



Board of Trustee
Closed Session Meeting Minutes
Held at Winfield Township Office
130 Arbor Ave.
West Chicago, IL 60185
09/24/2018

7:01PM- Closed Session for 5 ILCS 120/2 (C) (1) The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with this Act.

The Clerk called roll call; Trustee Alekna, Trustee Halley, Trustee Guglielmi, and Supervisor Smith were all present. Trustee Voelz was absent.
Also present Clerk Nicole Prater, John M. Redlinshafer, Michelle Moore Norton and Heather Ryan

Supervisor Dona Smith went and brought John Redlinshafer into the room for interview from Mescher law Offices, P.C. . John Redlinshafer was introduced to the board. Supervisor Smith advised John is the new attorney for John Dusza. Trustee Guglielmi asked John to tell us a little bit about himself and why he is qualified for the job. Mr. Redlinshafer thanked the board for the opportunity and advised them that he grew up in a rural community at the beginning he did not have city services available to him. As he grew older he learned what townships do for is community. He went to law school and he was given the opportunity to serve townships and road districts. Therefore he holds a special place in his heart for them.

As legal counsel he learns more from the clients at times and listening to particular issues than mandating or dictating to clients. I like to work through the legal and practical issues of things. Law and practical sense don't always see eye to eye. Over the 14-15 years of being a lawyer speaking at the annual and regional conferences TOI meetings and being for the general counsel for the highway commissioners of Illinois as representing for urban and rural township districts and road districts I have learned a lot. My qualifications have grown because I listen more than I talk.

Trustee Alekna asked one of the needs we have is with tax objections. Do you have any experience on that? John Redlinshafer stated yes traditionally on the road district side of things. I have been involved with litigation out West. If anyone does not recognize the name Evan Carnes with tax litigation they do not know tax objections. I have not gone to trial but negotiated down the settlements. They come at you with a significant claim what it comes down to being a lawyer is balancing how much it would cost to take to trial, negotiations and being honest. The last case I had I was able to get one charge dismissed



and the second reduced by over 50% and done within 2-3 hearings. The sooner we engage with council the faster things go. Also working with opposing council help things to for a little faster too.

Trustee Halley asked on average with previous tax objections how many hours would you say you worked on it from getting it to settling billable hours? John Redlinshafer stated he bellies he was under \$5000.00. Remember one important aspect is reaching out to your insurance company to see if there is coverage. A good line of communication with TORMA on tax objection cases and work at their rate.

Trustee Halley asked how often are you up in this area? John Redlinshafer at least 2-3 times a month and I do not charge for travel.

Supervisor Smith advised everything is clear it comes to \$190.00/hour for lawyer and \$100.00/hour for paralegal, no charges for copies faxes and no travel time. Was there anything else anyone wanted to ask? No one responded.

John Redlinshafer advised the board if you have any follow up questions please let me know do not hesitate to contact me and gave the board his cell phone number. Thanked the board for their time and left the meeting at 7:17PM

7:22PM Law Office of Michelle L. Moore. The Moore Norton Law Group, LTD.

Michelle Moore Norton and Heather Ryan entered the room with Supervisor Smith. They introduce themselves to the board.

Supervisor Smith asked them to introduce themselves Michelle and Heather have Known each other for 25 years Heather Trained Michelle at the states attorney's office. Michelle opened her private practice in 2000 for the last 7 years been doing work for municipalities. The focus of the law group is to provide upscale services for Municipalities. I learned a lot of about government and elections while running for county board and learning and wanting to make local government better. Michelle wants to provide the best legal services for the best rate. You want to be able to benefit the tax payer ultimately. There are also Heather and two other lawyers that word work for you as well.

Heather Ryan has a similar background with the attorney's office. She went out into private practice in 2000. She works with municipalities and hearings with the secretary of state.

Supervisor Smith asked what type of background they have in Tax objections. Michelle Moore Norton advised that they have no experience in tax objects. She advised that she realized this is a legitimate concern. When you go to law school they teach you to be a lawyer. The best lawyers are capable to grow and develop their practices to have different types of law. I understand that Winfield Township had an ongoing suit that cost the taxpayers \$200,000.00+ lawyer fees which took months if not years to settle. Ultimately your case was settled. Being a lawyer you have to look at everything at a cost benefit, risk, and reward. The laws are already written in township law. The lawyer should have looked at the case sooner for a cheaper rate. To be a good lawyer will be able to tell you hey this is why this taxpayer



has a good objection and settle this not instead balloon out over time and continue to have litigation cost. Every case has facts and facts are immutable things. It is people's interpretations of facts of getting into the gray areas of the law. Let's assume that property A is assessed at this value the objections it should be at this value and how do you come to a happy medium right. Maybe the assessor is right or maybe there is wiggle room. I think in a lot of these cases there is wiggle room because it is objective. We don't want to get to litigation we need to find a resolution to make everyone happy and a little unhappy. Your best bet is to look at this at a case by case basis and don't balloon out of control and save your monies on litigation expenses.

Supervisor Smith advised Tax objections are not based on assessments. They are based on the levy to budget ratio. So assessment does not play a role in Tax objections. Michelle Moore Norton I am always willing to learn.

Supervisor Smith asked for the \$1450.00 a month what do we get? Michelle Moore Norton advised that access to me and the lawyers in the firm, all meetings, phone calls, preliminary issues for tax objections; Tax objections broken down for each property right?

Supervisor Smith advised it is not broken down into Property. The formula is very confusing but it is the amount that is levied and spent with the budget these are big corporations Com Ed, Rail road's big companies stating that the tax bills are too high and coming back to the Township and stating the tax bill is too high.

Michelle Moore Norton stated this is not my specialties but we are not going to be charging you our learning curve. But I assume you will need us for more issues correct? Supervisor Smith advises no not really just the tax objections. Michelle Moore Norton stated then the \$1450.00 a month is too much. Are there any other questions?

Trustee Alekna advised would you just charge us an hourly rate then? Michelle Moore Norton stated yes that would be no problem at all.

Supervisor Smith asked if there would be a bill for travel time? Michelle Moore Norton stated no. unless you wanted me to go to a seminar or event. But I would not be charging you to come to meetings. No further questions were asked they thanked us the board for their time and left at 7:42PM.

Supervisor Smith asked for any comments.

Trustee Halley asked if we could have Trustee Voelz review the executive meeting minutes prior to making a decision.

Supervisor Smith advises that is OK. She advises she is concerned that Michelle Moore Norton does not know how to do tax objections when John M. Redlingshafer does. Supervisor Smith advised she would like to review the other lawyers' proposals as well. Ancel Glink apparently does not want to work with us because there rates have increased. Klein, Thorpe and Jenkins had an increase as well. Bond Dickson and Conway as well as Robbin Schartz their rate stayed the same. What were all of your thoughts?



Trustee Guglielmi advised that both lawyers were easy to talk to I liked John but a little concerned about the 2-3 times a month to come out here (the distance an issue).

Trustee Halley advised he liked that the last bill for Johns tax objections being \$5000.00 for billable hours. I feel we have been paying that once a month. Supervisor Smith advise what really surprised me about that is us having our liability insurance thru TORMA and negotiated our rate down with TORMA. I did not know we could do that.

Trustee Alekna I liked them both I like the ideal of hiring women and someone in DuPage county. We cannot find a Lawyer from Winfield Township?

Supervisor Smith advised no one has applied from Winfield Township. Honestly moving forward before the tax objections Rick never came to the office. As far as coming into the office I do not see why someone would come to the office or travel.

Trustee Alekna asked if Rick Tarulis has been terminated yet?

Supervisor Smith advised she has not yet terminated Rick Tarulis.

Trustee Alekna I thought he was terminated from the last meeting. He should have been reported to the states attorney office.

Trustee Guglielmi stated he would not feel comfortable hiring another attorney without terminating Rick Tarulis.

Supervisor Smith advised she will send a letter to terminate Rick Tarulis tomorrow.

Trustee Halley stated we are all in agreement to wait for Trustee Voelz to make a final decision of the lawyer.

Trustee Halley made a motion to rise out of Closed Session. Second by Trustee Guglielmi. No further discussion.

Trustee Guglielmi –Aye

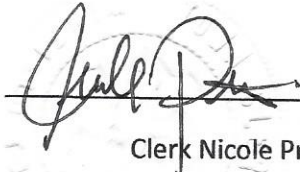
Trustee Voelz-Absent

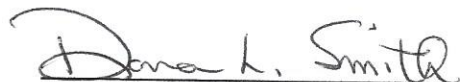
Trustee Halley-Aye

Trustee Alekna-Aye

Supervisor Smith-Aye

Closed Session adjourned at 7:51PM.


Clerk Nicole Prater


Supervisor Dona Smith

Released 2/11/2019