

Randy Ritari

From: Brenda Helgren
Sent: Wednesday, May 09, 2012 11:25 AM
To: drliimatta@chartermi.net; Randy Ritari; Ernest Johnson; Pete LaRue; Lyn Durant; Dianna Truscott; Danny Pompo
Cc: Randy Girard
Subject: FW: message from web site visitor

From: Carl F Hammerstrom, MD [mailto:chammerstrom@chartermi.net]
Sent: Wednesday, May 09, 2012 9:58 AM
To: Brenda Helgren
Subject: message from web site visitor

Logged IP Address: 75.128.225.25

Sent on May 9th, 2012 at 9:58am by Carl F Hammerstrom, MD (chammerstrom@chartermi.net)

May 7, 2012

To: the Marquette Charter Township Board
From: Carl F Hammerstrom, MD.
33 Middle Island Pt. Rd., 49855

Dear board members,

I was disappointed with the report I received concerning the Township Board response to the request from the Peter White Public Library for an extension of the contract for library services to our township. This request was made early in March 2012.

The issue has not been addressed in a timely manner and it appears that it is unlikely that you will place the issue on the August Ballot, and will not approve the request for a 5 year contract as do the other townships.

As you will recall I addressed this issue during public comment last month. PWPL and the Township are both multimillion dollar operations with budget and accounting subject to state and local laws. The PWPL Trustees and the Township Board share similar responsibilities for budget and long range planning. Short term contracts create long term planning difficulties and add administrative costs beyond that of longer term obligations. Your evident desire to have a short term contract will create uncertainties for the director and Trustees of PWPL and may require the curtailment or elimination of personnel or programs in order to produce a balanced budget. (<http://www.miningjournal.net/page/content.detail/id/573003/Peter-White-Public-Library-looks-to-tighten-finances.html?nav=5006>)

I strongly urge you to place the issue on the earlier ballot and to increase the term of the contract, as has been requested by PWPL.

I have received a copy of Mr. Markes recommendation to you, including a letter dated Oct. 18,2011 labeled "Library Service Millage" and several appended pages.

(<http://www.marquettetownship.org/pdf.php?file=libraryservicemillageletter.pdf>),

and I have these comments.

If a Charter Township of Marquette "Citizen Library Services Fund" is created, The Township will no

longer have contract with PWPL. The Board of Trustees of PWPL has clearly established the conditions for a contract with townships.

Township citizens will be greatly disadvantaged. They will have to annually request a non-resident membership for PWPL—a process which will be costly in time for our citizens and PWPL. The accounting process for both PWPL and the Township will be time consuming and costly. If citizens are required to register at the Township Hall for a voucher or similar reimbursement for the PWPL membership, it is likely to be a time consuming and costly process. (My home is 14.2 miles from the hall and the driving time at least 17 min. each way. The gasoline consumption will be 1 ½ gal for an SUV or truck; another cost.) The Library services Fund will need to be separately maintained and audited

Citizens without an auto, or who could not otherwise come to the Hall during regular business hours will be greatly disadvantaged, as will senior citizens who no longer drive.

Marq-Tran does not include a stop at the Township Hall on the scheduled routings. Door to door service is theoretically available, but requires advance reservation. Taxi service adds expense to the process. An internet or telephone registration could be arranged, but has the difficulty of authenticating township residency.

Mr. Marks apparently assumes that fewer township residents will bother to request library privileges and therefore there will be a surplus in the fund, which surplus could then be diverted to other Township projects. Is Mr. Marks advocating discouraging citizens from having library privileges? At the current number of library users from the township- 1908- the fund will consume \$143,100, if PWPL continues the current rate for a non-resident membership. That would leave \$35,874 in the fund. That is a tiny amount in relationship to any significant infrastructure project. If there were to be a 10% increase in requests for library membership the surplus drops to \$21,624. With a 20% increase leaves a surplus of only \$7324. With 25% increase the surplus, assuming no change in PLWL membership fees, the surplus is only \$199.

I see creation of a library services fund as a difficult and costly process for township residents, and for township and PWPL accounting processes.

A tax millage which purports to be for library services and diverts monies so designated to a roads project which is not specified, cost accounted and clearly supported by the citizens may not be legal. Certainly I will not support such a proposal and would strongly lobby against it.

What benefit will local business owners derive from such a scheme? Will they be supportive of it?

Without a contract with PWPL the township will become an 'unserved area' as defined by the state. Penal fines from the township will go into escrow and state aid will go back into the pool for distribution to libraries other than PWPL. This will further endanger a balanced budget for PWPL and may result in further reductions in service to all county citizens.

Mr. Markes appended several sheets of information which I find misleading and confusing. The September PWPL "quick read" contains out of date statistics and the item about the Michi Card Program should further inform the Board that State of Michigan (and Federal) support for library services are dwindling. It emphasizes the importance of reliable and sustaining local support for libraries. A Township or library cannot create balanced budgets based on temporary or fickle support.

Mr. Markes is, I believe, supposed to be one of our representatives to a PWPL Township advisory council. I am informed that his attendance is irregular.

For some reason Mr. Markes highlights that members of the PWPL board of Trustees must be residents of Marquette.

I informed you during public comment last month the PWPL is a state chartered Library. An extract of PWPL regulations follows

Date Established: Established in 1891 by an Act of the State Legislature which specified the Board's powers, duties and procedures. The Board is responsible for the operations and setting policy, programs and determining the budget for the Library. The Board may also levy up to 1.5 mills on the City's SEV for operating expenses.

Corresponding MCL#, City Charter Citation, and/or City Code: Public Act 254 of 1891; Charter Section 4.20; Code: Chapter 2, Article IV, Div. 2, Section 2-411.

Number of Members & Term of Office: Five members serving five-year terms.

Peter White wisely created this state charter which has ensured the maintenance of stable funding and governance of this widely acclaimed library. It would not be sensible to seek to change the charter.

Mr. Markes chose to highlight the Arts and Culture center and costs for non-residents of Marquette City. To my knowledge, The Arts and Culture Committee is not supported by Marquette Township. At the time of the PWPL building and expansion project the Arts and Culture Committee was exploring ways to establish a Center. The Committee guaranteed participation to the extent of some \$500,000 to integrate their activities with those of the community access spaces at PWPL. The Arts and Culture Committee is funded by the residents of Marquette City. Is Mr. Marks suggesting that the Township seek to support the Arts and Culture Committee/Center so that township residents might qualify for the lesser fee which Marquette residents pay?

What is Mr. Marks object in highlighting the use of the Library by Marquette City Manager for community office hours? Does Mr. Marks suggest that our Township officers also hold community office hours?__ ?At the PWPL?

If the objective of having a township representative on the Advisory committee of PWPL is to promote a better understanding and cooperation between the organizations, then I suggest that Mr. Markes is not fulfilling his obligation to our Township.

Minutes from a recent Township Advisory Council can be found at <http://www.uproc.lib.mi.us/pwpl/about/TownshipAdvisory/TACSept2011.pdf>

Respectfully,
Carl F Hammerstrom, MD
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Marquette Charter Township, MI
49855

phone: 906-228-9945