

Supervisor Rossi informed the Board that Highway Commissioner Freund could hire anyone he chooses in the Road District.

Trustee Murphy suggested that the Road District is its own governmental entity.

Trustee LaPorta suggested that the responsibility of the Board of Trustees includes approval or disapproval of the Highway Commissioner's budget, or any part of the budget they deem necessary, and in order to properly and accurately approve a budget, the Board must understand what comprises and derives a budget. Part of that derivation, are the expenses and run rates. The Board also has the right to question the validity of those expenses that the taxpayers are paying.

Supervisor Rossi suggested that what the Board is questioning is the dollar amount this employee is making, not the relationship between the Highway Commissioner and his assistant/secretary. Additionally, Supervisor Rossi explained that the Board has no jurisdiction regarding who is hired or not. The Board does set the budget for the Township.

Supervisor Rossi suggested defining the Road District's budget and to determine what is reasonable to run the Road District. At the present time, there are three men in the field, one Highway Commissioner and one assistant/secretary. The salary of the assistant/secretary is \$19.00 an hour, plus overtime. The Road District has to explain the necessity for all of its employees and their salaries.

Trustee Brothers expressed her discomfort with the issue of the Highway Commissioner hiring his daughter and for the excessive salary, full insurance benefits and overtime she receives.

Supervisor Rossi suggested that the Board determine how the Highway Commissioner's assistant/secretary fits into the Transportation program.

Trustee Murphy expressed her thoughts relating to the Transportation Program and not a personal attack on an employee in the Road District.

Trustee LaPorta added that this was not a personal attack. Trustee LaPorta suggested that the Board plan and understand the actual. He also suggested that it is impossible to set a budget without a plan and justification for the actual, and run rates that are proven productive.

Trustee Brothers inquired about the administrative costs.

Supervisor Rossi explained that the Highway Commissioner stated that his assistant/secretary works on the scheduling for the bus at least 1-3 hours a day. Supervisor Rossi inquired about the remaining 5 hours at \$19.00 an hour. He also informed the Board of the Highway Commissioner's assistant/secretary's \$1.00 raise before the budget has been approved. He also added that no other Township employees have been given raises. He suggested that the Highway Commissioner's timing was inappropriate. All of the Trustees concurred.

Supervisor Rossi expressed his assistant's frustration when she sees the Highway Commissioner's assistant/secretary visiting the Assessor's Office for hours every day and collecting an overtime salary as well.

Trustee Brothers inquired whether or not the Highway Commissioner's assistant/secretary's position was salaried. Supervisor Rossi suggested that her position is hourly and is taken out of Administrative. Trustee Zirk replied that the salary couldn't be taken out of Administrative. Trustee Zirk also stated that the Board has to approve the budget.

Trustee Brothers informed all that she got three complaints regarding no one ever answering the phone in the Highway Department for shuttle service.

Trustee Murphy explained that she has had eight of her patients that visit for physical therapy use the Grafton Shuttle and she has never heard anyone complain. She also has the occasion to phone the Road District Offices and her calls are always returned.

Supervisor Rossi explained that at McHenry Township, they utilize part-time employees to drive the bus, as well as a dispatcher. The pay is \$11.75 (after five years of service) with no benefits. Presently, the Grafton Road District pays \$17.50 for their part-time bus driver.

Supervisor Rossi suggested running the Transportation System out of the Township and creating part-time employees. He also suggested describing the duties of the Road District assistant/secretary in accordance with her salary.

Trustee Brothers suggested entering into job descriptions within the Township personnel handbook and setting the budget accordingly.

Supervisor Rossi, Trustee Brothers and Clerk Frigo informed all of the sharp tone and demeanor that the Highway Commissioner's assistant/secretary has used with them. In addition, Supervisor Rossi's assistant is spoken to with much disrespect.

Supervisor Rossi stated that by employing a relative/family member the Township may be at risk for litigation and it has created dissention within the office.

Trustee Brothers suggested placing the Transportation System on the agenda for the Board's next meeting.

Supervisor Rossi suggested to all to take a trip to other townships to see how their transportation system is run.

Trustee LaPorta suggested that the Board justify the Highway Commissioner's assistant/secretary's salary with the budget.

Trustee Zirk informed all that Bruce Cosman was out on the roads and ran the office without any assistant or secretary.

Supervisor Rossi suggested that if the taxpayer's find out that the Highway Commissioner hired his daughter at \$40,000.00 a year, with overtime and benefits to do office work and not dig ditches, the taxpayer's will come after this Board for appropriating this action and not being good stewards of funds.

Trustee Brothers suggested that the Board pledged to be good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars.

Trustee Zirk suggested that there is not enough work to keep the Highway Commissioner's assistant/secretary busy or full time. The position needs to be part time.

Trustee Brothers suggested that Highway Commissioner Freund does an excellent job in his department.

Supervisor Rossi also expressed his respect for the Highway Commissioner and that he may be influenced by his daughter and other influences at home.

Trustee Zirk commented on the sheet disbursed by the Highway Commissioner that reflects the Highway Departments monthly bills. She suggested that it does not take eight hours to do so.

Supervisor Rossi explained that as the Supervisor, Bookkeeper and Treasurer of the Township, he is Statutorily responsible for the input and disbursement of bills and receipts.

Supervisor Rossi asked for the Board's direction to these matters. The Board concurred that the attorney draft a legal document relating to the transportation system run by the Township and General Assistance in cooperation with the Road District, should the Road District decide to do so.

The Executive Session of the Grafton Township Board of Trustees was adjourned at 10:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Dina M. Frigo

Exhibits:

1. Article entitled, "Can the Township Board Tell The Highway Commissioner What To Do"?
2. Highway Department's Monthly Bill Sheet

(clerkmins041206exec)