

RUSHCREEK TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING
08/15/2014

A Special Meeting was called to order by Chairman Bill Myers at 7:07am. Those present in addition to Bill: Trustees Dave Myers and Hart Van Horn; Fiscal Officer, Connie Moyer; and Road Superintendent, Robert Suer. The following notification was sent to the Eagle Gazette on Tuesday, August 12th.

Rushcreek Township Trustees have scheduled a Special Meeting for Friday, August 15th at 7am at the Township office, 213 Marietta Street, Bremen. Purpose of the meeting is to discuss personnel for the chip/seal project.

Bill asked Bob to explain the problem he was having with the chip/seal project. Bob stated that he was unsure why the meeting was called.

Bob was interrupted when Dave stated, "I want to hire Tommy Belcher for 40 hours to operate the chip box". Hart was unclear on what was transpiring and asked for clarity. Bill explained that he went out on the road Monday afternoon after the special meeting and the new personnel was not working out very well. Therefore, he also wanted to hire Tommy Belcher. It was explained that the Board hired a new CDL operator because no one else applied for the position**. Bob Suer reported that this was the first time that the new employee was on the equipment in the manner that the township operated; Trustee Dave Myers was operating the stone spreader and rammed the equipment into the dump truck causing the new operator to panic. With the proper amount of training Bob stated he felt that the new employee could be ready for the chip/seal project. If he was not, it was Bob's intention to have Richard do all the backing into the rock box and have the new employee shuttle the vehicles. It was the consensus that the criticism of the new employee on Monday was premature, unfair and the basis was incorrect.

Hart asked how Tommy was brought into this situation. Bill replied that immediately after the special meeting he met with Tommy, got his application, and brought him over to the Township to meet with Bob and Dave. Bill stated that while Richard was off it was his opinion that we should've hired Tom Belcher then. **

Hart stated that Bill called him requesting this special meeting for "safety issues". After investigating, he found out that the "safety issue" was Bill & Dave wanting to hire a friend, Tom Belcher, instead of supporting the training of the person who was already on the job. Hart advised that he called Tom Belcher to find out exactly what was going on. Tom informed him what job he would be doing along with the wages set at \$15.00 per hour and believes he has already been hired as Dave and Bill had already instructed him to begin processing the new hire forms.

Hart expressed his concern on how the entire situation was handled. A special meeting was not called for "safety issues", but it was called to hire a friend, thereby showing favoritism. The record will show that Tom Belcher did not apply at any time this year when the Township advertised to hire a CDL operator or road crew members. Hart agreed after speaking to Mr. Belcher that he was indeed a worthy candidate but rules were broken in the attempt to hire him. He pointed out that the new employee had been on the job for less than 8 hours and was subjected to inordinate criticism by, two Board members who had been Trustees for over 10 years but still had not learned to follow the rules. This behavior is unacceptable and unethical. Bill replied that he never meant to do harm.... Hart responded "No, you meant to do a favor which is wrong. Not requiring a friend to go through the same rules as everyone else is wrong."

Hart continued that both Dave and Bill held the fire department to a lower standard by not intervening when needed, yet they were quick to disrupt the supervision of the road department for personal benefit. There should be no difference of supervision between the road department and the fire department. Bill and Dave breeched the state's rules and regulations for ethical behavior, and the Sunshine Laws when they held an unscheduled meeting, agreed on a decision, and made a job offer. Hart further informed the trustees that the "back room" deals must stop.

Hart reported that at the December OTA meeting last year Heidi Fought from Ohio Township Association spoke about sharing resources with other governmental entities. Hart specifically remembered attending a meeting where then Trustee Ed Pool discussed sharing resources with Marion Township, Berne Township, Reading Township and so forth. However, as Trustee overseeing the Road Department, Dave has not demonstrated any effort to contact other sources outside of friends.

Bob asked the Trustees to come in next week to practice operating equipment prior to actually doing the work. This would help the new employee and refresh everyone's skills.

Connie inquired with Bill asking if his OVI charge had been dropped off his driving record so he could operate the equipment, noting that Bill made a statement early in the year that his driving record would be clear of the OMVI points after June 22, 2014. However, Bill answered that this is not the case. He further stated that he could operate any vehicle as long as it was not licensed like the roller. Connie reminded the Board that we should be sure of this because there have been other incidents and the importance of being consistent. Hart felt it would be best if he check with our insurance carrier to make sure this was correct. He will then report back to the Road Superintendent who could pass the information onto the Board.

The water supply line under the Township building has sprung a leak. A plumber came to evaluate and offered to supply the line as a donation. Bob stated he planned to come in on Sunday and dig a hole at the curb stop so we could begin replacement of the water line. He asked for the Trustees to come in and help.

The trustees were reminded that the next regular meeting had a work session beginning at 6:30pm.

With no further business to discuss, Dave stated, "For the Record, I want to hire Tommy".

Meeting adjourned: 8:10am

** Mr. Belcher did not submit a resume or application at either time.


