

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF PLYMOUTH
BOARD OF TRUSTEES – SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2007**

Supervisor Reaume called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Reaume, Supervisor
 Ron Edwards, Treasurer
 Marilyn Massengill, Clerk
 Kay Arnold, Trustee
 Charles Curmi, Trustee
 Robert Doroshevitz, Trustee
 Steven Mann, Trustee

ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Randy Maycock, Fire Chief
 Thomas Tiderington, Police Chief
 Mark Wendel, Assistant Fire Chief
 Timothy Cronin, Township Attorney
 Joe Bridgman, Deputy Clerk
 Alice Geletzke, Recording Secretary
 1 Member of the Public

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mrs. Massengill said she has been asked to add a closed session, Attorney Opinion Regarding Fire Department Personnel. She then moved to approve the agenda for the Board of Trustees Special Meeting of April 4, 2007, as amended. Seconded by Ms. Arnold.

AYES: Massengill, Arnold, Reaume, Edwards, Doroshevitz, Mann
NAYS: Curmi

Motion carried.

E. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA – N/A

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS – There were none.

G. PUBLIC HEARING – N/A

H. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – N/A

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I. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**I.1 Intergovernmental Communications Service Agreement
Intergovernmental Fire Service Agreement**

Board members discussed at length charts presented by Mr. Edwards comparing calls for service, cost breakdown, and 5-year projected costs for dispatch services for the City of Plymouth and Plymouth Township, both continuing under the present contract and if a new contract is implemented.

Mr. Edwards indicated the dispatch costs in the present agreement are apportioned according to population, SEV, and number of calls. Charts indicate the City of Plymouth has 39% of the calls and paid 23% of the total costs for 2006.

Projected costs presented indicate that in five years the Township would have to absorb an additional \$181,674.

Mr. Edwards indicated he felt if the Township stays on the same path, they won't be able to afford this anymore. A fair amount of dollars from the City of Plymouth is necessary to keep going forward.

The Board discussed what reductions in dispatch personnel might be necessary if the City opts out of the agreement. Chief Tiderington anticipated prisoner bookings would probably have to revert back to officers if dispatch personnel numbers are reduced. He also noted training costs and potential reduced commitment if part-time dispatchers are used.

In answer to Mr. Doroshevitz question regarding giving the City numbers that were less than projected costs, Mr. Edwards indicated that was purely in error. It was assumed the dispatchers received the same 2.25 % increase as the police because both are members of the POAM.

Mr. Edwards then presented fire department figures. He indicated some of the drop in the number of runs was because HVA has been in attendance at public events since 2003 and nursing homes have been told by the City to call HVA directly.

In the case of the fire contract, there's a formula. However, they are required to pay a minimum of 25%, and they've been at the floor since 2003. They're receiving 28% of the services, but paying 25% of the costs because a one-third formula based on population, SEV and runs.

Since 2004, firefighters have not been replaced.

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Projected costs were presented under the current agreement if full staffing is reached, which would be 27.

Mr. Edwards indicated the only way Plymouth Township's costs could be dropped would be by telling certain people to call HVA directly.

Mr. Curmi suggested meeting with the management of Independence Village to help reduce calls.

Chief Maycock reminded Board members that Independence Village is an independent living arrangement, not a nursing home or convalescent center.

Chief Maycock noted the reduced number of runs in the City on a graph doesn't necessarily mean there were fewer runs in the City but may mean fewer runs reported to dispatch so City gets the full benefit of the fire personnel at a reduced cost because they're not factored into their formula.

Mr. Doroshevitz said he understood the dispatch contract has a 12-month out and the fire contract is 12 months plus the remainder of that calendar year. In the fire contract, 3C, it states the staffing level is the initial staff of 24 full-time firefighters, but it uses the word "initial". He asked Attorney Cronin if there's anything in the contract he's aware of that prevents the Township from going up to whatever number they deem appropriate in applying the cost formula.

Attorney Cronin initially felt if any changes in staffing were to be made, there should be discussion between the Township and the City. If both sides have done it and ignored it, there would be a pattern of conduct.

Mr. Edwards and Mr. Mann said staffing increases were anticipated through the approval process of the budget. There's a 5% limit where you have to negotiate with the City and they have to approve it.

Mr. Doroshevitz asked Mr. Edwards if, in his opinion, it is satisfactory if the Township continues to receive the 25% if there is no new contract through 2011.

Mr. Edwards said, in his opinion, no because the Township had prior discussions with the City. In 2004 they came to the Township for adjustments. His reasoning was letting the dispatch agreement go because additional funds would be picked up in the fire contract. Now, they don't want to touch the fire contract. He would prefer 72/28%.

Mr. Doroshevitz asked the two chiefs if anything in the contract as they exist that create an operational burden for them. Is there something in the contracts that prevents them from getting their jobs done?

Chief Tiderington answered no for dispatch.

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Chief Maycock said the biggest issue for the Fire Department is staffing levels, currently at 23. In some cases, stations had to close briefly.

Board members discussed the possibility of, and problems with, paid on-call firemen.

Ms. Arnold checked with Mr. Cronin on 2(B) on the communications contract if it was a fiscal year.

Mr. Cronin said it means a 12-month period commencing on January 1. He also pointed out a typographical error in the fire contract. “December 1” should read “December 31.”

Mr. Edwards voiced concerns with the fire agreement. If the City decides to pull out, it doesn’t specify when they pay the legacy costs. Also, if additional firemen are hired and the City leaves in two years, they would have to be laid off which would involve unemployment costs.

Mr. Edwards indicated the formulas are all in the City’s favor and he believes the fire agreement has to be tightened because economic conditions are different from ten years ago.

Mr. Doroshevitz and Mrs. Massengill expressed doubt that the City could be convinced to negotiate.

Mr. Edwards thinks if the Township continues in the current vein, they won’t be able to pay the bill in the future. He believes the Township should be proactive in presenting figures to the City.

Mr. Edwards asked Mr. Cronin about legacy costs with regard to equipment.

Mr. Cronin said the language in the fire contract for legacy costs refers specifically to post-termination health care retirement benefit costs. “Upon termination of this agreement, any post-termination health care costs, medical benefit costs, or retirement-related costs attributable to service by employees performed under this agreement should be shared on the same basis as costs incurred during the term of this agreement.”

He noted changes have been made in accounting laws for these costs since 1999 when the agreement was reached which are now in effect for all municipalities. These changes could be cause for having to revisit the contract.

The Board noted that the section regarding payment of legacy costs was not included in the last version of the attempted modification of the dispatch contract.

Mr. Edwards said he would rather negotiate; but if there are four Board members who wish to do nothing, he’s fine with it.

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Mr. Curmi asked Chief Maycock for a written report in the next week on which fire stations were closed for how long since 2004.

Mr. Curmi recommended nothing further be done on the contracts.

Mr. Curmi was excused at 8:32 p.m.

Ms. Arnold recommended staying with the current contracts, but letting them know what their legacy costs are.

Mr. Edwards reiterated that over time, the Township will not be able to afford the costs of continuing the present contracts.

Mr. Mann said the legacy costs could be handled later.

Mr. Mann thanked the negotiating committee for all their time and effort.

Chief Tiderington thought a small sub-committee could meet with the City to present them as an educational tool with the numbers charted tonight, which weren't available when negotiations began.

Mr. Edwards asked if the fire department should be brought to full staffing.

Mr. Doroshevitz requested a formal opinion on that.

Attorney Cronin said he'd defer to the former supervisor. If the reality of it is the budget grows and part of that includes adding staff and both entities are aware of it, and the City has agreed by virtue of the contract to a certain percentage of authority for the Township to do it anyway, he's satisfied it is a course of business that would be supported in court if anybody decided to challenge it. They've given you the authority to add to the budget and if part of that is staff, part of that is staff.

Mr. Edwards said the Township has been to 27.

Mr. Mann said Mr. Edwards is just proposing to go up to staff that's authorized.

Mr. Doroshevitz said he's proposing we bill them at the same proportion for that.

Mr. Edwards agreed.

No action was taken, but it was the consensus of Board members to remain with the current contracts.

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J. NEW BUSINESS – N/A

K. SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS

Mr. Reaume presented figures for the building department for the Board's information. Listed are direct costs, as well as indirect costs. Costs and revenues are now required to match. Only one year did revenues cover both direct and indirect costs. Projections for revenues become bleaker because of the economy. Only three residential building permits and small commercial permits have been issued this year. The same staff is being maintained but there are only one-third the transactions.

L. TRUSTEE COMMENTS

The Board discussed briefly having Mr. Anulewicz investigate further the possibility of having a food vendor in the park.

M. PUBLIC COMMENTS – There were none.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:07 p.m. it was moved by Mrs. Massengill and seconded by Ms. Arnold that a closed session be called for the purpose of discussing:

- 1) Attorney's Opinion Regarding Fire Department Personnel

This is a permissible purpose under the Michigan Open Meetings Act, Public Act No. 267, Article 15.268, Section 8, Paragraphs (a).

Ayes all on a roll call vote, with Mr. Curmi absent.

At 9:25 p.m., it was moved by Mr. Edwards and seconded by Mr. Mann to return to open session.

Ayes all on a roll call vote, with Mr. Curmi absent.

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O. ADJOURN

Mrs. Massengill moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Edwards. Ayes all.

Marilyn Massengill, Clerk
Charter Township of Plymouth

The Charter Township of Plymouth will provide necessary reasonable aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon two weeks notice to the Charter Township of Plymouth. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Charter Township of Plymouth by writing or calling the Human Resource Office, Charter Township of Plymouth, 9955 N. Haggerty Road, Plymouth, Michigan, 48170, (734) 453-3202, TDD users: 1-800-649-3777 (Michigan Relay Service).